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This Week

National

Haifa University hopes to keep Israel on top in chess. *Page 3*

Beth Radom opts not to renew rabbi's contract. *Page 6*

Arts & Travel

Web series blurs line between fact and fiction, connecting story to real life. *Page 29*

Heebonics

Former Montrealer balances eclectic interests, demanding job. *Page 34*

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Engineering an Iron Dome

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Rocket scientists have a reputation for being cerebral, of being able to wrap their considerable mental powers around mathematically challenging problems.

That's certainly true for "D," an engineer for Raphael Advanced Defense Systems who played a key role in the development of Israel's Iron Dome missile defence system.

But D, who asks that his name not be used due to concerns over his safety, is also a man of faith. He wears a knitted kippah and quotes Halachah in connection to the formidable changes Iron Dome has occasioned in the lives of ordinary Israelis.

"I am very religious," D said in a meeting with members of the press. "God works in Iron Dome. Iron Dome is the way that God works in which to save us."

D was in Toronto last week as part of an extensive speaking tour. He said the system is helping save "Am Yisrael [the people of Israel] and that's helping God out."

The CJN interviews the project manager instrumental in developing Israel's anti-missile defence system

Of course, he continued, people have to help themselves as well, and for him, it was particularly gratifying to see Israelis "get it done quickly." Impetus for the Iron Dome system, which tracks, targets and shoots down short-range rockets and shells, came as a result of the 2006 war with Hezbollah, after thousands of rockets rained down on northern Israel.

"Our backyard was on fire," D said. "There were people being injured, killed... When that happens, you work differently."

Continued on page 12

An installation near Tel Aviv of the Iron Dome anti-missile system *[Flash90 photo]*

Belated bar mitzvahs

A group of Holocaust survivors from around Israel came to the Kotel last week at the invitation of Western Wall Rabbinic Authority to celebrate their bar mitzvahs. They were unable to do so during World War II.

[Photo courtesy of Western Wall Rabbinic Authority]

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This edition of The CJN went to press on Dec. 28, 2012.

CANADA

Harper Feted

OTTAWA — Russian Canadian Broadcasting (RCB) has selected Prime Minister Stephen Harper as its "Man of the Year" for his "continued dedication to the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law." RCB will present the award on Jan. 7. Founded in 1993 by Russian expatriates, RCB operates the television program *MIXTV*, the newspaper *Nasha Gazeta* and the radio program *Intersection*.

Saturday Opening

WINNIPEG — The Rady Jewish Community Centre (JCC) is extending its Saturday hours of operation as of Jan. 12, opening its doors at 8 a.m. Fitness classes, swimming lessons and other services will be offered in the morning, although there will be no exchange of money, the JCC stated. The change puts the JCC in line with similar community centres across Canada. The Rady JCC currently opens at 2 p.m. on Saturdays.

WORLD

Klugman Dies

LOS ANGELES — Actor Jack Klugman, who made up the sloppy half in the popular *Odd Couple*, has died at 90. Klugman, who also starred in the original film version of *12 Angry Men*, won two Emmy Awards for his portrayal of messy and careless New York sportswriter Oscar Madison. He also performed in the original Broadway production as a replacement for Walter Matthau. Klugman went on to star in the television series *Quincy, M.E.* in which he played a medical examiner.

Artifacts Excavated

JERUSALEM — Archeologists with the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) have unearthed artifacts dating from the First Temple period. A nearly 3,000-year-old temple was found at the Tel Motza archeological site a few kilometres west of Jerusalem. "The ritual building at Tel Motza is an unusual and striking find, in light of the fact that there are hardly any remains of ritual buildings of the period in Judea at the time of the First Temple," said Anna Eirikh, Hamoudi Khalaily and Shua Kisilevitz, directors of the excavation on behalf of the IAA, in a statement. Among the artifacts are pottery vessels with fragments of chalices that were used in sacred rituals, decorated ritual pedestals and a number of pottery figurines.

Cotler Urges Legal Action Against Iran

STOCKHOLM — MP Irwin Cotler called on the international community to hold Iran to account for its state-sanctioned incitement to genocide and its violations of the human rights of the Iranian people.

Speaking at a conference marking the 100th birthday of Holocaust-era diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, the former Canadian justice minister also called on the Swedish government to join other democracies in initiating legal measures against Iran.

In a wide-ranging address, Cotler urged Sweden to sign the Ottawa Protocol to Combat Antisemitism, which was adopted by 150 parliamentarians from more than 50 countries. The protocol serves as a blueprint for parliamentary, governmental and citizen action to address antisemitism.

Cotler, who once chaired the International Commission on the Fate and Whereabouts of Raoul Wallenberg, also called on the government of Russia to "open up the blank spots of history and disclose the truth of Wallenberg's fate. The smoking gun is somewhere in Russia's archives."

Tourism Increases

JERUSALEM — Some 3.5 million people visited Israel during 2012 – a four per cent increase over 2011, according to Israel's Ministry of Tourism. The United States is the largest single source country for incoming tourism with about 610,000 visitors, four per cent less than in 2011. Tourism from Russia was second with 590,000 visitors, 20 per cent more than 2011. Revenue is about $4.6 billion (U.S.), an increase of eight per cent.

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Haifa U hopes for a checkmate

University hopes to keep Israel on top in chess

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The University of Haifa is working on a project to perpetuate Israel's extraordinarily strong position in chess.

The Grandmaster Chess Research Project, currently in its fundraising phase, will be launched once sufficient funds are available.

Initiated by Aaron Ben-Zeev, the university's former president, the project is being created in collaboration with Boris Gelfand, an Israeli grandmaster and winner of the 2009 World Cup.

Its objectives are three-fold: to determine the connection between chess and cognitive development; to develop the first Hebrew-language educational software for teaching chess in schools and kindergarten, and to establish an international program for training chess instructors and coaches.

"This initiative is introducing chess and the disciplines in the game's development into the academic world," said Michael Yerushalmy, the university's vice-president and dean of research.

"It will provide an opportunity to achieve breakthrough research and social outreach in a field that has not yet been fully explored. We are well-positioned to examine the impact of chess on students' math skills, language acquisition and other skills."

Shay Bushinsky, a chess software developer who's playing a role in the project, said the skills of chess can advance social knowledge.

"Chess has many advantages in developing social skills, especially in young children," noted Bushinsky, who teaches computer science courses at Haifa U and Tel Aviv University.

"In general, chess teaches patience, coping with winning and losing and paying respect to an opponent."

Among the elderly, the relationship between chess and cognitive enhancement is clear, he added.

"It has been empirically shown to preserve critical skills such as memory and calculation. Chess players must cope with time pressure and carry the burden of precise attack and defence planning, which require a robust decision-making process."

Continued on page 12

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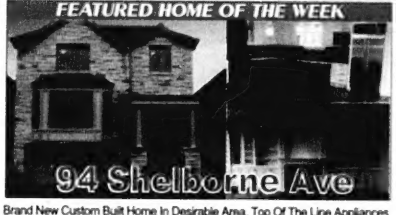

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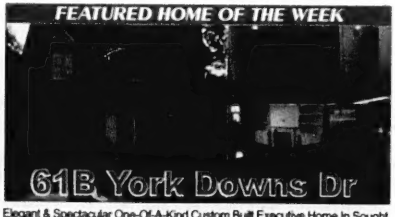

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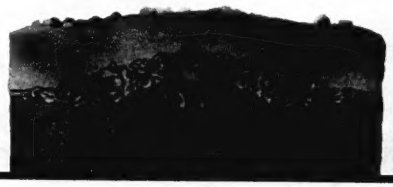

'Better a bitter conclusion'

From the editor's desk...

The new year begins with an old story: Israel's ability defend itself so well is upsetting to some people.

Thomas Friedman, in a Dec. 5 *New York Times* column, and Scott Wilson, in the *Washington Post* on Dec. 9, bemoan what they perceive as adverse implications from Israel's highly effective Iron Dome anti-missile system.

"The wall [security barrier] plus the dome are enabling Israel's leaders to abdicate their responsibility for thinking creatively about a resolution of its own majority-minority problem with the Palestinians in the West Bank and east Jerusalem," wrote Friedman. "I am glad," he meekly adds, "that the wall and the Iron Dome are sheltering Israelis from enemies who wish to do them ill." However, he does not budge from his central opinion: "But I fear the wall and the Iron Dome are also blinding them from truths they still badly need to face."

Wilson echoed Friedman's worries. Neither, however, wrote a word about the effect of Palestinian policies on the peace process.

Many people responded to this absurd Friedman/Wilson line of thinking. Leo Rennert, Washington bureau chief for *McClatchy Newspapers*, and Barry Rubin, director of the Global Research in International Affairs Center in Herzliya, were the most effective. Their responses appeared in the American Thinker blog and in the Rubin Reports blog, respectively.

But perhaps the best response of all to Friedman and Wilson came from Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion.

On March 4, 1958, Ben-Gurion delivered an in camera assessment to members of his party, Mapai (Workers' Party of Israel), of the country's political situation in the world.

The wise and wizened prime minister reported on and analyzed the Jewish state's relations with various countries and regions in the world. The first part of his report dealt with Israel's prospects for peace with its Arab neighbours. His remarks were reproduced in the spring edition of *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, 1984.

"So, after I had gained some experience in this matter [how the Arabs regard the Jews in the Land of Israel] 25 years ago, I went to the Arabs of Palestine and to their leaders, to Musa Alami, to Awni Abd al-Hadi, to George Antonius and later to leaders in the neighbouring countries, to [Syrian leader] Jamal Mardam, to [Lebanese leader] Riyad al-Sulh, to Ibn Saud's emissary, to the [Syrian-Palestinian] Arab committee in Geneva, and I met with them in London at the [1939] St. James Palace Conference convened by Malcolm MacDonald [the British colonial secretary]. There we met with all these Arab countries. Before that they had not wanted to sit with us. Malcolm MacDonald made a great effort to arrange a meeting; the Arabs of Palestine remained adamant in their refusal. So we met only with Arab rulers of neighbouring countries, with the rulers of Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia [Lebanon and Syria were still under French Mandate at that time].

"I thus came to a bitter conclusion: at this time there is no prospect of a Jewish-Arab peace…

"I cannot forget how when [American journalist J.] Alsop entered my office in the Prime Minister's Bureau and saw the map on the wall, he asked: 'How will you survive?'

"Only afterward does the question arise: is there any prospect of peace? I believe that the two questions are intertwined. Only the forces that help us survive may bring about a situation in which the Arabs are forced to acknowledge that we cannot be annihilated; *and it is my profound belief that peace cannot be reached without the Arabs first recognizing that there is no possibility of annihilating us.* (My emphasis) Since this is the only way to peace, concern for our survival and for our strengthening becomes the true concern for peace."

Ben-Gurion's conclusion still stands today, some 54 years after he spoke them. And no one can say of Ben-Gurion that he was a maximalist in any respect in his approach to seeking peace with the Arabs.

The reason his conclusion still stands today is quite simple, although it appears to have escaped Friedman and Wilson. Palestinian leaders have not changed their thinking since 1939. They simply refuse to accommodate a State of Israel alongside a State of Palestine.

Even if we only look at the record since 1993, the evidence is overwhelming and inescapable. Former Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat and current PA President Mahmoud Abbas turned their backs on the various Israeli prime ministers who sat with them, negotiated, bargained and pleaded for a treaty of peace between the two peoples. (And it must be added, Arafat and Abbas sat with them while even Jews were building homes, roads, schools and communities in the West Bank.)

The extent to which individuals such as Friedman and Wilson are willing to ignore history, distort logic and undermine values of decency and morality in order to indict Israel is a sorrowful commentary on the place of truth in modern political discourse – at least when it comes to Israel.

The last word must go, again, to Ben-Gurion.

"Better a bitter conclusion which is the truth than sweet-seeming self-deception." *– MBD*

SeeJN

DRESSMAKERS ON STRIKE: Women picket for better wages, union recognition and impartial arbitration during the Dressmakers General Strike of 1931, which was organized by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU). This was a time when low wages, long hours and hazardous working conditions were the norm, striking was a common part of the working-class experience, the Russian Revolution and other political developments influenced a new generation and Spadina Avenue was the focal point of Jewish working-class life. This is the first in a monthly series from the Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA), a department of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. OJA's collections illustrate the vibrancy of the community from its earliest days to the present. Their stories are our stories.

[Ontario Jewish Archives photo]

Rabbi's contract not renewed at Beth Radom

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Beth Radom Congregation is facing a period of healing following a decision by its board not to renew Rabbi Steven Schonblum's contract after it expires next July and after an unsuccessful challenge by a group of members seeking to replace the board and overturn its decision.

A Dec. 6 letter from the board to congregants explaining the decision regarding the rabbi alleged "unauthorized" conversions and "poor decisions" in managing his discretionary fund, both of which placed the Toronto shul at risk, according to the letter.

Following a Dec. 16 special meeting and congregational vote, the board emailed congregants to say that a motion asking for the board to resign was defeated. As well, the letter asked for co-operation to "ensure that our community not only heals but thrives."

In an initial letter to congregants dated Oct. 22, the board announced that it would not renew Rabbi Schonblum's contract, but it didn't specifically say why, citing concern for his privacy.

The letter said, however, that there had been "ongoing contractual issues" over the past several years. It added that the matters were serious and documented, and there had been discussions with the rabbi, as well as attempts to remedy the situation.

In its Dec. 6 follow-up letter, the board explained its decision regarding the rabbi, who since 2001 has been spiritual leader at Beth Radom, an unaffiliated Conservative egalitarian synagogue with 350 families.

A former ritual director of Pride of Israel Synagogue, Rabbi Schonblum received his smichah shortly before he joined Beth Radom, at age 40, after a decade of study in a distance learning program run by Tifereth Yisrael Rabbinical Yeshiva, which is Orthodox and based in Long Island, N.Y.

According to the board's Dec. 6 letter, "numerous" complaints, dating back to 2009, had been received from congregants about Rabbi Schonblum, who nevertheless was described as "an extremely likeable and personable individual."

The complaints related to his availability and responsiveness to members' needs, including shivah visits, visiting the sick and returning phone calls and emails; use of Internet content for sermons without attribution, and unresponsiveness to the board of governors.

Most notably, the board said the rabbi's conversions "placed the shul at serious risk for liability," and that his management of the rabbi's discretionary fund placed Beth Radom's status as a charitable organization at risk.

The board said he used synagogue letterhead for conversion certificates after he was asked not to, and was "unable or unwilling to demonstrate that informed consent had been provided" regarding the limitations of his conversions.

Beth Radom Congregation's sanctuary

Jordan Cait, a vice-president of Beth Radom, told *The CJN* that the board's priorities right now are "healing, and to listen to the congregation, and to have them participate with the transition committee that we're forming to help set the direction in finding a new rabbi."

Because of the controversy, some congregants have withheld their dues, leading to financial difficulties for the synagogue.

A Dec. 11 letter from the five people who challenged the board – Symon Zucker, Sidney Zucker, Howie Meyer, Wendy Melvin, and Risa Veffer – blamed the board and its actions for what it called the "current financial crisis at the shul."

Cait, however, described the situation in an interview as "a seasonal cash-flow problem" and "now that the situation is over and the new year is upon us, we're asking congregants to pay their dues."

In its letter, the dissident group offered explanations for the accusations directed at Rabbi Schonblum.

The group said, for example, that alleged wrongdoings with respect to the rabbi's discretionary fund had been authorized by the board, and that the rabbi had in fact complied with other requests regarding his sermons and conversions.

They also wrote that the congregational vote was not the one they had requested. They said they had asked for separate votes about the future of the current board and the renewal of the rabbi's contract.

A majority of two-thirds in the membership vote would have been required to override the board's decision and have current board members resign.

Symon Zucker, a former board member whose father was a founder of the shul, said that a little more than half the votes were in favour of the board's resignation. There were 134 opting for the petition, with 126 against, and 17 abstentions.

Cait views the results differently. He said the board had told some undecided members that by abstaining they would be voting for the board.

Zucker told *The CJN* he will stay at the shul. "We're not a dictatorship. We abide by the constitution. There's an election coming up next November. We'll address it again."

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis and spiritual leader of Beth Tzedec Congregation, said that Rabbi Schonblum is not a member of his group, which comprises members from all the main Jewish movements, and that he could not comment on his particular case.

He added that he didn't know whether Rabbi Schonblum had ever applied to join the TBR, and he did not recall ever having received a complaint about him.

But speaking about Conservative conversions, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said that "Conservative rabbis, generally speaking, utilize the Beit Din, or rabbinic court, of the [Conservative movement's] Rabbinical Assembly, and all of those conversions are conducted under what I'll call a fairly consistent model. And occasionally, there will be Conservative rabbis who for different reasons will convene their own beit din. In those cases, the beit din is usually three rabbis, but might include a non-rabbi as a member."

Rabbi Schonblum did not respond to *The CJN*'s requests for an interview.

Toronto man still fit as he turns 100

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

"It's not easy getting older, but there's still a lot of pleasure in life," says Yitzak Eisenberg who turns 100 this week.

In an interview, the centenarian said the things that helped him along the way are "my beloved family, exercise, playing cards and a lot of determination."

Eisenberg was born in Radom, Poland, on Jan. 6, 1913, and worked as a tailor. When there was no work for him in Radom, he moved to Lodz in 1933.

In 1939, with thousands of other Jews, he fled to the Russian border, where he had to sign up for hard labour to get into the country. In Siberia, he worked with some 20,000 other Jews in a factory in Magnitogorsk, an industrial mining town that supported the war industry.

"I pretended that I was sick and had a pain in my chest," he recalled. "They gave me four weeks off. I was very fearful as my brother was accused of being a spy and was assassinated." His brother was later exonerated, he added.

Through a chance meeting with a woman who knew his brother, he was able to get a job as a tailor, making clothes for the people working in the factory.

Although the work was not difficult, "I lived in fear day and night. I was afraid I would be accused of something as my brother had been."

After the war, Eisenberg did not want to return to Poland because of the antisemitism. He found his way to Stuttgart, Germany, where he applied to go to America with his wife, Channah (Frenkiel).

He arrived in Canada in 1946 and thought that Canada was America – the United States. "But it turned out for the best, as my father's sister lived in Toronto," he said with a smile. "I was really born in 1946 when I arrived in Canada."

Over the next few decades, Eisenberg tried some different ventures – working as a tailor, at a dry cleaners, in a furniture store, in pickle importing, as a real estate agent and in the building business.

An entrepreneur, he admitted that he had a lot of courage and foresight and always had a vision for improving his life.

In the early 1960s, Eisenberg's desire to remain strong and healthy began. "I joined Vic Tanny's gym and bought a life membership for $18."

He said that around that time, he also began playing cards to keep his mind sharp.

When he retired at age 65, Eisenberg began swimming an hour every day and working out on the resistance machines.

At 85, although he was fit, he needed bypass surgery. The doctors did not want to operate at his age. He told the doctors not to judge him by his age. "I am fit and I want the operation," he told them.

"And I've gone on to live 15 more vital years."

At 93, he joined the Columbus Centre Gym, and four years later, they gave him a free lifetime membership.

Yitzak Eisenberg

Eisenberg has two children, Morty Eisenberg and Helene Smagala, six grandchildren and is expecting their first great-grandchild.

Although Eisenberg has macular degeneration and is legally blind, he walks a mile at the Columbus Centre and continues to use the resistance machines.

His daughter, Helene, told *The CJN* that her father is "a fearlessly and independent man. He continues to take the bus to his appointments and continues to do whatever he can."

Eisenberg will celebrate his 100th birthday at a party at the Columbus Centre on Jan. 6, where 150 guests, including seven family members from Israel, will toast the centenarian.

Bar-Ilan expert on Arab political discourse to visit

Western analysts often 'oblivious' about Mideast, says Kedar

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Mordechai Kedar doesn't come right out and say most Mideast analysts in western countries are completely out of their depth, but that's pretty much the upshot of his position.

Very few of them speak the indigenous languages of the region, such as Arabic or Farsi, so they can't read important documents that reveal what people really believe. And when they visit the area, they interact with western-oriented intellectuals and media representatives who share their values. They only see "a very thin layer of local societies" and as a result, they don't really understand the forces at play. "The West is oblivious about the facts of the Middle East," he said.

Kedar, a scholar at Israel's Bar-Ilan University and an expert on Arab political discourse, will visit Toronto in late January as part of a month-long North American visit and lecture tour.

Mordechai Kedar

Kedar said the Arab world is experiencing massive convulsions as "oppressed masses for decades burst onto the streets to break the fear and chains and take out dictators… The imported ideologies of the West – patriotism, secularism, liberalism – went bankrupt in the Middle East, as they are not indigenous to the local cultures."

"In the Middle East, the culture is Islamism on one side and tribalism on the other side. Those will shape the Middle East."

Kedar, a research associate of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, said people in the region relate to each other by family ties, language and land, and they maintain fighting militias to promote their own interests. "They don't mingle with other groups, and when they take over, they use the state to dominate other tribes, which fight for survival."

He criticized western observers for failing to realize Middle Eastern and Asian societies are fractured on tribal and ethnic lines. Afghanistan, for one, is "a failed state of 11 ethnic groups that don't share language, mindset, traditions, behavior, nothing. Nobody can expect they'll cooperate in anything. There is no Afghani people."

Likewise Iraq, with its Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish areas, while Yemen and Syria are tribal societies with no overarching national identity, he stated.

His analysis of the fractured nature of Middle Eastern societies applies to the Palestinians as well, he said. Palestinian society is based on clan and tribal ties, but it's represented on the international stage by "intellectuals with no relevance to Palestinian society."

Their bid for statehood through the UN "will lead nowhere, as a Palestinian state will be another failed Arab state, as local tribes won't let it function."

Palestinian tribes dominate individual West Bank cities "and they don't trust each other. They will become another Syria or Libya," he said.

Peace will only come when Palestinians fragment into homogenous city-states, following "the Gulf paradigm," which he called an "eight-state solution."

Kedar, who gained international celebrity when a spirited 2008 Arab-language interview on *Al-Jazeera* about the Jewishness of Jerusalem went viral, said the United States is making "the basic mistake of judging and evaluating societies in the Mideast with western-mindset and western values, which are totally irrelevant in the Middle East. Whatever is sacred in the West is profane in the Middle East."

Freedom of religion, a cornerstone of western civilization, "is viewed in the Middle East as totally unacceptable." Muslims who seek to abandon Islam face decapitation, he said.

Other western freedoms, such as behaving as you like or choosing your spouse, are a "totally unacceptable way of thinking" in the Middle East. "The virginity [of young women] is sacred, and if a young lady behaves too liberally, she will be slaughtered by her family for bringing shame to the family," he said.

As for minority rights, "ask the Copts how Egyptians honour minority rights," he stated.

Even the concept of peace has a different meaning in the Middle East, he continued. "According to the West, peace is the normal relations between two states that recognize each other's sovereignty and independence. In Islam, there is no peace between states. Between Islamic states and infidel states, there is no peace. Peace can be only between communities that live under Muslim [hegemony] and behave under sharia law."

Truces of unlimited duration are the best outcome Israel can expect. However, in the Islamic tradition a truce can be broken when the Islamic country becomes powerful enough to overwhelm its infidel foe. "As long as Israel is invincible, this temporary peace can last. Once Israel is viewed as vulnerable, that peace will be over. Israel can have temporary peace forever as long as it remains invincible."

Kedar praised the Harper government for standing by Israel and making it appear more powerful. He criticized the United States for "encouraging Islamists who try to topple Israel and [who] see a U.S. president not supporting Israel as fully as presidents in the past… Unfortunately [President Barack] Obama works against peace. He does not understand that.

"In the Middle East, whoever asks for peace is viewed as weak and the weak is chased out of the club. The Mideast club is only for those who are strong," he said.

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Strengthen our unity

The monthly ritual at the Western Wall has now become a melodrama of political theatre. The Women of the Wall bring prayer shawls, some bring tfillin, to their court-designated location at the Western Wall for the prayers ushering in the new month. But the women are prohibited – by a decision of the rabbinic establishment and sanctioned by the Israeli Supreme Court – from wearing prayer shawls, for the shawl is considered by that rabbinic establishment to be halachically forbidden to women.

And thus, the police, some enthusiastically, some quite embarrassed, are compelled to enforce the law by confiscating the women's prayer shawls and detaining the women intent on wearing the shawls on suspicion of "disturbing public order."

The real underlying issue is less theological than it is political, namely, who is to set the rules for prayer and Jewish ritual congress in Israel's public spaces.

Given the historical, religious, national and emotional significance of so many of Israel's public spaces – especially the Western Wall – to the entirety of the Jewish People, the question can no longer be considered "merely" an internal domestic issue within Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu understands this. A public policy that does not also somehow accommodate non-Orthodox rituals of prayer at the Western Wall alienates millions of Jews who consider themselves excluded because their way in the Jewish faith is not that of Israel's rabbinate.

Thus the prime minister last week asked Jewish Agency chairman Natan Sharansky to find a way that does accommodate non-Orthodox prayer at the Wall.

Despite the hold on Jewish religious institutions in Israel by the haredi establishment, there are encouraging signs that changes may not be too far off. As reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, two leading non-haredi Orthodox rabbis have expressed support for accommodating non-Orthodox prayer at the Western Wall.

Rabbi Yuval Cherlow, dean of the Hesder Yeshiva in Petah Tikva, told the *Jerusalem Post* last week that "Jerusalem is at the heart of the Jewish People, and if we want all of the Jewish People to feel connected there, then we need to find a place for all parts of the Jewish People at the Western Wall."

Rabbi Benny Lau said the fact that only Orthodox worshippers feel at home at the Western Wall is damaging to the Jewish people and that the "sectoralization" of the site "distances other Jews from their heritage."

As Netanyahu himself noted when he instructed Sharansky to undertake this new important task, "the Western Wall must remain a source of Jewish unity rather than division."

The unity – not uniformity – of the Jewish People has been one of the millennial cords binding us together in common moral commitment through the long years of history. We must do our utmost to buttress that unity, not undermine it.

We commend Netanyahu for this initiative.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Immanuel Jakobovits, chief rabbi of the British Commonwealth, was elevated to the House of Lords, becoming the first British chief rabbi to be so honoured. Rabbi Jakobovits, 66, was one of three new barons named by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and joined other religious leaders in the chamber, including the archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Dry Bones RELIGIOUS NEWS ROUNDUP 2012

ISRAEL'S ISOLATION AMONGST THE NATIONS IS FULFILLMENT OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY IN CURRENT EVENTS.
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Women and the Wall (1)

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein suggests that in order to resolve the recent conflict in Israel with the Women of the Wall, the Israeli government should "remove the Kotel's 'religious' designation... and declare it a public site under the Ministry of Antiquities... and then disallow any minyan of any denomination to pray there" ("Provoking change at the Wall," Nov. 22). This solution is reminiscent of the ruse suggested by King Solomon to reveal the true mother of the baby in the famous court case recorded in the Tanach. Two women come to claim a baby, and King Solomon has to decide which one is the real mother. The malingering woman is willing to cut the baby in half so that each woman can have a piece, and therefore be "equal." Why would a rabbi propose a plan that would deny any minyanim to pray at the Kotel, the holiest site in our tradition? The answer is obvious: her agenda is a political one that is focused on a misguided notion of equality, wherein religious significance and values are first ignored and then pushed aside entirely.

Amy Bitton
Thornhill, Ont.

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Women and the Wall (2)

In her column, "Provoking change at the Wall," (Nov. 22), Rabbi Elyse Goldstein quotes a highly placed Israeli official in Ottawa who says that "Israel is an Orthodox country." If this is so, perhaps the Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist congregations in the Diaspora should act accordingly by withdrawing their generous funding for our Jewish state.

Not allowing women to congregate and pray publicly is a disgrace to the Jewish People who have prided themselves in human rights and social justice. Rabbi Goldstein's suggestion – to remove the Wall's religious designation and declare it a public site under the Ministry of Antiquities, so all denominations can pray comfortably – seems very sound. God created Adam and Eve to share this Earth. Surely Israeli soil surrounding the Wall can accommodate both genders with equality.

L.N. Pomer
Toronto

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Settlement construction

Former Israel ambassador to Canada Alan Baker needs to be reminded about what the Israeli government agreed to through past UN Security Council resolutions. ("The Palestinian UN upgrade: setting things straight," Dec. 13). To date, among the numerous UN Security Council adopted resolutions, the most important now of relevance to this issue are resolutions 242 (1968) and 1515 (2003), which was endorsed by the "road map" peace plan (2002). The Palestinian Authority fulfilled most of its "road map" obligations, but Israel has not fulfilled a major component that states the "government of Israel freezes all settlement activity consistent with the Mitchell Report, including natural growth of settlements," while conducting sincere direct bilateral talks between the PA and the Israeli government. Therefore, it's clearly articulated that settlement construction, which entails planning for future construction projects as well, must stop during peace talks. This is really not debatable anymore.

Smadar Meiri
Thornhill, Ont.

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Con man on Toronto subway

I was hoping to make your readers aware of a con man who is riding the Toronto subways. One Sunday morning, as I sat in the St. Clair West subway station, looking over my Torah trope, a man sat down beside me and we began to chat. Who would have thought my photocopied pages of Hebrew text made me an easy mark. I heard about his wife, who had just had heart surgery, his five children in Israel, his parents who were killed in the war, and his bakery in Jerusalem. And through our discussions I learned that his wife required medication. He had only shekels, and his credit card was not working in Canada.

After I gave him several hundred dollars Canadian, he explained that the money would be returned to me the next day, when he was back in Israel. He didn't return the money to me. I generally try to help people when I can. This man should know that because of my experience, I am wary of helping people. I wanted to warn your readers and hopefully shame him for what he is doing.

Meredith Halpern
Toronto

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The 'day-after' scenario in Syria

Jonathan D. Halevi

The moment of truth is approaching in Syria. In an interview with the Lebanese daily *al-Akhbar*, published on Dec. 7, Syria's vice-president, Farouq Shara, admitted for the first time that the war against the Syrian rebels could not be won: "I do not believe that what the security forces and the army units are doing will achieve a decisive victory."

The rebel forces, led by allied jihadist groups, have the upper hand on the battlefield and scored significant achievements when they took over a large military base in Aleppo well stocked with weapons and ammunition, and later in fierce fighting in communities surrounding the capital city of Damascus including the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp. The Free Syrian Army is now claiming to have gained control of most of the air defence bases in the Damascus Governate.

Bashar Assad's regime is fighting a rearguard battle and has already lost control over large parts of the country, which are still being subjected to aerial and artillery attacks by Syrian army forces still loyal to the regime. Assad continues to draw his strength from the Alawite community, which forms the backbone of the army, and from the political, military, and economic assistance he receives from Russia, Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah. The latter two have also sent forces to help with the fighting, both in advisory and operational capacities.

The sense that the end is approaching was expressed by Russian deputy foreign minister Mikhail Bogdanov, who acknowledged that Assad's regime is losing control of the country and a rebel takeover may be imminent. While Russia has not changed its policy on the official level, it, too, appears prepared to safeguard its interests should the regime collapse.

A political turning point occurred when the United States recognized the Syrian National Coalition as the sole and exclusive representative of the Syrian people. The United States and other western countries, as well as the bloc of Arab and Muslim states that support the rebels, have an interest in building up a national leadership that can unite the rebel forces under its command and serve as a legitimate temporary government, thereby ensuring a stable transition period and the continued geographic and governmental coherence of Syria.

With the Syrian crisis entering its final stage, what follows are the main implications.

To begin with, Assad's regime has long since lost its legitimacy to rule and at most can survive for a further period through the growing use of firepower that is meant to inflict large-scale casualties among the rebels and the civilian population that supports them.

The rebels' takeover of large parts of Aleppo will likely precipitate a final collapse of the army's rule in the area. This will add momentum to similar processes in northern Syria, further enabling the mobilization and organization of forces for the decisive battle in Damascus – if the campaign being waged at present does not achieve a breakthrough.

In attacking rebel forces and the Syrian population, the Syrian army has seen fit to use all the weapons in its arsenal, except for chemical weapons. Strong messages on this issue from the United States and other western countries, indicating that the use of such weapons will prompt western military intervention expressly aimed at toppling the regime, have acted as a deterrent.

It is unlikely under the prevailing circumstances that Assad's regime believes the use of chemical weapons can restore the previous situation in Syria, even if very heavy losses are inflicted on the civilian population. It appears probable that, should Damascus soon fall into rebel hands, the regime will instead seek to transfer most of the surviving loyal forces and strategic (including chemical) weaponry to the area of the Alawite enclave in the west of the country. These weapons would then serve as a deterrent to acts of revenge and a political card for ensuring the Alawite community's status in a future Syrian order.

Israelis protest against the slaughter in Syria. ***[Flash90 photo]***

The Syrian National Coalition has indeed won international recognition and projects a moderate image for the Syrian opposition. The reality, however, is much more complex. The rebel forces regard the new leadership of the opposition as having been imposed on them and are prepared at most to accept it as a temporary actor that can mobilize the international support needed to complete the endeavour of toppling the regime.

In actuality, the dominant forces in Syria are the military frameworks that have waged the campaign against the regime since the revolution erupted in March 2011. These military frameworks, which enjoy great popular support, will likely demand their part in the new government and make their imprint on the shaping of the new Syria.

An analysis of the fighting forces' ideological underpinnings shows that the overwhelming majority, if not all, espouse an Islamist, jihadist, Salafist outlook in different degrees of fervour. Their common denominator is a desire to establish a new Syria that is ruled by the Sunni Muslim majority and defines itself first and foremost as an Islamic state.

The Jahbat al-Nusra organization, which is identified with the Iraqi branch of Al Qaeda, is considered one of the most powerful forces among the rebels and enjoys extensive popular sympathy both because of its battlefield achievements and the aid it provides to the population. A few days after the United States decided to add it to the list of terrorist organizations, there were mass demonstrations of support for the organization in Syria in the name of all the fighting forces, under the banner: "There Is No Terror in Syria But Assad's Terror."

Despite its international connections, even the Syrian National Coalition rejected the U.S. decision to classify Jabhat al-Nusra as a terrorist organization. This full backing for a branch of Al Qaeda against the United States and the West likely indicates the future direction of the Syrian revolution, which appears ready to adopt Islamism as the main basis of the government that will replace the Assad regime.

Under the surface in Syria, two major Islamic forces are active: the Muslim Brotherhood via Turkey, and Hizb ut-Tahrir, which calls for the immediate creation of an Islamic caliphate. Officially, the Muslim Brotherhood has no fighting forces acting under its name. According to testimonies, however, some of the semi-military frameworks set up over the past two years are identified with the movement, and it controls numerous sources of financial aid from the Gulf states and thereby wields influence among the rebel forces. The Brotherhood is likely to take a higher profile after the revolution achieves its ends, and to strive, with the help of Turkey and Egypt, to unite all the Islamic factions under its leadership.

The overriding goal of the new regime, with Turkey's support, will be to maintain Syria's geographic coherence and prevent its division on an ethnic/religious (Sunni, Alawite, Kurdish, and Druze) basis. So far the rebel forces, except for specific acts of vengeance, have avoided massacres of the Alawite population. They want to leave an escape hatch for Alawite officers and soldiers who will encourage others to desert, thereby hastening the army's collapse. Such restraint will not necessarily remain after the regime falls, with not a few voices among the rebels already calling for retribution. One possible solution for the new situation is an eventual Syrian federation that would extend limited autonomous rights to the minority groups.

The revolution in Syria has greatly depleted the Syrian army. The rebel forces, for their part, are hostile to Israel and reiterate calls to extend the jihad from Damascus to the liberation of Jerusalem. At present, all their resources are directed at overthrowing the Assad regime. After that is accomplished, a potential military-terrorist threat to Israel will likely emerge in the transition period, which will be marked by governmental instability and a lack of central control over at least some of the fighting forces. The jihadist forces in Syria have taken over the Syrian military's stocks of weapons, as in the Libyan case after the fall of Moammar Gadhafi. This could pose a serious security challenge to western interests in the future.

The fall of Assad, Tehran's close ally, will be a harsh blow to Iran's interests in the Middle East and could cause further shockwaves that weaken Iran's influence even more. That pertains particularly to the Lebanese arena, where the Sunni Islamist forces are already organizing for the day after Assad's fall in a push to alter Lebanon's political and military balance of power, in which Hezbollah is now dominant. The collapse of the Syrian hinterland will likely spark violent clashes that could escalate to a civil war in Lebanon between the radical Sunni forces and Hezbollah. In Iraq, which has been under increasing Iranian domination after the U.S. withdrawal, Iraqi Sunnis will likely look to their Sunni allies in a post-Assad Syria in order to renew the insurgency campaign against the Shiite-led government in Baghdad.

At present, the rebel forces view Iran, Russia, and China as partners in crime for fully backing the Assad regime. It is, however, undoubtedly possible that ties with them will be rehabilitated in the longer term. Russia has a major interest in maintaining its influence in Syria and will likely play the card of banishment of Assad and his comrades in trying to pave a path to the rebels' hearts. Although the animosity toward Iran has an ideological basis, the Muslim Brotherhood has shown that it ascribed supreme strategic importance to relations with Iran even while massacres were being perpetrated in Syria. The common interest is to counter western influence in the Middle East and build a front against Israel. These considerations are likely to guide the new regime in Damascus.

Jonathan D. Halevi is a retired lieutenant colonel in the Israel Defence Forces and a senior researcher on the Middle East and radical Islam at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He's a also co-founder of the Orient Research Group and a former adviser to the policy planning division of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Our struggle for religious pluralism in Israel

Spending time away from your usual surroundings sometimes gives you a better appreciation of where you're from and where you plan to continue life's journey.

In November, I spent almost three weeks in North America, mostly in Canada. Speaking at Reform congregations and schools in Toronto and Southern Ontario, as well as in Montreal, I was a guest of ARZA Canada, "the Zionist voice of the Canadian Reform movement."

I came away with a deeper awareness of Reform Jews' devotion to Israel (and that of Canadian Jews in general), but also of their legitimate concerns and frustrations regarding ongoing trends in Israel, particularly in matters of synagogue and state. The lack of any genuine state recognition for liberal, egalitarian strains of Judaism in the Jewish state rightfully exasperates them, as it does like-minded Israelis, myself included, who consider themselves liberal Jews. The enduring Orthodox monopoly on anything religious in Israel is infuriating, alienating millions of Jews around the globe.

My message to the people I spoke to was that we must broaden and deepen our partnership, using the strengths we have on both sides of the Atlantic to endeavour together to achieve a much more religiously pluralistic Israel. Many of us here are willing to work on expanding liberal Judaism around the country, encouraging more sabras to join us and fighting the legal and other battles necessary to succeed.

Our brethren in the Diaspora, particularly in North America, should support us, and not only financially. Because of their sheer numbers, they ought to use the leverage at their disposal to pressure our government into making the changes necessary to make Israel a place where all Jews feel at home.

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

On a more personal level, while in Canada, I had several experiences that helped me better understand my roots, but also where I am today.

It always amazes me how easily I fit back into Toronto, where I spent most of my childhood. Getting into a car at Pearson International Airport, I can still navigate the highways and byways and enjoy seeing places central to my past – houses I lived in, schools and shuls I spent much time in, not to mention restaurants, stores and malls, streets and neighbourhoods, as well as wonderful family and friends who are still very much part of my life.

On this trip, I spent enough time in the city to also realize again what a wonderful Jewish community Toronto has and how one can live a genuinely rich Jewish existence there.

But a couple of incidents also helped me recognize some other things. After one of my talks, I was chatting with some of those present when someone asked, "How is it to be back home?" My initial reaction was to look over my shoulder, certain the question had been addressed to someone behind me. When I realized I was the one being asked, I responded in no uncertain terms (and I hope not impolitely) that Toronto was no longer my home, but rather Jerusalem is.

That became clearer later in my visit. Toward its end, Israel undertook Operation Pillar of Defence in response to incessant rocket attacks into the southern part of the country from Gaza. Hamas' response was to send hundreds of missiles towards civilian targets within a growing range of fire, with long-range projectiles aimed at Tel Aviv.

On the first day of hostilities, I told people that Jerusalem is the safest place to be in Israel in these situations, as Hamas would never target our capital and risk hitting Muslim holy sites. The next day, I was on my way to meet a friend who was to show me around the new Jewish community centre in Vaughan. On the way, I was listening to CBC Radio when news of air raid sirens in Jerusalem and an explosion were announced. I froze, parked the car and phoned home to make certain my wife and kids were OK.

There's a link between both parts of my story. Israel is the place I now happily and proudly call home, where my family and I enjoy a good life. Sometimes it requires doing battle with true enemies, such as Hamas. And it's still a work in progress, where some of us are struggling to make it a more pluralistic place, one we can feel even more at home in. In that vein, we Israelis can still learn much from you, our brothers in the Diaspora.

Israel's democratic dilemmas on full display

As Israel moves closer to general elections scheduled for Jan. 22, the achievements of Israeli democracy, as well as its structural limitations, are on clear display.

There are 34 parties registered to compete for the 120 seats in the Knesset, covering the full range of public opinion – left, right, centre, religious, anti-religious, green, olim (immigrants mainly from the former Soviet Union), pensioners, militant Arabs that deny the legitimacy of Israel, etc. As many as 12 parties are expected to win seats, ensuring that a wide range of views will again be represented.

In this sense, Israeli democracy is thriving, under extremely difficult conditions and contrary to the public relations campaigns of Diaspora organizations that warn of imminent doom in order raise money and gain influence. Women head two of the major party lists – the newly revived Labor, which is expected to lead the opposition, and Tzipi Livni, who has formed yet another party.

At the same time, many young people and others outside the traditional political blocs and interest groups, are alienated from the mid-19th century eastern European system of deals and "machers."

Israelis vote for a single national party list, rather than for individual representatives.

There are no constituencies or ridings, and no Knesset member is accountable for a particular district or region. For the upcoming elections, Netanyahu's Likud list merged with Lieberman's Yisrael Beitenu, which gives supporters of one group no choice but to support the other or find an alternative. Some alienated voters are expected to go with the party formed by this round's "new face" – Yair Lapid, a post-ideological media celebrity seen as outside the old system.

Based on past experience, a limited protest vote will not, by itself, force a change in the system or increase the level of democratic responsibility, which is one of the reasons for repeated corruption cases brought against top politicians (although this is by no means unique to Israel). With so many interests benefiting from an antiquated system, a long-overdue change will require a major change involving the large established parties.

The plethora of micro-parties, some with only two, three or four seats out of the 120 total, also leads to weak coalition governments that are unable to tackle core domestic and social challenges in a sustainable manner. In the 2008 elections, the two largest parties – Likud and Kadima – each received less than a quarter of the total seats. To form a government, (after Livni refused to join a broad coalition under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu), they had to negotiate and horse trade with numerous smaller parties – a process that gave Netanyahu a small but decisive edge, particularly in wooing the religious parties.

The price for their support, however, was more gridlock, particularly in dealing with unresolved conflicts in the revival of Jewish national self-determination (in other words, Zionism). The two critical issues that brought the present government to an end and forced elections a year earlier than necessary focus on military exemptions for the growing haredi sector and the difficulty in prioritizing budget cuts while reducing the gap between rich and poor.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Public opinion polls show that the majority of Israelis want to see an end to the special treatment and mass army exemptions given automatically every year to thousands of young haredi men. After different experiments failed, the Israeli High Court of Justice ruled that these exemptions are discriminatory and must not continue. But no prime minister or government, including Netanyahu's, has been willing to risk the political cost of alienating haredi coalition partners. In addition, as Israel follows other countries in the need for economic belt-tightening, the subsidies provided to the haredi sector must clearly be cut. But this, too, would bring down a narrow coalition government.

Perhaps the results this time will finally allow for a broad coalition, in which small haredi parties would lose their veto power, and these core issues can be tackled. But there is also a realization that other democracies around the world are plagued by their own difficulties, and no system is perfect. Despite the imperfections, Israel's democratic society remains a very impressive accomplishment.

Avigdor Lieberman was a politician, not a statesman

Avigdor Lieberman began and ended his tenure as Israel's foreign minister on an inauspicious note.

Within a day of assuming office on April 1, 2009, he was summoned by police and questioned on suspicion of corruption. A little more than a year later, the police issued a recommendation for his indictment on breach of trust.

In normal democracies, a government minister whose honesty and integrity have been compromised leaves immediately and awaits his fate. In Israel, however, conventional norms applicable to civilized nations are not necessarily observed. Consequently, Lieberman faced no real pressure to resign.

His boss, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, could have removed him from cabinet pending his exoneration. He refrained from doing so because he felt he could not survive politically without the support of Lieberman's ultra-nationalist party, Yisrael Beitenu, which held the balance of power after winning 15 Knesset seats in the last election.

Lieberman could have followed in the footsteps of Ehud Olmert, who stepped down as prime minister in 2008 before formal charges of corruption were laid against him. Instead, Lieberman waited until the last possible moment to act – 24 hours after Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein's disclosure that he would be indicted on charges of breach of trust and fraud.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

After finally announcing his resignation, Lieberman proclaimed his innocence, expressing hope he could clear his name prior to the general election on Jan. 22. In the meantime, he remains chair of Yisrael Beitenu, which is largely supported by Russian immigrants like himself.

Lieberman, one of Israel's most polarizing figures, may well bounce back. Polls indicate that the joint right-wing list composed of Yisrael Beitenu and Likud will likely regain power. If this scenario unfolds, and if Lieberman manages to clear his name, he will be invited to rejoin Netanyahu's government. Netanyahu, whose working relationship with Lieberman dates back to the 1980s, may even give Lieberman back his old job.

To liberals and middle-of-the roaders in Israel and abroad, Lieberman's return to the foreign ministry would be an extremely unfortunate development.

Lieberman, a stridently outspoken hardliner, a bull in a china shop, was one of the most belligerent and divisive people to hold this sensitive portfolio.

Some people admire straight-talkers like Lieberman, but in the world of diplomacy, where one ill-chosen word or phrase can trigger an international incident, alienate a partner or tarnish the image of a nation, circumspection is a more valued trait.

Lieberman was not the first Israeli foreign minister to behave like a politician rather than a statesman. One of his predecessors, the future prime minister Ariel Sharon, once urged Jewish settlers to "run and grab as many (Palestinian) hilltops as they can" so that Israel could retain possession of as much of the West Bank as possible.

In the Sharon tradition, Lieberman was nothing if not combative, a secular right-wing nationalist who hewed closely to his principles in performing his duties.

An acolyte of the Revisionist brand of Zionism, he was the director general of the Likud party from 1993 to 1996 and the director general of the prime minister's office from 1996 to 1997.

When Netanyahu ceded the bulk of Hebron to the Palestinian Authority under the 1997 Wye River agreement, he resigned from the Likud party.

An advocate of conflict management rather than conflict resolution, he entered the Knesset in 1999 and joined Sharon's government in 2001, only to resign in protest over his plan to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the West Bank.

In 2008, he left Olmert's government, citing his opposition to resuming peace talks with the Palestinians. "Negotiations on the basis of land for peace are a critical mistake," he claimed.

Thanks to Lieberman's party's third-place finish in the 2009 election, Netanyahu appointed him foreign minister, succeeding Tzipi Livni. On the day Lieberman replaced her, he declared that the Annapolis Middle East peace conference, convened by the United States in 2007 to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict through a two-state solution, lacked "validity."

A resident of a West Bank settlement, Lieberman eventually came out in support of "a viable Palestinian state." But at best, he paid lip service to the concept, mocking the "peace industry" as a waste of time and money and asserting it would yield no result.

Together with Netanyahu, Lieberman, a self-styled realist, worked to achieve an interim accord with the Palestinians, claiming that a final-status agreement was unattainable.

Lieberman regarded Mahmoud Abbas – the president of the Palestinian Authority and one of the most moderate figures in the Palestinian camp – as "a man of terrorism" and "an obstacle to peace." He called for his replacement by "a new, legitimate... leadership." Netanyahu distanced himself from Lieberman's attack, while Defence Minister Ehud Barak said his comments "do not represent Israeli policy, and harm Israeli interests."

Avigdor Lieberman

In yet another attempt to blacken Abbas' reputation, Lieberman proposed that key Israeli embassies in Europe should run full-page ads in major newspapers denigrating Abbas. According to reports, senior foreign ministry officials in Jerusalem dismissed it as "an idea divorced from realty." For his part, Abbas accused Lieberman of "killing the peace process."

When the Palestinian Authority announced its intention to upgrade its status at the United Nations, Israel's foreign ministry threatened to cancel the Oslo accords. The Palestinians prevailed at the UN, and Oslo remained standing.

Lieberman was a vociferous defender of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. In one encounter, he clashed with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who, like President Barack Obama, described them as illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace-making.

In the wake of the Arab Spring, Lieberman strived to improve bilateral relations with Egypt, one of two Arab countries that have signed a peace treaty with Israel. But Lieberman was persona non grata in Cairo, having made incendiary remarks about Egypt before becoming foreign minister.

Lieberman was also a stumbling block in efforts to repair Israel's now frayed relationship with Turkey. Of late, he recognized the importance of normalizing relations with Ankara. But for the record, Lieberman allowed Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon, a Yisrael Beitenu party member, to publicly insult Turkey's ambassador in a notorious incident in Jerusalem. And Lieberman put up sharp resistance to issuing a formal apology to Turkey for the 2010 Mavi Marmara incident, which gravely damaged Israel's ties with its former ally.

Lieberman's views on Israeli Arabs were also problematic. In a speech to the United Nations, he spoke of "moving borders to better reflect demographic realities," thus reviving a scheme to place some Arab citizens outside Israeli territory. Netanyahu's office disowned his speech, saying its contents had not been vetted.

In retrospect, Lieberman was something of a wild card, but ultimately, he and Netanyahu were close allies, and Lieberman was his master's voice in a recognizable good-cop-bad-cop routine.

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Iron Dome is part of a multi-layered defence system

Continued from page 1

"It was nice to see Israelis working like one nation. It was really, really nice."

Despite the massive technical problems associated with shooting down speeding rockets and shells, the project was taken from drawing board to deployment in only three years. During the recent Operation Pillar of Defence, Iron Dome batteries opened 573 times, knocking down 421 out of 1,506 missiles that were fired from Gaza. Iron Dome's sophisticated battle-management system calculated which rockets were heading for uninhabited areas and only fired on those aimed at populated areas. CNN reported the system had an 85 per cent success rate.

The technical problems making the system work were considerable, D said. "It's a system made up of other systems." There's radar and fire control – the Israelis call it "battle management." All the systems have to communicate very quickly. "My specialty is systems engineering, taking parts and having them talk to each other."

Iron Dome is a vast improvement over the Patriot missile system, which was deployed during the Gulf War in 1990-91 and shot down incoming Scud missiles. However, the Patriots hit the Scud motors, and the falling wreckage was dangerous in its own right. Iron Dome explodes close to the incoming projectile outside populated areas, he said.

During Operation Pillar of Defence, his team was constantly provided data about the system's performance and made changes to the software to "make it work better." It is designed to "stay eight or nine steps ahead of the enemy" and worked as intended when Palestinians attempted to overwhelm it with massive rocket barrages.

Despite its successes, Iron Dome was not always a popular option, D stated. "When [it] was being developed, a lot of people were against the idea of an Iron Dome."

Some were concerned it cost too much, others that there wasn't enough oversight, and still others believed there were better alternatives.

Engineers considered different approaches, but lasers were rejected since they don't work when it's rainy. Projectile defences that fire thousands of rounds and create a steel curtain were also rejected, since those bullets are still live when they hit the ground.

With Iron Dome, there is still debris, but it is designed to fall in unpopulated areas, D said.

Remarkably, the Israeli military establishment was skeptical "at the outset." Defence planners saw the system as a reversal of traditional Israeli military doctrine – of taking the initiative. They worried Israel would become too passive and reactive, D said.

"I don't know" if the unintended result of Iron Dome is "to hide in the shadows," but consider Operation Pillar of Defence, he continued. Tens of thousands of soldiers were mobilized and made ready for a ground offensive. "If Iron Dome did not work so well, we probably would have gone into Gaza."

Iron Dome should be part of a balanced solution of offence and defence, D added.

Iron Dome is part of a multi-layered defence system that includes David's Sling and Arrow interceptors.

Iron Dome has received more than $200 million in funding from the U.S. government, though it was developed by Israel. "This is huge" for bilateral relations, D said. "It is an opportunity for the United States to be part of the destiny. This is sharing in the destiny."

As for the system's practical benefits, it's already had an impact on Israelis. "People write to us and say they feel safe," D said.

That, too, can have unintended consequences. Three people were killed in Kiryat Malachi as they stood on their balcony watching Iron Dome batteries intercept incoming rockets. But no system is foolproof and on that occasion, Iron Dome missed. Bolts and other shards attached to the incoming missile killed the three onlookers.

It might also be a bit premature to alter Halachah because of Iron Dome's successes, D continued. Rabbinic authorities have reversed an earlier ruling that had permitted people at prayer to seeking shelter when warning sirens are heard. The chief rabbi has now stated that they can keep praying, as there is no longer a danger.

"As an aside, that's a mistake," D said. "Iron Dome lessens the chance of being hit, but not to zero."

POLICE REACH OUT: Sgt. Lawrence Sager, second from right, a Jewish 24-year veteran of Toronto Police Services watched 32 Division's unit commander hang a Christmas wreath at the front desk last month and challenged the senior officer to also acquire a chanukiyah for the station. Supt. Selwyn Fernandes, left, an officer with deep connections in the community, took up the challenge and obtained a six-foot chanukiyah, which was donated by David Stein and Michael Kuhl (not pictured). The chanukiyah was displayed in front of the station, located near Yonge Street and Finch Avenue. Officers at 32 Division took part in lighting it and learned about the age-old traditions of Chanukah. The area surrounding 32 Division includes a large swath of the Jewish community. It's also home to people of diverse faiths, and many made positive comments about the menorah.

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Project will train new generation of chess instructors, coaches

Continued from page 3

According to Bushinsky, the project is potentially very important for training a new generation of chess instructors and coaches.

Many Israeli chess trainers who acquired their expertise in the former Soviet Union have moved abroad or are no longer employed in the field.

Nonetheless, chess is very popular among Israelis of Russian descent, and Israel has more than 30 grandmasters, a significant achievement for a country of its size and population. As a result, Israel is a superpower in chess, having won numerous medals in international competitions.

But there are troubling signs that Israel's standing in chess may be on the wane, Bushinsky warned.

Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union played an integral role in catapulting Israel to chess prominence. But Israeli grandmasters are getting old and very few new ones are joining the club, he pointed out.

As well, chess is underappreciated by Israeli society and its leadership, he claimed.

Which is why this project may yet make a real difference to chess in Israel.

Righteous Gentiles' grandchildren accept awards

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Two grandchildren of Yad Vashem's Righteous Among the Nations – Matylda Liro, a Polish journalist in the United States, and Michael Bulik, who operates a Mississauga bakery – were honoured recently at Congregation Habonim in Toronto.

They were presented with awards by the March of the Living for their grandparents' heroism during the Holocaust.

Anita Ekstein and Sally Wasserman, who were both saved by Polish Righteous Gentiles during the Holocaust era, presented the awards.

Eli Rubenstein, national director of March of the Living of Canada, said "although the Holocaust is a story of how humanity can descend to the ultimate depths of almost unimaginable cruelty, yet there is another story which also must be told.

"It is a story that involves, bravery and altruism beyond belief where people took enormous risks to save others. The study of the Holocaust does not cause us to give up completely on humanity.

"It is courageous people like your grandparents," he told Liro and Bulik, "who serve as role models in our own lives."

In 1995, the film *Wanda's Lists: Children Without a Name* was shown on Polish and Israeli television. In it, Israelis who had survived the Holocaust told the childhood stories of their rescues during the war in the hopes that someone could reveal to them their identities.

Matti Greenberg's story was one that was told. Liro, then 15 years old, remembers watching the film with her grandmother, Antonina. Her grandmother became very emotional and revealed that she put three-year-old Tolek Weinstein – who was later named Matti Greenberg – on a train when she could no longer protect him from the Nazis.

She had been a good friend of Tolek's parents, who were caught up in the Warsaw Ghetto. She promised the Weinsteins that she would try to save their son.

A Polish nurse, Jozefa Bulik, rescued young Tolek. She took him home to her parents, Antonina and Ignacy, and they hid him in their home and bakery.

The Buliks took a great risk even though they saw their neighbours and their families executed for hiding Jews.

After the war, Weinstein, by then known as Greenberg, was taken to Israel, where he became a well-known and respected officer in the Israel Defence Forces.

Antonina Liro contacted Greenberg after she saw *Wanda's Lists*. Now in his 50s and living in Israel, Greenberg, who was unaware of his real name, learned he was really Tolek Weinstein.

Matylda Liro and Michael Bulik met for the first time at the March of the Living event, where *Wanda's Lists* was screened.

"I am here for my grandmother, to remember her," Liro said. "My grandmother was just being human in this situation. She was a very good, generous person.

"It's amazing that I can finally meet Michael. This story changed my life, and thanks to that I am a great friend of Israel."

Bulik recalled that his father talked about the German army coming to his next-door neighbour and in front of his eyes shooting the whole family because they were hiding Jews.

"My parents were good decent people. It must have been in their hearts to risk their lives to save this boy. Perhaps they saw their own children in this little boy," Bulik said.

"On a human level, they knew this little boy would be dead if they did not take him in."

He described his family as quiet and private. "Matti's story is a sequence of events which are so extraordinary, you can't even imagine how they happened," said Bulik, whose family moved to Toronto after the war and now run a CORhechshered bakery in Mississauga.

"All of us think we would do the same, but in reality, when it comes to it, you cannot answer that question until you are in the same position."

Rubenstein told *The CJN* that "when the people who attended the award event first met Liro and Bulik, you could sense how uplifted they immediately felt.

"To be in the presence of these noble people whose families had acted in such heroic ways and to witness their admiration of their grandparents, and at the same time their absolute and utter humility, was to be in the presence of pure goodness. It was awe inspiring," Rubenstein said.

"Courageous people can serve as role models in our own lives so that young people are given hope for the future and an understanding that evil was resisted during the darkest of times and can still be confronted today."

Michael Bulik, left, and Matylda Liro, second from right, both grandchildren of Righteous Among the Nations, received awards for their grandparents' bravery. Sally Wasserman, second from left, and Anita Ekstein, right, who were hidden children, presented the awards.

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Gun culture in Israel, U.S. not comparable

Wayne LaPierre, the head of the U.S.-based National Rifle Association, is without doubt an expert on America's gun-crazed culture, to which he makes his own singular contribution. He's no expert at all, however, on Israeli society, despite his effort to invoke Israel in order to help justify his interpretation of the American "right to bear arms" in the aftermath of the horrific massacre of 20 children and six adults at a Newtown, Conn., public school on Dec. 14.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On NBC's Dec. 24 *Meet the Press* show, LaPierre rejected calls for tighter gun controls and instead backed up his proposal to have armed guards at all U.S. schools by, among other things, claiming that Israel provides a model for how this is effectively achieved. "Israel had a whole lot of school shootings until they did one thing: they said, 'We're going to stop it,' and they put armed security in every school and they have not had a problem since then,'" he said.

An Israeli soldier, carrying his rifle, prays at the Western Wall. ***(Israel Sun photo)***

LaPierre's ignorance is riveting. He's utterly mistaken about Israel, the way that country deals with its security issues and its attitude towards guns.

Reporting from Jerusalem for the *New York Daily News*, Matthew Kalman wrote: "When it comes to Israel and school shootings, Wayne LaPierre doesn't know what he's talking about, Israeli security experts said."

According to these experts, such shootings are very rare in Israel – two in the past four decades – and have resulted from terror attacks, not "crazed gunmen." But it's the army and security services that Israel relies upon to deal with terror attacks, not armed citizens or even armed guards.

Kalman drew attention to Yigal Palmor, spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry, who remarked that the situation in Israel was "fundamentally different" from what Americans face. "We didn't have a series of school shootings, and they had nothing to do with the issue at hand in the United States. We had to deal with terrorism," Palmor said. "What removed the danger was not the armed guards but an overall anti-terror policy and anti-terror operations which brought street terrorism down to nearly zero over a number of years."

Palmor added: "It would be better not to drag Israel into what is an internal American discussion."

LaPierre might also be surprised to learn that, as Kalman observed, "In recent years, restrictions on gun ownership in Israel have been tightened, not relaxed... Despite having a standing army of more than 100,000 and police and security guards carrying guns on the street, Israel has strict firearms licensing and supervision."

The Jerusalem office of the Associated Press put this issue in perspective in a story carried by *The Times of Israel* (Dec. 24): "Though military service in Israel is compulsory, routine familiarity with weapons does not carry over into civilian life. Israel has far fewer private weapons per capita than the U.S., and while there have been gangster shootouts on the streets from time to time, gun rampages outside the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are unheard of."

• • •

On a completely different subject – some small but positive moves in Turkey-Israel relations have recently caught the eye of *Reuters*:

• In November, Israel and Turkey entered talks to end their diplomatic crisis stemming from the May 2010 Mavi Mamara incident. This is occurring despite the fact that Turkey is still demanding a formal apology from Israel for the deaths of nine Turks killed by Israeli commandos trying to prevent the ship from running Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip.

• Around the same time, Turkey agreed to purchase airborne warning and control systems for its spy-planes from a subsidiary of Israel Aircraft Industries.

• Late last month, Turkey dropped its previous objections to Israel's participation in non-military NATO activities in 2013. According to Israeli analysts, Turkey fears growing instability from Iran and Syria – especially the possibility that Syria could use its chemical weapons – and to this degree, shares regional security concerns with Israel.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

NIF working for Israel's future

Orit Sarfaty
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

Anyone who paid attention to the social justice protests of 2011 in Israel knows that the country we once envisioned as egalitarian and just has trouble living up to its original ideals.

But if you are as committed to Israel as we at the New Israel Fund of Canada are, that simply gets you to the next step – doing something about it.

Fortunately, much is being done about Israel's social justice issues, and the civil society we support is leading the way.

For example, to help cultivate new leaders in the next generation, BINA, a secular yeshiva in Israel, fosters national leadership among young Israelis through the application of Jewish texts to real-world social issues.

Students participate in year-long programs during and between their military service injecting national responsibility for social issues into Israeli discourse using a pluralistic, tolerant approach based on the best Jewish values. The New Israel Fund of Canada supports this initiative by BINA.

To strengthen Israel's civil society, SHATIL, the New Israel Fund's action arm, trains nascent non-profit organizations in the business of running themselves. Across the country, SHATIL strengthens organizations from their inception at the grassroots level to govern themselves, fundraise, keep to a budget and grow. The New Israel Fund of Canada supports SHATIL.

Working with communities to break the cycle of poverty, Mahapach-Taghir offers financial aid to university students from Israel's most marginalized communities. In return, those students tutor neighbourhood kids and conduct workshops on women's rights and healthy living for adults, thereby introducing the benefits of higher education and public health back into their villages. The New Israel Fund of Canada supports this initiative as well.

It's been widely reported by scholars and sociologists, pulpit rabbis and our own children that the tie to Israel may be more tenuous for the next generations of North American Jews.

That's why North American Jews are poorly served by the vision of a romanticized Israel and by an absence of discussion of real Israeli life and challenges. For secular Jews, Israel is not primarily the nation given to us at Mount Sinai, but the living embodiment of an ancient people challenged to create a modern, tolerant and just society.

Young North American Jews want their own authentic connection to Israel, separate from their parents and grandparents. They want to grapple with a "real Israel" whose imperfections give way to a personal invitation for tikkun olam.

That's why the New Israel Fund of Canada works hard to ensure that the next generations of Canadian Jews will take up Israel's cause and leave their own mark on an Israel that needs them.

We don't agree that younger generations will reject Israel if it's portrayed critically within the context of an abiding commitment to its strength and survival. Instead, they will do the opposite – they will find a personal connection and a reason to commit to an Israel not of the past, but of the future.

Orit Sarfaty is executive director of the New Israel Fund of Canada.

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Winnipeg enjoys more kosher meat options

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — There may not be local ritual slaughter going on, but observant Jews in Manitoba's capital now have more choices for kosher meat than they've enjoyed in a long time.

Within the last couple of years, the Superstore, Sobeys and Price Choppers supermarkets serving Winnipeg's south end and a Superstore in the north end have all introduced frozen kosher meat and chicken products, mainly from Toronto.

The plentiful new supply relieves a situation that had existed since fresh kosher slaughter came to an end here in the summer of 2006 and the city's last kosher butcher shop closed its doors a couple of years later.

"It's great to have some more options now," said Faye Rosenberg-Cohen, planning director at the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, who keeps kosher herself.

"It's almost ironic that our options in terms of kosher meat have actually increased since Bathurst and Omnitsky closed," said kosher meat consumer Morris Bloom. "It's nice to see that others picked up the slack."

The Bathurst Street Market, which closed in 2006, was a north end kosher grocery store and restaurant operated by a shomer Shabbat family. It sold deli products as well as kosher meat imported from Toronto and Montreal. Omnitsky, Winnipeg's last kosher butcher, lost its hechsher in 2006 and finally closed in 2008.

"In recognition of the growing cultural diversity in many Canadian neighbourhoods, Loblaw is proud to offer our customers a wide range of ethnic products, such as kosher meat," Loblaw, which operates the Superstores, said about its decision to introduce kosher meat in some of its Winnipeg locations.

"Although we cannot discuss specifics in terms of sales and strategy, the introduction of kosher meat in Winnipeg stores came as we realize that this is a growing market and that a number of stores are beginning to receive inquiries from clients interested in the supply of kosher products."

Winnipeg and Manitoba used to have a thriving fresh kosher meat industry. There were many recognized shoichets and butcher shops. Rabbi Peretz Weizman (formerly of Winnipeg and now living in Toronto) used to boast that his hechsher was universally recognized and that the beef under his supervision was sold as far away as Israel.

But as has happened in other North American communities, over time, the city's Jewish population declined, and the number of Jews keeping kosher declined even more.

First, the chicken went. After the last chicken processor closed, however, frozen chicken (whole, breast, thighs and legs) was still widely available in outlets in areas with substantial Jewish populations, and ritual cattle slaughter continued on a once- or twice-a-week basis.

But in the summer of 2006, Omnitsky, the city's last kosher butcher shop, lost its hechsher, and the local kashrut agency retired Winnipeg's last two shoichets. Within the year, Bathurst Street market also closed due to a lack of business.

Ed and Barbara Reiss operate Desserts Plus, which supplies kosher deli products as well as kosher meat from outside Winnipeg. ***(Myron Love photo)***

What's changed since then? No one seems to have a clear answer.

Winnipeg's Jewish population has grown over the past few years with an influx of Israeli and Russian Israeli immigrants. (After reaching a high of 21,000 in 1961, Winnipeg's Jewish population dropped to 14,000 by 2002 and now stands at about 16,500 due to an immigrant recruitment drive.)

But the newcomers generally don't keep kosher.

Perhaps it's a matter of geography. Omnitsky and Bathurst Street Market were both located in the north end, while a majority of Jews had moved to south Winnipeg and elsewhere.

The Jewish community wasn't entirely bereft after Omnitsky and Bathurst closed, however. Although not initially under kosher supervision, Desserts Plus in south Winnipeg had been selling frozen kosher beef and chicken for several years before Omnitsky's demise. (Desserts Plus has since come under kosher supervision.)

And shortly after Omnitsky went out of business, Gunn's Bakery in north Winnipeg (one of two long-established kosher bakeries in the city) began stocking frozen beef and chicken for its customers.

"We felt that there was a need in the north end and decided to provide that service [selling kosher meat] to our customers," said co-owner Fivie Gunn.

Frozen chicken and a small selection of kosher beef products also became available at a north end IGA supermarket.

While Rabbi Ari Ellis of Herzlia Adas-Yeshurun Synagogue is happy to see the additional options, he hopes the added competition doesn't hurt business at Gunn's and Desserts Plus.

Initially the supermarkets were selling kosher meat for significantly less than Desserts Plus and Gunn's.

"We're not making tons of money on the meat," Gunn said. "Yet the supermarkets were selling their products for less than we pay to bring it in."

In recent weeks, that has changed. "The competition has pulled in its horns a bit," said Desserts Plus' Ed Reiss. "They were selling at a loss. Now, their prices are similar to ours."

Gunn said that despite the supermarkets' lower pricing, his customers remained loyal.

And Desserts Plus also sell deli products and other meats – such as kosher lamb – that no one else carries.

Iranian group added to terror list

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Qods Force is now a listed terrorist entity under Canada's Anti-Terrorism Act.

According to the Ministry of Public Safety, the Qods Force is the clandestine branch of the IRGC responsible for extraterritorial operations and for exporting the Iranian Revolution through activities such as facilitating terrorist operations.

"The Qods Force provides arms, funding and paramilitary training to extremist groups, including the Taliban, Lebanese Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command," the ministry said in a statement.

The news came Dec. 20 from Public Safety Minister Vic Toews, following the government's Dec. 11 addition of the IRGC to the list of entities under the Special Economic Measures Act (SEMA), which allows Canada to take action against businesses, groups and individuals who fund such organizations.

Jewish community organizations greeted the news enthusiastically. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) called it a "clear message to Tehran" that Canada will hold it to account for "past and future acts of terrorism."

CIJA chair David Koschitzky said his organization had called on the government to list the IRGC "for many years."

It's "the next logical step in countering international terrorism," he said.

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גידי קורן וחברים

אין לי ארץ אחרת!

שירו האלמותי של אהוד מנור נפתח בשורות "אין לי ארץ אחרת גם אם אדמתי בוערת".

בסקר שערך עיתון הארץ עם חברת המחקר "מידע שיווקי" הצהירו 37% ישראלים שדווקא יש להם בראש הגירה לארץ אחרת, אם כי רק 2% אמרו שאין להם ספק שהם יעזבו.

מהמחקר עולה שהמהדהדים בירידה הם בעיקרם חילוניים שמגדירים את עצמם כאנשי המרכז והשמאל, ואין אלה אנשים רעבים ללחם, אלא מה שמגדירים מנהלי המחקר כ"מסוגלים החדשים"-אנשים משכילים שמאמינים שאינם ממצים את יכולתם הכלכלית והמקצועית בארץ, ומאמינים ברוב המקרים שלא יצליחו להגיע לאן שרצו בארץ.

המחקר מביא את סיפורה של משפחה ששני בניה היגרו לטורונטו. עידן הגיע אחרי שירותו הצבאי ויזר הצטרף אליו השנה. לדברי האם שירלי "ניר הרגיש שלא סופרים אותו כאן, אלא מדיפים על פניו מגזרים שאינם משרתים, לא תורמים ולא עובדים, ובנוסף קיים קושי למצוא תעסוקה במקום שהולם את כישוריו, שיאפשר לו ולמשפחתו להתפרנס בכבוד".

"חינכנו אותם שזה הבית שלנו ואסור לוותר על המדינה. בתור ההורים זה מאד קשה. גם נשארים לבד וגם יש בזה התרסקות ערכית. לא חינכנו את הילדים לעזוב....ועצוב לנו שהם לא רואים עתיד במדינה הזו".

בנה ניר שהיגר לטורונטו בפברואר השנה אומר:"בעיקר מפריעה לי התמיכה של הממשלה לחרדים והתנחלויות , על חשבון מעמד הביניים".

מעניין שרוב הנשאלים נימקו את השיבתם על ירידה בשיקולים כלכליים ולא בטחוניים, כמו גם לא בגלל אי שיוויון חברתי.

לפי ההשערה- כ 15 אלף ישראלים עזבו את ישראל ב 2011 שלא על מנת לחזור. לפי נתונים רשמיים- עתיים את ישראל כשלושה תושבים לכל אלף, והסיכוי של אקדמאים ובעלי מקצועות דרושים גדול בהרבה משאר האוכלוסיה. מסתבר שהגירה ברמות כאלה קורית כיום בארצות מתועשות רבות, כשמובילה אותן שוויץ, שאי אפשר לטעון שיש לה את הבעיות של ישראל.

מה לעשות- העולם הופך לכפר גלובאלי, וכמו שישראל קולטת יהודים מ 200 ארצות, עליה ללמוד לקבל את העובדה שחלק מבניה ימצאו את מקומם במקום אחר וילדיהם ישירו את "או קנדה" או את ההמנון השוודי.

מה שבטוח מהמחקר החדש הזה- ישראל הופכת בהדרגה ליותר דתית, יותר ימנית ויותר קיצונית, עובדה שבולטת מאד בבחירות המתקרבות. זה בהחלט משמח את מי שהאידיאולוגיה שלו נושה לכוון הזה. אבל זה מחזה די דיכאוני ומחריד למי שחשב בנעוריו שישראל תהיה דמוקרטיה מערבית. אבל שישאר בינינו.

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikren.com

Hamas-Fatah truce signals trouble for Israel

In his recent triumphal return to Gaza, Hamas leader, Khaled Meshal, immediately ramped up the rhetoric against Israel, proclaiming that "Palestine is ours, from the river to the sea and from the south to the north." He vowed that "there will be no concession on an inch of the land" and that "we will never recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation, and therefore there is no legitimacy for Israel, no matter how long it will take."

He further promised to free thousands of Palestinian prisoners currently in Israeli jails, suggesting that further kidnapping of Israeli soldiers, as needed bargaining chips, is still integral to Hamas' objectives.

When addressing a crowd that was estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands, he used as his backdrop an oversized model of a Hamas missile, shaped as a map of "historic Palestine," without any delineation of Israel.

Meshal's bluster has been carefully rationalized in the wake of Hamas' drubbing by the Israeli Air Force during Operation Pillar of Defence. But perhaps what's been given the greater benefit of the doubt is the position taken by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas when he addressed the UN General Assembly prior to the vote that granted the Palestinians non-member observer status at the United Nations.

In that speech, Abbas set about branding the Israeli government as the agent of "barbaric and horrific" acts (in Gaza), and accusing it of the "perpetration of war crimes." He referred to Israel's "racist, colonial occupation" and described its actions in the 1948 war as "one of the most dreadful campaigns of ethnic cleansing and dispossession in modern history."

Meanwhile Fatah, Abbas' party, has developed a new logo to celebrate its 48th anniversary. According to *Palestinian Media Watch*, the emblem has as its backdrop a keffiyah enveloping all of what's otherwise recognized as the State of Israel and shows the image of a white dove in shackles and a door key that's intended to represent the "right of return" for Palestinian refugees.

My View

Lawrence Hart

It's in this context that that the latest rapprochement between the PA and Hamas raises very serious concerns. For example, as a first act in their newfound common cause, Fatah permitted Hamas to organize rallies in several West Bank towns. Amid cries to "create a volcano among the Israelis," a Fatah official applauded Hamas for having "given thousands of martyrs, prisoners and wounded for Palestine."

Even more troubling than the bellicose utterances is the report by Israeli military sources that the PA security forces are openly collaborating with Hamas operatives to foment unrest and physical violence in the West Bank. This has included the obstruction of road traffic, the shutting down of towns and even direct attacks on Israeli army patrols, as occurred in Hebron on Dec. 6.

The pervasive climate of hostility and suspicion that characterizes the Palestinian-Israeli relationship has undoubtedly been complicated by the misguided actions of Abbas at the UN and Meshal's return to Gaza, with each trying to outdo the other in vilifying Israel. The prospect of Hamas and the PA as bedfellows adds yet another dimension – as yet not fully tested, but likely ominous – to an already volatile situation. This should not be underestimated.

Gefilte fish: why all the carping?

It may not have the recuperative qualities of hot chicken soup. Or the sweet aroma of freshly baked challah. But love it, or not, gefilte fish has made quite a mark on Jewish culinary life.

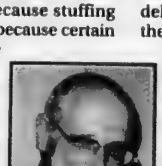
Why gefilte fish? And why the Jews? Claudia Rosen examines the talmudic sources that brought this fish to the Sabbath table. "Gefilte fish evolved as a Sabbath dish because stuffing gives it glamour and because certain versions eliminate the need to remove bones (which could be considered a forbidden activity on the Sabbath)." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte1]**

Not so quick says Rabbi Haym Soloveitchik. He adds reassuringly that it seems those who have opted not to eat gefilte fish have not suffered from communal opprobrium. "Gefilte fish is an east European dish, and Jews had been eating fish on Sabbath for some 15 centuries before this culinary creation. Even in eastern Europe, I know of no instance of someone being labelled a *mehallel* (desecrator of) Shabbas and run out of town for eating 'non-gefilte' fish." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte2]**

But could our attachment to gefilte fish run even deeper? Could it be mystical? Food writer Gil Marks explains, "For millennia, no Sabbath meal has been considered complete without fish, Friday night encompassing the theme of creation and Shalosh Seudot at the end of Shabbat that [will be during the days of] the messiah. The Talmud (Shabbat 118b) stated, 'Wherewith does one show delight in the Sabbath?' Rav Judah, the son of Samuel ben Shilath, said in the name of Rav, 'With beets (the greens), a large fish and garlic.' Even a trifle, if it is prepared in honour of Shabbat is a delight. What is it (a trifle)? Rav Papa said, 'Fish hash.'" Then Gil Marks adds, "Perhaps the latter dish consisting of chopped fish was the inspiration for the Ashkenazi gefilte fish." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte3]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz



So what went wrong? Tamara Mann points to the growth of kosher food in America and the commercialization of Jewish foods. "Authenticity and nostalgia, postwar businesses gleefully discovered, could be bottled, packaged and sold. And while numerous foods, such as cholent, kishka and chopped liver recalled the steamy kitchens of the Lower East Side and Brooklyn, only one food could be easily mass produced and slapped on the table without reheating: gefilte fish." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte7]**

Or as Miriam Silver mouth-wateringly describes it, "Fast forward to contemporary U.S.A. with its fast-food convenience culture, and those oval, grey fish balls, mass-manufactured, tanked in a jar, swimming in jelly, along with a few old cooked carrots." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte5]**

We have indeed noticed those glass jars with four or so pieces of gefilte fish suspended in a bath of gelatinous goo. But did you ever suspect that someone took out a patent on these vertical boneless fish – just as they do for iPads or jet turbines? You can read up on the "method of preparing an edible fish product" patented Oct. 29, 1963, at the United States Patent and Trademark Office. More than 3,000 words and a page of illustrations, all to secure Patent No. 3,108,882!

And here's to you, "inventors" of mass-market gefilte fish – and a slice of our heritage: Monroe Nash and Erich G. Freudenstein. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte6]**

Next time, gefilte fish: the great debates.

Highway@rogers.com

Why buy flowers?

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath

Whenever I think of a wedding of someone close, I think of the simple advice that my rabbi gave me before I got married.

He called me into his study, because he was going to share the secrets of a long-lasting

Like God and mitzvot, she just likes it.

relationship. I was excited, because I knew nothing about marriage, and quite honestly, I was pretty scared.

The rabbi leaned across the table and looked into my eyes, "Yisroel," he smiled as his eyes widened, "it is a mitzvah to give your wife flowers before Shabbat, and that is the Jewish secret to a long-lasting, loving marriage."

That's it? That's the secret? Really? But why?

I never really understood the whole women and flowers thing. Let's be real here: the flowers are cut and are in the process of dying, and in a few days, she will throw them out.

At least a potted plant is alive and will last a little while if it's taken care of.

Rabbinic Reflections

So why flowers? Flowers are useless. They're impractical and temporary, and they're not an investment.

But that's precisely their power. You buy them for no other reason than because your wife likes them. You do it just for her.

This is the very definition of romance – doing something pointless, just to express love. Nobody needs flowers. They won't be around forever, but someone you love likes them, so you buy them.

That's why our relationship with God is so romantic. He needs nothing from us humans, and we won't be around forever.

But He gets immense pleasure out of it when we do a mitzvah, an act that He has commanded. So we do it. Not for what we get out of it, and not for what He gets out of it, but just because He likes it.

The moment we do something that makes no sense to us, but makes our loved one happy, we have truly transcended ourselves and connected with someone else.

Stop thinking about yourself and think about her. That's the power of the flower.

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath is spiritual director of the Monkland Jewish Centre – Chabad NDG and the Jewish chaplain at Concordia University in Montreal.

Finding time for books

How does one find time for books? One finds time for books by taking it.

Even in our computer age, books are still the best way to preserve and transmit ideas. Not to speak of the diverse pleasures that books bring to readers. The printed book is a neat, compact, well-behaved invention. It is there when you want it. You need no apparatus to deal with it. It slips into your pocket, it fits your hand, it yields to your eye. A book asks no questions about your colour or creed or college degree.

Long ago John Milton declared: "A good book is the precious lifeblood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose for a life beyond." He hurled a scornful condemnation against the barbaric practice of consigning books to the hellish flames of the auto-da-fé. "Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature created in God's image, but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself," he thundered prophetically.

Jewish tradition, perhaps more than that of any other group, reflects the noble estimate of the value and significance of books. When an ark containing *The Book* is placed in a room, humble as it might be, that room becomes a shrine. When revered books become old and worn and their pages become lose and separated, it is considered a sacrilege to discard them to the mercy of callous hands or stunted minds or to the whims of shifting winds. Instead they are collected and deposited in the attic of the synagogue, and when space is no longer available, they are buried in a solemn ceremony.

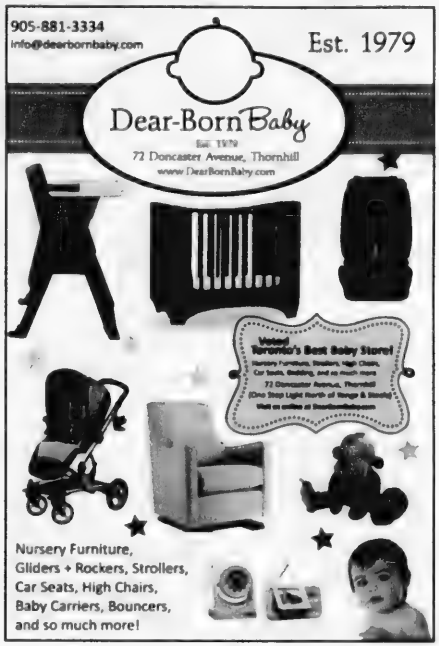
Bookmarks

Bernard Baskin

Words of praise for books and reading are widespread and eloquent. In an earlier generation, American author Clarence Day wrote that "the world of books is the most remarkable creation of man. Nothing else that he builds ever lasts. Monuments fall; nations perish; civilizations grow old and die out; and, after an era of darkness, new races build on others. But in the world of books are volumes that have seen this happen again and again, and yet live on, still young and still as fresh as the day they were written, still telling men's hearts of the hearts of me centuries dead."

The Book of Judges speaks of a city in Judah that Joshua called Kiryat Sefer, Book Town. The library in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem today may well be called a modern Kiryat Sefer. In addition to one million volumes and more than 10,000 periodicals, there are many collections catalogued separately. There are also incunabula, microfilms and manuscripts. I know of no other country in the world whose map lists a Kiryat Sefer.

Finally, there is much to consider in the following two selections from the midrash. The first teaches that the sword and the Book came down wrapped together from heaven. The Holy One said: "Keep what is written in the Book or be delivered to the sword." The other midrash maintains that a learned bastard stands higher on the social scale than an ignorant high priest.



Pro-Israel students criticize BDS endorsement

Boycott supported by U of T Graduate Student Union

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Pro-Israel students are criticizing the process that led the University of Toronto Graduate Student Union (GSU) to officially endorse the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel.

The motion was passed at a Dec. 10 council meeting that included an annual general meeting (AGM), in which all graduate students who attended were allowed vote.

The move follows three other university student councils that officially adopted the campaign in the past year – Carleton University, the University of Regina and, most recently, York University.

When the motion was brought up at a council meeting last year with due notice and fair representation of the graduate student population, it failed, said Jason Dumelie, academic and funding commissioner for the GSU.

This time, there was no advance notice of the motion, so nobody except the people pushing for the endorsement knew about it, said Israela Stein, a political science graduate student and Hillel spokesperson. "Obviously, that changed the balance of the vote."

Dumelie said the success of the motion demonstrates the passion and conviction of the people who organized graduate students to come and vote on the motion.

"However, it is not at all clear that it represents the views of a majority of graduate students at the University of Toronto, since no notice of the motion was provided prior to the meeting," he said.

Hart House at University of Toronto

Stein said it's this lack of transparency that leads to arbitrary and illegitimate decisions. And "every student should be bothered by arbitrary decisions."

The AGM is open to all graduate students, where anybody can bring forward any motion, said Erin Oldynski, the GSU's external commissioner. The membership then decides whether to discuss a motion.

According to the union's website, a general meeting "is an opportunity to discuss and guide the work of the students' union, along with approving and scrutinizing audited statements and bylaw amendments."

Therefore, this issue was not suitable for the AGM, Stein said.

At the meeting, Dumelie said he raised a point of order with this concern. Additionally, he said some students questioned the lack of due notification. However, the chair allowed the motion based on the fact it was voted onto the agenda.

Dumelie said it isn't clear people understood the motion had to do with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict when they voted for it and that some thought it had to do with anti-corporatization. Even with a clear description, it was impossible for the vote to be defeated due to the sheer number of people in attendance in support of the motion, as all graduate students who attend have voting rights during an AGM, he said.

Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA) is reporting, on rabble.ca, that 97 per cent of students and councillors present at the meeting voted in favour of the motion, and Oldynski said of the roughly 150 people present, no more than 10 voted against it. Typically, 80 to 100 people attend council meetings, she noted.

SAIA representatives did not respond to *The CJN* by deadline.

Shirin Ezekiel, associate executive director for Hillel of Greater Toronto, said Hillel has been in contact with university administration and is confident the university is taking the matter seriously and will "deal with the GSU in the appropriate manner to ensure procedures are followed."

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is examining the GSU's bylaws and is determining what recommendations it can make to Hillel in "pursuing the apparent violation of bylaws," said Howard English, CIJA's senior vice-president.

Ultimately, the problem with this kind of campaign is that it doesn't challenge Israeli policies, but rather denies Israel's right to self-determination, said Stein. "It's beyond radical."

In response, Oldynski said the motion calls for the university to divest from all companies worldwide that violate human rights – not just Israel. However, the resolution specifically urges the university to "refrain from investing in all companies complicit in the violations of international law," singling out companies that it says "profits from the illegal occupation of Palestinian land, directly benefits from the construction of the wall [security barrier] and Israeli settlements, is economically active in settlements, and profits from the collective punishment of Palestinians."

Now that the motion has passed, the GSU membership will decide the direction it will take, Oldynski said, adding that it may involve lobbying the university administration to divest from companies that violate human rights, organizing discussions on the topic and working with other organizations dedicated to promoting human rights.

The university's statement to *The CJN* said that although the GSU resolution has endorsed the BDS campaign, "the GSU has no authority to bind its members to any particular course of action at all regarding Israel and Israeli products or academic interchanges or international companies doing business with Israel."

The statement added that the university has a responsible investing committee that advises the university on such matters, and that members of the university community may submit a "convincing and thorough brief" to try to add the issue to the committee's annual agenda.

More than five years ago, university president David Naylor called academic boycotts "antithetical to academic freedom, counter-productive, and likely to do more harm than good as regards any issue of human rights and political or military conflict." In its most recent statement on the endorsement, the university reiterated that it stands by that assertion.

The GSU's endorsement focuses on economic boycotts. However, the larger BDS campaign includes both economic and academic boycotts, Stein said.

Although these endorsements have been called symbolic, since student unions themselves tend not to have actual investments in Israel, Stein said students should still care about what it could lead in the future.

"This is a fight on public opinion and on slander," she said, adding that they are trying to stop it before it leads to action. "Every U of T student should be deeply concerned that this is what is done with their money and, most importantly, in their name."

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May the family be spared further sorrow and be comforted amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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Bikur Cholim visits the Sephardi elderly

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Hadas Moshonov was looking for a meaningful cause to contribute her time to. But when the 38-year old Israeli-Iraqi met her Sephardi senior, the woman she was assigned to visit through Rav Hesed – Sephardic Bikur Cholim, she realized she would benefit much more than she bargained for.

"She penetrated straight into my heart," said Moshonov, who moved to Toronto from Israel 11 years ago. "Apparently she wasn't receptive to many volunteers before me, but she made a click with me. In the end, she was looking forward to my calls and visits, and it was really special."

Moshonov is one of about 30 people who volunteer with Rav Hesed in Toronto. It was started by Denise Benzaquen Levin, who understood the difficulties involved with caring for seniors when she became responsible for her own parents. When they died within five weeks of each other, she realized the need for a program to help care for Sephardi seniors.

> *'The volunteers are an integral part and so valuable'*

"I found a big disconnect in the community of Spanish-speaking people [in Toronto] who would go visit people in hospitals," said Levin. "They wanted to have this comfort of having someone speak to them in their language."

While there are other organizations that cater to Jewish seniors, they don't focus on Sephardi Jews, Levin said. A visit from someone who understands your language, your culture, your food and your traditions makes the connection between volunteer and senior even stronger.

"The clients feel wonderful because they're being connected to people in Spanish, French and Arabic, languages that our volunteers speak," Levin said.

Her own parents, Aaron and Vida Benzaquen, came to Canada from Morocco in 1958 by boat. She said they were among the pioneers of the Sephardi Jewish community in Canada.

"Imagine leaving a beautiful Mediterranean country for cold, cold Canada," she said. "Community was everything to them, their lifeline, and I want to keep that connection."

Since she started the program in 2010, she's recruited volunteers from ages 18 to 70, who visit some 100 Sephardi seniors in Toronto.

The program has been life changing for volunteers like Moshonov. One of the first seniors she visited was the elderly woman who had not been able to connect with other volunteers.

"I could hear in her voice and feel in her smile that even when she was in her last days, she was shining and really, really appreciative, and sometimes it was really hard to go away because we enjoyed each other's company," Moshonov said.

They spoke on the phone regularly and Moshonov would bring flowers almost every week. When she died, Moshonov felt as though she'd lost a friend.

"I really cared for her," she said. "I kind of got attached to her."

It's stories like these that show Levin she's on the right track.

"The best part is knowing that somebody feels a part of their community, that they feel they have a place to turn to. And another best part is to see a smile on their face when you've made a connection. And know that they haven't been forgotten by their community," Levin said.

She credits the success of the program to the tireless work of volunteers who selflessly visit seniors. "The volunteers are an integral part and so valuable. I couldn't do this on my own," she said.

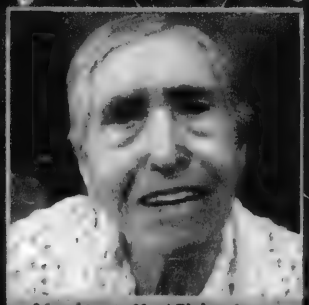
Some volunteers visit seniors, while others invite them into their homes for holiday meals, take them to appointments, send them holiday cards or bring them flowers for Shabbat.

Although the program is currently funded by Levin and private donations, she hopes to expand it in the future. She would like to develop lecture series on care of the elderly, set up a transportation system to help Sephardi seniors get to their appointments, provide Meals on Wheels with a Sephardi twist, and even, one day, open a Sephardi nursing home.

"I would like to be out of business and people wouldn't need it," said Levin, "But as long as it's needed, I want it to be a full place of support when navigating this old-age process and I want to make sure we haven't forgotten any single person in our Sephardi community."

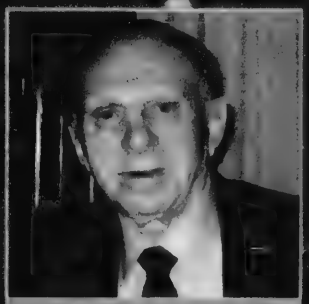
Mazel Tov מזל טוב

Mazel tov on your 100th birthday Isaac (Irving) Eisenberg. Much love and best wishes for continued good health from your children and grandchildren.



Mazel tov to Hani Blobstein on celebrating her 95th birthday. Love from all her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Happy 50th anniversary Frank & Sylvia White, Dec. 24, 1962. With love from your children and granddaughters.



Mazel tov Sid Posner on his 90th birthday. Love, Rachel Posner, Toby & Joe Soil, Sarah Soil, Jennifer & Max Marants, Paul, Jaime, Lawrence, Michelle, Zoe, Ari Marants

Hannah Liora has arrived to kvelling parents Steve Mitchell & Lisa Dolovich and excited sister Hope. Mazel tov from Bubbe Myrna and grandparents Bill & Marjorie.

Happy eighth birthday Joshua, son of Michael and Fara Forman. We are so proud of you! Love, your sisters Jordyn and Samantha.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Find the PERFECT CAMP in our January 24th issue

What's New

Deadline reminder: Jan. 7 is the deadline for Jan. 17 and Jan. 14 is the deadline for Jan. 24. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com. This week's What's New was done by Carolyn Blackman.

Thursday, Jan. 3

FREE TIMES CAFE

Hear **Gerry Kane**, noon, "Shmooz the News," Free Times Café, 320 College St.

Tuesday, Jan. 8

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

The Brothers Who Sent The Rosenbergs to the Electric Chair, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 2 p.m., $5 at the door.

LODZER SYNAGOGUE

Rabbi Moshe Meirovich of the Lodzer Synagogue will offer a 4-week course on Jewish Ethics: Tonight: How To Die: A Responsa by 19th Century Rabbi Chaim Palaggi, Turkey. Each class is $5 or $15 for the series. Call 416-636-6665 to reserve.

Thursday, Jan. 10

YIDDISH MUSICAL THEATRE

"The Life, Legends and Music of Abraham Ellstein and Sholom Secunda," with **Cantor Marshall Loomer**, 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue. 416-633-5500 or bethdavid.com.

ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Author **Salomon Benzimra** will discuss the Palestinian narrative and its impact on the Arab-Israeli conflict, 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

OTHER NEWS

PLAYERS WANTED

Temple Har Zion mah-jong drop-in, Wednesdays, 1 p.m. Debbi, 905-881-8025, debhave@gmail.com.

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue welcomes experienced players for mah-jong and Rummikub, Monday and Wednesday afternoons, 416-633-3838.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue welcomes people for a friendly game of bridge, Mondays, 1:30-3:30 p.m. $2 members, $3 non-members. Call 905-889-4975.

YIDDISH LEBT

Yiddish classes for adults and kids Sunday mornings, sponsored by committee for Yiddish, UJA Federation, all levels. Yiddish culture for kids, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Begins Jan. 13, Beth David. Adults $150/10 sessions. Kids, one time, $20. www.committeeforyiddish.com **Barbara**, 416-631-5843.

MAIMONIDES

Delve into Maimonides' (Rambam) *Mishneh Torah*, covering legal and philosophical topics that form the basis of Judaism. Open to everyone. Wednesdays, 8 p.m., The Chai Centre, 1089 Spadina Rd. No charge. RSVP 416-271-0659 or rabbi@thechaicentre.com.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario provides support following the death of a child. It offers eight-week self-help groups for bereaved parents. For information, **Beth Feffer** at JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

A spousal bereavement group for ages 55+ will examine topics related to death, dying, myths of bereavement and moving forward.

Continued on page 21

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF OF THE NEW ISRAEL FUND OF CANADA

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Jonathan Stein *NIFC Staff Member*	Kenny Rubin *Board Member*	Kendra Kleiner *NIFC Staff Member*

New Israel Fund of Canada
הקרן החדשה לישראל

TZEDAKAH PROJECT: Grade 6 students at Robbins Hebrew Academy's Beth Tzedec campus have been working with United Chesed to help needy families through cookie sales, tzedakah and donations of books, sports equipment and more. Pictured with packages ready to deliver to their adopted families are, back row from left, Julie Grammer, Nathan Kowal, Justin Marks, Ashtyn Robbins, Logan Hart and Maya Dalen, and front from left, Talia Aaron, Samantha Cloth and Hannah Lefton.

Continued from page 20

Runs Jan. 29 through March 5, 2-4 p.m., Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St., 4th floor. For more information, call 416-635-2900 ext. 418 or 462.

MEKOROT

Join Mekorot and Yeshiva University Torah Mitzion Beit Midrash Zichrom Dov to study "The Book of Daniel: Exile and Redemption," with **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**, Tuesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m., Jan. 8-May 20, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Call 416-877-2050 or 647-234-7299.

NEW TO TWO

Shaar Shalom Sisterhood and Youth present New-to-Two, a program for babies and toddlers (up to 2 years of age) and their grown-ups. Program starts in January. $90 per family for non-members, $54 per family for members. For details and to register, call 905-889-4975.

MOMS AND TOTS

Beth David Synagogue offers an interactive musical class with **Deborah Maes** that offers a way for mothers and babies ages 3 to 24 months to interact with each other within a Jewish setting. Session runs Friday mornings, Jan. 11-March 29, either 9:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. Members $190, non-members $260. Limited spaces. Call **Debbie**, 416-633-5500, ext. 0, to register.

OPEN BEIT MIDRASH

Yeshiva University Torah Mitzion Beit Midrash and Congregation B'nai Torah present Monday nights Open Beit Midrash, 8-10 p.m. Open to everyone to come and learn. For information, call 647-234-7299 or info@torontotorah.com.

MELAVA MALKA CONCERT

A show under the auspices of Beth Tikvah, Beth Emeth, Beth Radom and Beth Jacob Hamilton synagogues with cantors **Tibor Kovari**, **David Edwards**, **David Rosen** and **Eyal Bitton**, accompanied by a band, Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $10 in advance, $15 at the door, children 13 and under free. Beth Tikvah: 416-221-3433; Beth Emeth: 416-633-3838; Beth Radom: 416-636-3451; Beth Jacob (Hamilton): 905-522-1351.

JOB READINESS PROGRAM

JVS and Kerry's Place Autism Services' Asperger's Job Readiness Program, provides an eight-week workshop to develop job readiness skills, weekly one-on-one sessions and a placement for up to 14 weeks with coaching for those between 18 and 30 with Asperger's. Registration is open for Feb 11. Call 416-649-1619. Email: schong@jvstoronto.org.

CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW

Ulpan method with **Yael Lev**. Beginner's level (Part 2), Tuesdays 7:30 pm. starting Jan. 8, Pride of Israel Synagogue, 10 lessons $150. Call 416-226-0111, ext 10, or 416-225-6151.

HONOUR MOTHERS

Act To End Violence Against Women is seeking volunteers to work on a committee to honour the important women in your life on Mother's Day with flowers, while remembering women who are in shelters for abused women. Email joy.levy@rogers.com or call **Joy** at 416-520-9901.

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel-Mississauga is a Conservative egalitarian congregation. Join us for a Shabbat service Jan. 12, 10 a.m. in Oakville. Kiddush and guest speaker follow service. www.bnaishalom.ca, info@bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

ADULT LEARNING

The Melton School of Adult Learning, holds a 6-week class at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda given by **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**: "The Book Of Jonah," 10-11 a.m. Jan. 24-Feb 28. Email toronto@meltonschool.org for more information and to register. Space is limited, register early.

CHABAD CLASSES

Bat mitzvah club begins Jan. 13, for bat mitzvah age girls to learn more about this unique time in their lives. To register, 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

MINI-PROGRAMS

Sign your child, age 12 months to five years, for one of Temple Sinai's mini-programs, starting in January and running for eight weeks. Includes Mini-Chefs at Work, Super Scientist, Junior Circuit, puppetry and Sportball. Morning, lunchtime and afternoon programs. Call education office, 416-487-3281, email education@templesinai.net, or visit templesinai.net.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

Effective parenting: A four-session group to help parents learn what they can do to raise a happy, motivated and well-behaved child. For parents of children ages 2 to 10 years. Topics include: how to – nurture self esteem, encourage problem solving, increase communication and set limits. Monday, Jan. 21, 7- 9 p.m.

When you're about to separate: What to Tell the Kids: a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. How and when to tell the children, how to handle moving day, as well as ideas and strategies to best meet your child's needs will be discussed. Thursday, Jan. 24, Promenade Mall, suite 313, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, Jan. 16, includes buffet lunch; barber, hairdresser, Jan. 10, 9 a.m.; Tuesdays, seniors gentle fitness with personal trainer, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; membership registration now open for 2013.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Bridge club at Forest Hill Library has reopened and is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, evenings, **416-487-7630**.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Miles Nadal JCC, information/registration: 416-924 6211, ext 155. "United Bakers 100th Anniversary" with Ruthie Ladofsky, Jan. 17, 1:30 p.m. refreshments, 2 p.m. program. Cost: $4. Pre-pay by Jan. 10.

Beth Tzedec Haverim presents **Yehudit Shier Weisberg**, a ventriloquist who tells Jewish stories and gives advice, Jan. 7, 1:30 p.m. in the boardroom, $5.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trip, including *Mary Poppins* on sale now.

Health management with **Gabby Cogan**, 8 Thursdays 1:30-2:30 p.m., starts Jan. 17.

Social yoga with **Dorry Korn**, Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Starts Jan 10.

Casino Rama, Thursday, Jan. 17.

For all programs, call 416-638-1881, ext. 4235.

"The Impressionists – Superstars of the Modern Western Art World," Tuesdays, Jan. 15-Feb. 5 (Part 1), Feb. 12-Mar. 5 (Part 2), 1-3 p.m. Single sessions (4 weeks): member value fee: $40 + HST, regular fee: $50 + HST.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Registration now open for the following courses and more:

Toronto Jewish Film Society: eight movie nights, Al Green Theatre, January to December, $100. esthera@mnjcc.org, www.mnjcc.org.

"The Singer's Body," a class with **Orville Heyn**, Jan. 13, 2:30-4:30 p.m., $25. Presented by MNjcc's Institute for Lifelong Choral Wellness and SING! To register: www.torontovocalartsfestival.com. Information at music@mnjcc.org.

Play in the MNjcc Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein** of Beyond the Pale, Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Info: music@mnjcc.org.

Join the Women's Chorus, Mondays 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. No audition. Email conductor **Gillian Stecyk**, gillians@mnjcc.org.

Join our adult daytime choir Tuesdays 1-2:30 p.m., with conductor Gillian Stecyk. $5 drop-in. No audition or experience required. Info: gillians@mnjcc.org

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. www.srcentre.ca.

Free guest/fitness programs, Jan. 6, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Krav-Hagana, Karate, Hip-Hop for Teens, Belly Dance, Kangoo Fit, Prenatal Yoga and much more! To register for a free demo, call 905-303-1821, ext. 3025.

Family Israeli Folk Dance, free open house for the family, Jan. 13 2-3 p.m. and Jan. 20, 3.30-4:30 p.m. To register, call **Andrea** by Jan. 9, ext. 3006.

Registration is now open for winter session – please check at srcentre.ca, 905-303-1821, ext. 3025.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 12

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Lankar, Ernest	Dec. 8/12	7881 Dufferin St
Ozery, Pamela	Dec. 6/12	186 Brighton Ave
Banik, Julie	Dec. 7/12	3560 Bathurst St
Katz, Florence	Dec. 8/12	23 Grove Ave
Guigui, Anita	Dec. 8/12	
Zawierucha, Zinaida	Dec. 2/12	1 Emerald Lane
Zlotnik, Marks	Dec. 8/12	Private
Blyman, Alex	Dec. 9/12	277 Rusholme Rd
Lasman, Rami	Dec. 11/12	7601 Bathurst St
Charney, Ruth	Dec. 10/12	102 Sultana Ave
Burakovsky, Victor	Dec. 14/12	Private
Acoca, Silvya	Dec. 16/12	
Crone, Jack	Dec. 17/12	108 Clifton Ave
Lemud, Gita	Dec. 17/12	122 Tuscana Blvd
Abramov, Narunz	Dec. 18/12	Private
Vilenska, Rachil	Dec. 18/12	Private
Narodetsky, Sarra	Dec. 18/12	17 Kingsbridge Circle
Drash, Milton	Dec. 19/12	32 Brockington Cres
Ambros, Sylvia	Dec. 19/12	263 Hidden Trail
Lipszyc, Faiga	Dec. 19/12	1101 Steeles Ave. W

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Gerald Rosenberg	Dec 6/12	131 Beecroft Road
Eva Rothblott	Dec 7/12	147 Elder Street
Mircea Z. Cohn	Dec 6/12	44 Charles St. West
Irving Pizel	Dec 7/12	114 Scott Street
Irwin Fisher	Dec 7/12	231 Lonsmount Drive
Arthur Charles Pape	Dec 6/12	102 Blythwood Road
Toby Lipton	Dec 8/12	1555 Finch Avenue East
Marilyn Cadesky	Dec 9/12	71 Talara Drive
Paula Summerfield	Dec 9/12	8 The Don Way East
Jack Walman	Dec 9/12	1500 Steeles Avenue, W.
Sam Pasternack	Dec 10/12	41 Blue Forest Drive
Bernard Kasner	Dec 10/12	25 Canyon Avenue
Raissa Paguis	Dec 12/12	14 Cross Street
Eveline Perlitz	Dec 11/12	429 Walmer Road
Lillian Cole	Dec 13/12	1 Northwestern Avenue
Meta Fridson	Dec 12/12	82 Buttonwood Avenue
Lois Michaels	Dec 12/12	51 Kortland Cresent
Enrique Fenig	Dec 14/12	2600 Bathurst Street
George Biro	Dec 14/12	15 Paddock Crt
Eleanor Baskin	Dec 15/12	2 Neptune Dr.

HEDREW BASIC

Sadie Pinkas	Dec 7/12	643 St. Germain Avenue
Sonia Greenwald	Dec 7/12	125 Caribou Road
Adele Lerner	Dec 14/12	47 St. Clair Ave. W.

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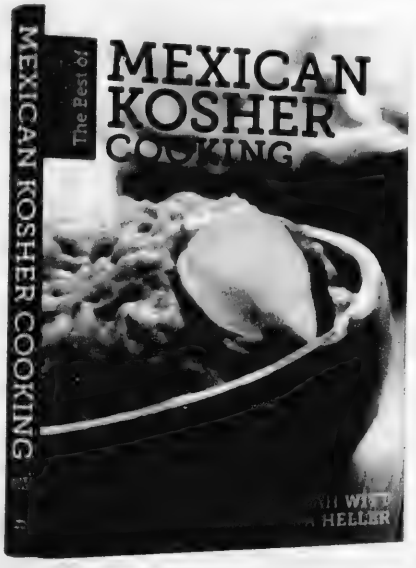
Mexican kosher cooking turns dinner into a fiesta!

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Zipporah Malka Heller and Shifrah Devorah Witt love ethnic food. When the mother/daughter team started keeping kosher about 17 years ago, they stopped eating most of their meals in restaurants and learned how to cook their favourite dishes themselves. Their first cookbook was *The Complete Asian Kosher Cookbook*. They recently co-authored their second cookbook, *The Best of Mexican Kosher Cooking*, with over 90 recipes, all accompanied by full-colour photos.

"Every time we eat a Mexican meal, we are magically transported to feeling like we are on vacation, or at a fiesta, a party. Our goal was to create dishes that are both authentic in taste but can be made easily by anyone who wants to step into the kitchen. You don't have to be a master chef to create food that will make your guests think you are one."



Mexican Kosher Cooking offers a wide selection of authentic Mexican recipes, including nachos, several salsa recipes, guacamole, enchiladas, fajitas, burritos, chimichangas, tacos and tostadas. You'll find 7-Layer Bean Dip, Mexican Chicken Wings with Dipping Sauce, Tortilla Soup, Crazy Good Chicken Salad, Refried Beans and Cheese, Chili Rellenos, Grilled Fish Soft Tacos, Fish Veracruz, Arroz con Pollo, Chili con Carne, Mexican Rice, and Refried Beans. Desserts and beverages include Mexican Wedding Cookies, Margarita Ice Cream, Sangria and Mexican Iced Coffee.

The authors provide a list of basic ingredients, herbs and spices to keep in your pantry, refrigerator and freezer to help you prepare a quick Mexican meal when the mood strikes. They explain the difference in fresh chili varieties: Anaheim chilis are mild, Jalapeno are hotter than the bottled, Serrano are a bit hotter than Anaheim, and Habanero are for the fearless!

- Make sure you use disposable plastic gloves to cover your hands while you are working with chili peppers. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap after you are done and refrain from touching your eyes or any other sensitive area.
- Any recipe that is called spicy or has peppers in it can also be delicious without the peppers. Alternatively, feel free to add them to any recipe you wish. Start out mild and work your way up.
- If you get a pepper that is too hot, the way to neutralize the heat is with bread, not water.

The mother/daughter team lived in California for 23 years before moving to Jerusalem in 2004. They now share a multi-generation home close to the shuk (market) Machne Yehuda, with its array of seasonal produce. When they first came to Jerusalem, there were no Mexican restaurants and few Mexican products, but new products continue to arrive, making their cookbook project much easier. Their website is www.mexicankoshercooking.com.

It's easy to turn a simple dinner, Shabbat meal or holiday celebration into a full-fledged fiesta. So bring some sunshine and heat into the cold days of winter ahead with *The Best of Mexican Kosher Cooking*. Enjoy!

MEXICAN FISH CAKES

These make a wonderful addition to your Chanukah repertoire but are great all year long.

1 (20-oz.) frozen gefilte fish roll, defrosted
4 sundried tomatoes that have been soaked for an hour in warm water, drained, squeezed dry, and minced
1/8 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
4 large cloves garlic, minced
3 eggs, beaten
5 tbsp. flour
3 green onions, chopped
4 tbsp. canola oil for frying

Defrost fish roll and mash into a smooth consistency in a large bowl.

Add all ingredients except oil to the gefilte fish mixture and mix thoroughly. Shape into patties 3 inches wide. (Thin patties will cook faster and go farther, but you can make them any size you like.)

Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add fish cakes and fry until brown on both sides.

Remove to a platter covered with paper towel to drain excess oil. Great hot or at room temperature. Serves 10-12 as an appetizer.

Accompaniments: Cumin and Garlic Dip or Chipotle Mayonnaise Dip (below)

CUMIN AND GARLIC DIP

1/4 cup olive oil or mayonnaise
1/8-1/4 tsp. cumin
pinch of salt
1 clove fresh garlic, minced (or 1/8 tsp garlic powder)
1/8 tsp. dried red pepper

Mix all ingredients and serve. If using mayonnaise, keep the dip in the refrigerator until you are ready to serve. If using olive oil, serve it at room temperature.

CHIPOTLE MAYONNAISE DIP

Combine 1/2 cup low-fat mayonnaise and 1/2 tsp. chipotle chili pepper. Chill for 15 minutes. (Norene's Note: No chipotle chili pepper? Substitute smoked paprika and a pinch of chili powder.)

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New chief rabbi plans to speak for all of UK Jewry

Miriam Shaviv
The Times of Israel

LONDON — Confounding expectations, the incoming British chief rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, said he hopes to act as a spokesman for the entire Jewish community on the national stage.

"I intend to represent the community as an ambassador to the outside world," he told *The Times of Israel*, adding that this would be one of his top priorities in office.

The statement will surprise many British Jews, who widely expected that Rabbi Mirvis, who does not currently have a national profile as a speaker, would concentrate primarily on internal issues in the Jewish community.

He also indicated that he hoped to speak for all British Jews, not only for members of the United Synagogue, the group of Orthodox shuls that officially employs the chief rabbi. Neither haredim nor the non-Orthodox denominations defer to the authority of the chief rabbi, and in recent years, the Progressive Movement has been increasingly vocal about its rejection of the chief rabbi as the figurehead for all Anglo-Jews. A statement issued by the Reform movement welcoming Rabbi Mirvis's appointment referred to him as the "Orthodox chief rabbi."

"My formal role extends to a specific number of congregations," said Rabbi Mirvis. "[Outgoing chief rabbi] Lord [Jonathan] Sacks made his mark beyond the confines of the community, and I will likewise be seeking to do that. There is a clear understanding — the chief rabbi has a voice nationally."

In one of his first interviews since he was appointed as the next chief rabbi last month, Rabbi Mirvis outlined his vision of leadership. He said he would "empower" rabbis belonging to the United Synagogue by opening a new department of rabbinic development that would provide "adequate resources to undertake initiatives and engage in creative initiatives for their communities.

"The rabbis will find in me personally someone who cares about their future and welfare," he said.

He also plans to increase educational programs, both formal and informal, identifying education as the key to reversing the decline in membership of the United Synagogue. He turned his own North London community, Finchley United Synagogue, into a "flagship" shul by pioneering a variety of educational initiatives such as the Kinloss Learning Centre, he said.

"'Rabbi' means 'teacher,' and I see the role of chief rabbi as chief teacher," he added.

During the eight-month search process for the chief rabbi, one of the most contentious issues was the candidates' attitudes toward the London Beth Din, or religious court. Although it is officially part of the United Synagogue, its dayanim, or judges, are seen as having blocked much of the progressive agenda with which Rabbi Sacks came into office.

"The chief rabbi is the 'av beth din' [head of the beit din]," said the South African-born Rabbi Mirvis. "The beit din is the court of the chief rabbi. I see myself taking an active role within the beit din."

According to Miri Freud-Kandel, a fellow in modern Judaism at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies and an expert on the institution of the chief rabbi, establishing his authority over the beit din is crucial because it will affect Rabbi Mirvis' ability to influence the religious direction of the community. This will be "his most important internal challenge," she said.

Rabbi Mirvis succeeds Rabbi Sacks, an internationally renowned author and public intellectual who speaks frequently on moral, philosophical and theological affairs.

Rabbi Mirvis takes up his new position in September 2013.

He told JTA that he hopes to be an "able and capable representative to the outside world," and would aim to bring an "ethical voice" to debates of national importance.

"A sense of religious identity has never been more relevant, nor more necessary, in our fast-changing world," Rabbi Mirvis said.

Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Rabbi Mirvis, 56, currently rabbi of Finchley United Synagogue, one of London's flagship Orthodox congregations, does not intend to neglect internal affairs either. His other top two priorities will be promoting education and empowering local rabbis, in order to bolster the shrinking constituency of Britain's centrist Orthodox synagogues.

Timesofisrael.com

Jewish Agency to look into women's prayer at the Kotel

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly asked the Jewish Agency to come up with a solution for non-Orthodox women's groups that want to pray at the Western Wall.

Netanyahu asked the chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Natan Sharansky, to examine the issue, the *Associated Press* reported, citing an unnamed Israeli government official.

The *AP* quoted Jewish Agency spokesman Benjamin Rutland as saying that Netanyahu told Sharansky that the Western Wall "must remain a source of Jewish unity rather than division."

Earlier this month, four women were detained at the Western Wall by Israeli police for trying to enter the site with prayer shawls to pray with the Women of the Wall organization.

Women of the Wall has held a special prayer service at the holy site almost each month for the last 20 years on Rosh Chodesh, or the beginning of a new Hebrew month, at the back of the women's section.

Women participating in the Rosh Chodesh service have been arrested nearly every month since June for wearing prayer shawls or for "disturbing public order."

In 2003, Israel's Supreme Court upheld a government ban on women wearing tfillin or tallit prayer shawls, or reading from a Torah scroll at the Western Wall.

"On behalf of the 1,700 Conservative rabbis who comprise our movement, the Rabbinical Assembly supports Israel in its efforts to work toward ensuring women's equality and religious pluralism – both in the most sacred moment of prayer at the Western Wall – and throughout life in Israel. All Jews should feel welcome and be legally permitted to express their Judaism freely at this holy place we all share," Rabbi Julie Schonfeld, executive vice-president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international umbrella organization for Conservative rabbis, said in a statement issued Dec. 26.

Marcie Natan, national president of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, said in a statement: "As a member of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors, Hadassah looks forward to participating in this important effort and hopes that a resolution can be reached which will allow all women to pray, individually and collectively, at the Kotel freely, without harassment, and in accordance with their own religious practices."

U.K. minister attacks Israel's construction plans

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — A British minister last Thursday harshly condemned Israel for its plans to expand construction in east Jerusalem and for conferring university status on a college in the West Bank city of Ariel, using damning language rarely used by government officials.

While international outcries following Israeli announcements of construction beyond the Green Line, Israel pre-1967 borders, are a common occurrence, U.K. Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt took the unusual step of mentioning the Geneva Conventions, likely implying that settlement expansion is considered a war crime under international law.

The move is being seen by some as an intensification of rhetoric in response to Israel's increasingly aggressive avowals to broaden its settlement enterprise.

In his statement, Burt said he and Foreign Secretary William Hague expressed "condemnation and deep disappointment" at the Jerusalem District Planning and Building Committee's approval of 1,500 housing units in Ramat Shlomo. They also denounced recently announced plans for additional construction in the Givat Hamatos and Gilo neighbourhoods, which are beyond the Green Line.

"These are further profoundly provocative actions that run contrary to the Fourth Geneva Convention," Burt stated. "By taking these steps, despite the international community repeatedly raising our profound concerns, the Israeli government is damaging Israel's international reputation."

Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that an occupying power "shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." This is the basis for the position of international bodies, such as the United Nations and the European Union, to consider Israeli settlements beyond the Green Line illegal under international law.

Violations of the 1949 Geneva Convention are considered war crimes under international law. Israel is a party to the convention and therefore bound by its obligations.

U.K. Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt

According to pro-Israel advocate Irwin Cotler, a Canadian MPP and a former Canadian justice minister who is an expert on international law, Burt's evoking of the Geneva Convention marks a "gradual ratcheting up" of criticism in light of Israel's increasingly assertive settlement policy. While international human right activists have in the past quoted the convention to incriminate Israel, western government officials have generally refrained from mentioning it in relation to Israeli settlements.

"At first, the settlements were unhelpful, then they became an obstacle to peace; from there they went to being illegal, from there to being contrary to international law, and now they are violating the Geneva Conventions," Cotler told *The Times of Israel*. "It seems that this signifies a calibrated indictment reciprocal to the increasing affirmations of the Israeli government's settlement policy."

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Yigal Palmor called the British minister's word choice "disappointing."

"The Palestinian interpretation of the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the West Bank and to settlements therein is highly controversial and stands in contradiction with a great number of legal opinions by leading experts," Palmor said.

"It is therefore disappointing to see that a [U.K. Foreign Office] minister should adopt the contested Palestinian position hook, line and sinker, thus adding controversy where it is already in excess."

In trying to fend off such attacks, Israel usually refers to a clause in the convention that says regulations only apply to "high contracting parties" – in other words, signatory states. Since the West Bank and east Jerusalem were not within the recognized territory of any contracting party when Israel captured them, they are to be considered disputed territories rather than occupied, Jerusalem argues.

In May, EU foreign ministers released a statement mentioning "the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilians." This passage seems to refer mostly to Israel's obligation to safeguard Palestinians living under Israeli military control. On Dec. 10, the EU issued a harshly worded rebuke of Israel's plans to expand settlements in the West Bank but failed to mention the convention.

Burt, a Conservative, also called on the Israeli government to "urgently" reverse its decision to upgrade the Ariel University Center to a full-fledged university. "Ariel is beyond the Green Line in a settlement that is illegal according to international law. This decision will deepen the presence of the settlements in the Palestinian territories and will create another obstacle to peace," he said.

The minister also said that the United Kingdom appreciates the Palestinian leadership's "measured response" to Israel's recent announcements and commended Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas for publicly rejecting recent "inflammatory statements" by Hamas leaders.

Having received non-member observer state status at the United Nations in late November, the Palestinians are said to be considering turning to the International Criminal Court in The Hague to denounce Israel for alleged war crimes relating to settlements.

However, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other senior government ministers have repeatedly vowed to continue building despite all pressure.

Former intelligence chief warns of 'delegitimization' of Israel

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — With the chances of a war breaking out in the coming year relatively low, Israel must face up to the graver strategic threat of "delegitimization" in the international arena, a former IDF military intelligence chief warned on Dec. 26.

Amos Yadlin, who now heads the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University, explained that Israel's powerful military deterrence would cause Hezbollah, Syria, and even Iran, to think twice before attacking the country. The proof, he said, was that Hezbollah had not fired a shot since the end of the 2006 Second Lebanon War.

"If I had to stand before the cabinet and estimate the chances of a war in 2013, I would say that it seems a campaign against us will not be opened," he said.

However, Yadlin cautioned, the country still faced a "strategic threat" just as pressing as that posed by "rockets and missiles: the threat to our legitimacy in the world and the attempt to turn us into a pariah state."

Still, the Iranian nuclear program, which had seemingly been put on a back burner, would return to the forefront of Israel's security agenda, he predicted, stressing the importance of maintaining a close working relationship with the United States over Tehran.

The statements, quoted on the website of the daily *Ma'ariv*, were made at a seminar organized by the National Security Studies Center at Haifa University.

When it came to negotiations with the Palestinians, Yadlin argued, both sides would have to make concessions: Israel, for one, would be required to relinquish areas of East Jerusalem.

However, the former intelligence chief said, the Palestinian leadership would be unable to follow through with what was required of it: to declare an end to the conflict and to give up on the "right to return" for refugees and their descendants.

Amos Yadlin

The Palestinians have "homed in on a smart strategy: to wrangle Israeli concessions from the international community without making any concessions themselves," Yadlin said. Thus, instead of relying on the Palestinians, Israel must take its own fate in hand and shape its future unilaterally. The first step, he claimed, should be to make the Palestinians an offer based on parameters set out by former U.S. president Bill Clinton after the failure of the Ehud Barak-Yasser Arafat peace talks he brokered at Camp David in 2000.

"I imagine the Palestinians would reject [the offer], though I would be happy if they accepted it," he said.

Timesofisrael.com

Avigdor Liberman indicted for fraud

Former Israeli foreign minister Avigdor Liberman was indicted last week on charges of fraud and breach of trust for allegedly advancing the position of Israel's former ambassador to Belarus in exchange for information on an investigation against him. Israel's Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein submitted the indictment following an extra round of questioning of members of a Foreign Ministry appointments panel. Liberman resigned last month as foreign minister, although he remains a member of the Knesset and the head of the Yisrael Beiteinu party.

Israel eases Gaza blockade

Israel is easing its blockade on Gaza, the Defence Ministry confirmed to local media. Israel will allow previously banned construction material into the coastal strip. The loosening of restrictions comes following the Egyptian-mediated truce in November between the Palestinian leadership in Gaza and Israel that ended Israel's Operation Pillar of Defence. Prior to the truce, only international aid groups could bring in certain construction material. Gravel for construction was scheduled to enter Gaza for the first time in five years. The building materials had been banned due to fears that they would be used to create rockets to be fired at Israel.

Hamas forbids Israeli media contact

The Hamas government in Gaza has forbidden local journalists from working with Israeli media outlets. Hamas decided to ban Palestinian journalists from working "with all Zionist media and journalists." There is no similar requirement in the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority. Hamas has ruled Gaza since 2006.

-JTA

Spanish Satellite provider bans Iranian news channel

JNS.org

NEW YORK — Two Iranian television channels, including one that recently blamed the Newtown, Conn. school shooting on "Israeli death squads," were banned from Hispasat, a Spanish communication satellites group.

"This is an important development in the worldwide effort to contain the defiant regime in Tehran, one we have been watching carefully for months, and discussing with our friends in Spain," American Jewish Committee (AJC) executive director David Harris said in a statement Dec. 20.

Hispasat terminated the broadcasting of Iran's Press TV and Hispan TV. In its "reporting" on gunman Adam Lanza's murder of 26 people (20 children, six staffers) at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Press TV cited former Arizona gubernatorial candidate Michael Harris – an Arizona-based contributor to the anti-semitic website, Veterans Today – who said Israeli "revenge" and "rage" against the U.S. were behind the shooting. Lanza, the channel said, was Israel's "fall guy."

"This is another case where Israel has chosen violence and terrorism where their bullying in Washington has failed," Press TV quoted Harris as saying.

AJC's Harris said, "No satellite company in the western world should enable the dissemination of propaganda from an Iranian government that denies human rights, supports terror organizations and is determined to achieve nuclear weapons capability."

Israelis skeptical

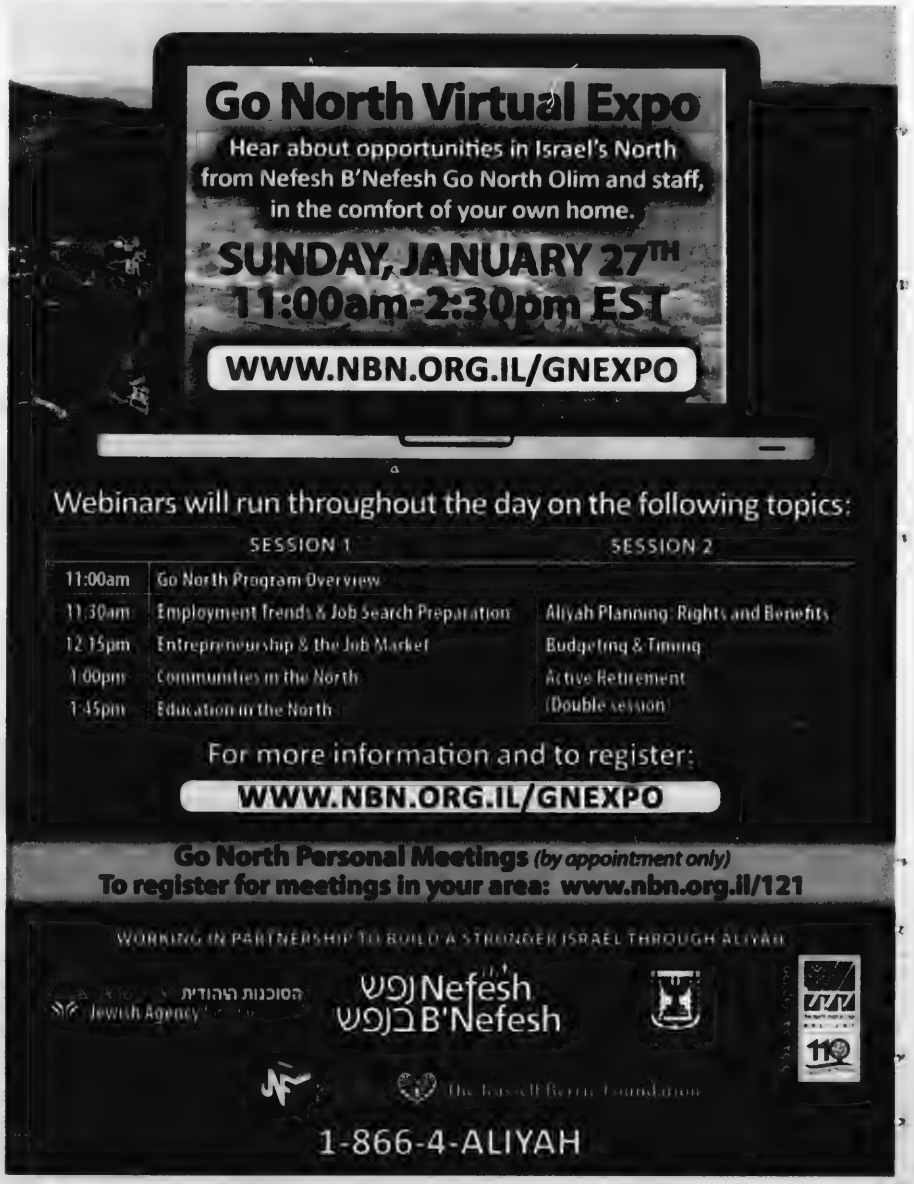
JNS.org

JERUSALEM — The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs has released the results of a survey, Views of the Israeli Public on Israeli Security and Resolution of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, showing that 76 per cent of all Israelis and 83 per cent of Jewish Israelis do not believe that a withdrawal to the 1967 lines and a division of Jerusalem would solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The findings were derived from a representative sample of responses from Israeli adults, gathered by telephone this November.

Also according to the survey results, 61 per cent of Israeli Jews think that it is more important for Israel to have defensible borders than to have peace that would ensure Israel's security. This percentage went up from 49 per cent in 2005.

Seventy-eight per cent of Israeli Jews also said they would change their vote if their preferred political party expresses willingness to relinquish eastern Jerusalem to Palestinian control. Fifty-nine percent of Israeli Jews feel the same way about the Jordan Valley.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SESSION 2
11:00am Go North Program Overview
11:30am Employment Trends & Job Search Preparation
Aliyah Planning: Rights and Benefits
12:15pm Entrepreneurship & the Job Market
Budgeting & Timing
1:00pm Communities in the North
Active Retirement
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Ready. Set. Entertain with Bite Me More

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

"Why wait for the traditional holidays to gather your friends and loved ones together when you can celebrate any day of the year?"

So say the founders of Bite Me More, Jane Apor and sisters Julie Albert and Lisa Gnat. Bite Me More is a lifestyle and entertainment website that encompasses eating, feeding, and easy entertainment at your fingertips.

From left, Lisa Gnat, Jane Apor and Julie Albert take a big bite out of life.

The company's tag line is "Ready. Set. Go Entertain," and its mission is simple: bring ease to the kitchen and laughs to the table. Albert, Gnat and Apor believe they couldn't possibly let any day, whether Hairdresser Day, National Cookie Day, World Chocolate Day or Talk Like a Pirate Day, pass without celebration. They want everyone to know they are there to help with dependable, doable recipes that will be shared, creative and affordable décor that will be shown, inspiring music that will be recommended, and stylish gifts and fashion that will be culled. Get ready to take a bigger bite out of life.

"Our business evolved out of our bestselling cookbooks *Bite Me* and *Bite Me Too*, which Lisa and I wrote together," said Albert. "We wanted to take the Bite Me brand and extend it, and that is where Jane came into the picture. We have created a road map for people who may be intimidated by cooking and by entertaining and have pulled it all together to provide solutions that are easy, affordable, and chic."

The two sisters and Apor launched their Bite Me More website on June 11. They believe the concept is new. "We are hard pressed to find a site that offers the full spectrum of what we offer. Yes, there may be sites out there that offer recipes, perhaps combined with wine, but we are doing the complete combination. This is a new evolution," said Apor.

Bite Me headquarters is located in Albert's home in central Toronto. Each week, the women change their website to work with a theme that includes original recipes supplied by cooking maven Gnat, while Albert and Apor concentrate on the creative side.

"We bring in a photographer to capture our original table setup with editorial shots. We try to give people the big picture and provide a place where our clientele know you don't have to take yourself too seriously," explained Albert.

Bite Me More's target demographic is 25- to 55-year-olds – not just families, but everyone from soccer moms to people who live in lofts and want to entertain friends.

"Part of our motivation is that we grew up in a home with a mom who was an incredible cook. Family meals and gatherings around food were very much ingrained in all of us. Our fondest memories are tied in with food," said Gnat.

The combination of the women's skills, personalities and energy make for a winning business. Albert holds a master's of journalism degree and provides the wit and cleverness behind the words. Gnat earned her pastry papers from George Brown College's culinary arts program, ran a successful dessert catering business and is the deliciousness behind all the recipes. Apor is a "Jane-of-all-trades" who earned an MBA from the Schulich School of Business and who knows pi from pie. She's worked in marketing, product development and event promotion for Estée Lauder in New York and London, and is a jewelry designer as well.

"We're still in the growth phase. It has been six months since inception. We give ourselves another six months to fine-tune. It is an evolution. The site is perfectly designed and lends itself to sponsorship. We are just starting to go after advertisers," Albert said.

"The first several months have been focused on web content as we wanted a site rich in depth. The entertaining and lifestyle sector is a very crowded market place, so we are differentiating ourselves in ways we can and trying to find the right partners along the way."

The ladies are featured regularly as entertaining experts on the *Steven and Chris* Canadian television talk show, which is syndicated and watched in the United States by 40 million viewers. They also write a weekly column for the news website *Huffington Post Canada*.

"We are two sisters and a Jane who are celebrating every day with the nation, who get to express ourselves creatively and watch our business expand. We're in it for life," Albert said.

As Apor says, "We try to teach people to turn hay into gold."

Israeli start-up puts fans on arena scoreboards

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — At a game this week, tens of thousands of basketball fans at Nokia Stadium in Tel Aviv have the opportunity to participate in a mass sports trivia game run right on the scoreboard.

Users participate by using a special app that connects them to the scoreboard, where the questions appear. The fans who are fastest to get the right answer up first will have bragging rights, if not fame and fortune, as their Facebook profile photos appear up there for all to see. They'll also get T-shirts, towels and other tchatchkes.

The technology to run such events has been around for a couple of years, but putting together the resources needed to run a successful game where a large crowd interacts with a scoreboard or other large digital sign has usually been more trouble and more expensive than it's worth, said Adir Zimerman, CEO and co-founder of Screemo. The technology being developed by his company, Zimerman said, will enable event sponsors of all kinds to quickly set up mass participatory events for mobile and smartphone users.

"Our platform is the first that allows businesses to implement mobile screens interactive apps within days, and, in many cases, without the help of developers," Zimerman said of the menu-driven system that interfaces with users and with the central screen.

"It could be a scoreboard or a digital sign outside a store," Zimerman said. "Many businesses have wanted to do this for a long time, but it's just been too expensive and time-consuming, since, until now, each event has required writing an application from scratch."

Screemo takes care of much of the back-end work that goes into the applications, and guides users in easily, quickly, and inexpensively setting up their mass event.

There's no doubt that interactive digital signage is going to be very big, Zimerman said, citing a test case that the industry has taken as a signal of things to come – the McDonald's Pong event in Sweden, where, in June 2011, the fast food giant ran an interactive game that pitted players against each other, with the action displayed on a giant billboard. Passersby logged into an app developed by McDonald's, and winners were awarded coupons for free food items. The kicker in that event, Zimmerman said, was the over 30 per cent redemption rate for those coupons, considered a huge advertising coup.

"That event marked the point when interactive digital signage got on the map, and since then, businesses have been looking for ways to duplicate that success," Zimerman said. "They've been frustrated in those efforts until now, but Screemo will without question make it much easier and cheaper for businesses to do interactive digital signage events."

The Nokia Stadium event will not be Screemo's first, as the company has tried out its technology in several bars and restaurants in Tel Aviv over the past several months. But the upcoming event will be the company's biggest so far, kicking off a new level of engagement for Screemo. "And we plan on opening a U.S. sales channel in the coming months," Zimerman said.

Screemo was established in March of this year, and was selected as one of 13 start-ups participating in the second round of companies enrolled in the Microsoft Accelerator for Windows Azure. More than 300 companies applied for the four-month program, which provides start-ups with office space, servers, mentoring and guidance from top professionals, and the opportunity to leverage Microsoft's connections around the world for opportunities.

In the case of Screemo, the fact that the worldwide Young and Rubicam advertising agency is a strategic partner in the accelerator makes the deal even sweeter, since the advertising industry is a main target for Screemo. "There are 22 million digital screens out there in the United States, waiting for interactive content," Zimerman said. "I believe our product will be embraced by the market."

Timesofisrael.com

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes.

They should not exceed 2,000 words. Selected submissions will appear in the Passover Supplement of The CJN on March 28 2013, in either our Montreal or our Toronto edition, or both. If you have a preference, please state it on your submission. Not all submissions can be published. We look for originality.

E-mail submissions to:
cjnliterarysupplement@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is February 28, 2013.
We can only accept e-mail submissions.

Jeanne Lamon shaped Tafelmusik into a world-class orchestra

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

At the age of three, Jeanne Lamon already knew what she wanted to do for the rest of her life.

As she watched the legendary violinist Isaac Stern perform on television, she pointed a finger toward the screen and exclaimed, "I want to do that!"

Recalling that momentous moment 61 years later, she said, "I just knew I had to play the violin. I saw myself in the violin. It was me."

Although Lamon would not seriously contemplate a career as a violinist until she was a teenager, she realized back then that she had an affinity for that angelic string instrument.

Today, as a new year beckons, Lamon is not only an internationally recognized violinist, but also the music director of the Toronto-based Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, one of the leading orchestras of its kind.

She was invited to join the fledgling orchestra by its two founders, Kenneth Solway and Susan Graves. "They wanted to create a world-class orchestra," said Lamon, who had been a concertmaster in a succession of European and North American period orchestras when she was invited to Toronto in 1980.

"I've done that," she said in a factual tone, without the slightest trace of hubris.

Tafelmusik's managing director, Tricia Baldwin, concurs with her assessment. Describing Lamon as "a superb musician, a visionary and a gifted artistic leader," she observed, "For the last 30-plus years, she has taken Tafelmusik to international prominence. She continues to break new ground every day, and does so with a big and genuine heart. We know her legacy will last generations."

When Lamon – the recipient of the Order of Canada in 2000 – arrived in Canada, Tafelmusik, founded in 1979, was little more than a rudimentary organization still in the process of trying to establish a niche for itself. "There was really no orchestra," she said.

But in the past three decades, Tafelmusik, headquartered in the basement of a weathered church in the Annex, near the corner of Bloor Street and Spadina Avenue, has achieved global stature.

Ticking off its achievements, she said, "We've built an audience of over 4,000 subscribers. We've toured the world. We've made well over 80 recordings. Last year, we launched our own independent label, Tafelmusik Media."

Lamon knew that Tafelmusik was on the right track when it signed a recording contract with Sony in 1990. In addition to Sony, Tafelmusik has produced baroque and classical albums for some of the best labels, Analekta, CBC Records, Collegium, Hyperion and BMG.

"We're essentially the only baroque orchestra in Toronto," she said. "Nor is there anything equivalent to us in Canada. We really have a unique orchestra here. Few orchestras do as much as we do."

In her view, the ensemble that probably most resembles Tafelmusik is the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra in Germany.

Tafelmusik consists of 18 musicians, who play the violin, the viola, the cello, the double bass, the harpsichord, the oboe and the bassoon.

Eight of its members have been associated with the orchestra since the early 1980s. "We don't have many personnel changes. People don't leave, realizing how lucky they are to be here. It's a happy group. No one has left in the last eight years. It's the best job in the business."

Lamon conducts, leading from the violin. "We play like a string quartet," she noted. "The violin is an instrument that often leads, and I'm a leader personality. The violin is a beautiful instrument. Some people call it the king of instruments."

Tafelmusk leans heavily toward Bach, Vivaldi, Handel, Mozart and Beethoven. By no coincidence, these composers lived in the 17th and 18th centuries, when western music was in one of its glorious phases. "I love the repertoire of this era," Lamon said.

It comes as no surprise that Lamon's three favourite musicians are, in ascending order, Bach, Mozart and Vivaldi.

Jeanne Lamon *(Sian Richards photo)*

"Bach is like Shakespeare. He operates on completely different levels. His music is profound, brimming with hidden meanings and poetic touches. He covers the full gamut of human emotions, from joy to tragedy."

To Lamon, Mozart is nothing less than a genius. "He wrote gorgeous melodies. He had an uncanny ability to write a sad tune with a smile and a happy tune with a tear coming down a cheek. All his music is melodically nuanced."

As for Vivaldi, he captures visual imagery like no one else, she said. "He's very dynamic and energetic."

Lamon, the third of three children in a Dutch Jewish family, ascribes her musicality to her mother. "I got the gene from her, but my father loved opera."

Lamon's father, Isaac, an investment banker of Sephardi origin, and her mother, Elly, a teacher of Ashkenazi descent, left Holland before it was conquered and occupied by Germany in World War II.

Her maternal and paternal grandparents also managed to leave Holland in the nick of time. Lamon's relatives who remained behind were murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

She grew up in Queens, a borough of New York City, and studied music at Brandeis University.

Lamon began to specialize in the baroque violin while studying with Sigiswald Kuijken in Amsterdam in the early 1970s. "I like it more than the modern violin," she explained. "It has a gentler, more expressive tone. It expresses my voice."

From 1971 until she joined Tafelmusik, she worked with period orchestras, including Il Complesso Barocco, Boston Baroque, Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montreal and The Smithsonian Chamber Players of Washington.

She had no hard and fast plan after arriving in Toronto, but "one thing led to another, and I never left."

Now a Canadian citizen, she credits Tafelmusik's stellar reputation, in part at least, to its extensive touring schedule. It's on the road quite often, having performed in venues ranging from Amsterdam's Concertgebouw to London's Barbican Centre.

Beyond Europe, Tafelmusik has toured Asia (China and Taiwan, among other destinations), the United States and Latin America. And it has visited Israel twice.

Almost three months ago, Tafelmusik announced that Lamon would leave her post in 2014 after 33 years at the helm.

In the meantime, she will stay on as music director emerita and continue to build up Tafelmusik's International Baroque Academy, which trains young musicians in master classes.

"Change is inevitable," she said. "I didn't want to step down at the age of 90. Things are in great shape. The orchestra is playing well. Finances are good. Everything is going well. It's the right moment for a great transition."

Lamon intends to continue teaching at the Royal Conservatory of Music, give master classes at the University of Toronto and guest conduct. "They bring me in as the baroque specialist," said Lamon, whose partner in life, Christina Mahler, is Tafelmusik's principal cellist.

Although she is focused on music, she seems like a well-rounded person. She likes to read, take long walks, paddle a canoe, paint and cook.

"I'm pretty eclectic and experimental in the kitchen," said Lamon, who attends gatherings of the Danforth Jewish Circle. "Nothing is more relaxing than cooking."

PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT?

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

TORONTO FILMMAKER CASTS LENS ON ISOLATED JEWS OF GHANA

During a volunteer placement in Accra, Ghana in 2010, Toronto-based filmmaker **Gabrielle Zilkha** sought out a local Jewish community as the Jewish High Holidays neared and discovered the Sefwis.

Situated in the rural village of Sefwi Wiawso, the Sefwis are a small group of Ghanaians who have been observing the Jewish religion for more than 200 years. They observe the Sabbath, circumcise their sons, keep kosher, and recite ritual blessings in Hebrew.

Only in the last 20 years have the Sefwis become aware that their religion was followed by millions of people around the globe known as Jews.

Since returning from her five-month stint in Ghana, Zilkha has become determined to make a feature documentary about the isolated Jews of Ghana, many of whom have also become determined to visit Israel and establish connections with other Jewish communities around the world.

She and her partners also want to use a variety of digital and social media to enable deeper and extended communications between the Sefwi community and people around the world. To this end, Zilkha has begun a fund-raising campaign. For details about the proposed documentary and to view a trailer about the Sefwi community, please visit www.fourcornersthefilm.com

• • •

New in Print: Torontonian **Elaine Blackstien** has written *Why Me?*, a collection of humorous tales and memoirs that reach back five generations. The collection was published as an e-book under the pen name *E. P. Snider*, and is available through Amazon.

Pearl Goodman, the daughter of Holocaust survivors who grew up in Toronto, has composed a humorous memoir, *Peril: From Jackboots to Jack Benny*. The book interweaves TV shows, ads, movies and other elements of the cultural landscape with her parents' harrowing wartime experiences. The publisher is Bridgeross Communications of Dundas, Ont.

Torontonian **Gerald Ziedenberg**, a retired pharmacist, historian and author, has recently published *Epic Trials in Jewish History*, which describes 12 contentious legal cases including those involving **Alfred Dreyfus, Leo Frank, Julius** and **Ethel Rosenberg, Adolf Eichmann and Jonathan Pollard**. The e-book is available through Amazon.

Hiding in Plain Sight -- Eluding the Nazis in Occupied France, by **Sarah Lew Miller** and **Joyce B. Lazarus**, presents Miller's memoir of a childhood and young adulthood; she was born in Dereczyn, Poland and moved with her family to Paris in 1937. Distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services; www.sbookscan.com.

Narratives of Dissent -- War in Contemporary Israeli Arts and Culture, edited by **Rachel S. Harris** and **Ranen Omer-Sherman**, is a collection of scholarly essays dealing with music, film theatre, photography, fiction and other cultural artifacts produced in a country immersed in a perpetual culture of war. Published by Wayne State University Press.

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Arts in Brief

• Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents *Hello I Must Be Going*, a 2012 US-made feature film by director **Todd Louiso**. It is "a charming and quirky comedy" about a couple's adult daughter who is dumped by her husband, moves back home, then falls for the teenaged son of her father's potential business partner. $15. Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Cinemas, Sunday Jan. 13, tea at 4 p.m., film at 5. www.tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• "Shmooz the News" with Yiddishist Gerry Kane, who leads a discussion on current affairs from the recent elections in the United States and Quebec to the bumpy Ford mayoralty. Yiddish Vinkl at Free Times Cafe, 320 College St., Thursday Jan. 3, 12 noon. $18 includes brunch. RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca; www.yiddishvinkl.com

• Singer **Marion Ross** was born in Eastern Europe, grew up in Israel, lived and studied in the United States, and now lives in Toronto. She performs everything from Broadway to jazz, pop, soul and Latin and ethnic music. To hear samples of her singing, please visit www.marion-ross.com.

Film examines issue of Nazi-looted art

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The restitution of Nazi-looted art is one of the last dangling, unresolved issues of the Holocaust. But the incident that most probably shaped the contours of this emotional issue revolved around a single, expressive oil painting, *Portrait of Wally*, which was composed by the Austrian artist Egon Schiele (1890-1918). An exponent of expressionism, he painted it in 1912. Schiele's model, Valerie (Wally) Neuzil, was his mistress.

Portrait of Wally was owned by Lea Bondi, a Jewish art dealer based in Vienna. In 1938, following Germany's takeover of Austria, the canvas was confiscated by Friedrich Welz, one of Bondi's competitors and a Nazi party member.

Bondi tried to reclaim it in the aftermath of World War II, but her efforts were in vain. With Bondi's death in 1969, her heirs doggedly pursued the case.

The painting resurfaced in New York City in 1997, touching off a tumultuous 13-year legal battle between Bondi's relatives and Rudolph Leopold, a Viennese art collector who had bought it in 1954. The wrangling morphed into a cause célèbre, forcing museums to return works of art to their rightful Jewish owners.

Andrew Shea's 90-minute documentary, *Portrait of Wally*, retells the convoluted story in all its permutations and nuances. It will be screened at the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema (506 Bloor St. W.) on Wednesday, Jan. 9, at 6:30 p.m. and again on Thursday, Jan. 10, at 6:45 p.m.

Once the basic facts are stated, the film unfolds in chronological order, using archival footage and interviews with relevant parties to amplify the issues.

Before Germany annexed Austria, the country was home to about 200,000 Jews, some of whom made enormous contributions to its culture and economy. But Jewish Austrians basically remained outsiders in Austrian society, Shea claims.

Like Berlin, Vienna of the 1920s was a cosmopolitan city, open to new ideas and trends. Bondi thrived in this milieu. But after 1938, everything changed as Austria was Nazified.

After Bondi's art gallery was "Aryanized," Welz demanded Schiele's *Wally* painting, which had pride of place in her apartment. Bondi had no alternative but to hand it over to him. A day later, she left Austria, never to live there again.

At around this time, Welz pressured Heinrich Rieger – a wealthy Viennese Jew who was eventually deported to a concentration camp – to sell his Schiele collection at a bargain-basement price.

Egon Schiele's *Portrait of Wally*

At the end of World War II, the U.S. army occupying Austria arrested Welz and turned over the paintings he had illegally acquired to the Austrian government. The Austrian National Gallery then purchased the treasure-trove, including *Portrait of Wally*, from Rieger's descendants.

Bondi, in the early 1950s, asked Leopold – one of Austria's greatest art collectors – for his help in retrieving *Wally*. To her everlasting disappointment, she learned that Leopold had bought it for himself.

In 1994, the Austrian government purchased Leopold's immense art collection of 5,400 paintings for $500 million and deposited them in the new Leopold Museum. Leopold claimed that Rieger rather than Bondi had been the proprietor of *Portrait of Wally*.

The case took a dramatic turn in 1997 when the *New York Times* disclosed the questionable provenance of *Portrait of Wally*, one of the Schiele paintings the Leopold Museum had sent on loan for an exhibition to the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

These developments prompted the Bondi family to contact Robert Morgenthau, the New York county district attorney, who issued a subpoena forbidding *Wally*'s return to Austria.

According to Shea, the Museum of Modern Art's chairman, Ronald Lauder – a Jewish businessman, philanthropist and former U.S. ambassador to Austria – adopted a "cavalier attitude" toward *Wally*. He apparently feared that global art-lending procedures would be gravely jeopardized by a failure to send back *Wally* to Austria.

Shea's important, well-crafted film reaches a climax as the Bondi family and the Leopold Museum agree to a financial settlement in lieu of a trial.

He delves deeply into each and every facet of this case, sometimes excessively so, and explains why *Portrait of Wally* was such a landmark event in the annals of Holocaust restitution.

Web series immerses audiences through interactivity

Rosemary Dunsmore as Ava O'Deary, the eccentric owner of the fictional O'Deary Library and a fan of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Ruby Skye P.I. isn't just a television show. The teen-targeted web series blurs the line between fact and fiction, interacting with the viewers between episodes and connecting the story to real life.

Jill Golick, the creator of the program, has built a batch of websites that bring viewers into the story. For example, there are Tumblr accounts for her characters – a microblogging service popular among teenagers – where fans can follow the characters' posts.

The show is at the end of its second season, after releasing an episode a week for nine weeks. Throughout the season, the teen detective protagonist, Ruby Skye, is working on solving the mystery of a haunted library.

To coincide with the show, Golick's production company, Story 2.OH, built a website at odearylibrary.com, which is supposed to be the online version of the haunted library in the show.

The website is designed to look like a real library site, with activities for viewers, such as links to author interviews and book reviews "written" by the characters.

"Each episode stands on its own, but if you want a really deep experience, then you've got a lot of content to explore," she said.

In fact, there's so much to the program that a media studies class at Toronto's Bialik Hebrew Day School studied it the way they might study a novel, Golick said. As part of the study unit, the students created their own web series and had a mini web-series festival, she said.

Golick, who has worked on several network TV shows for teens and kids, such as *Instant Star* and *Zoboomafoo*, co-writes *Ruby Skye P.I.*

She said one of her goals with the show is to create well-written independent female characters who don't care what other people think of them.

"I don't think we serve our daughters very well with what we put on kids and tween television," she said. "We don't tell them they're smart and capable and can change the world."

That's why she works with Plan Canada's campaign, Because I Am a Girl, which aims to empower women and provide opportunities for girls in developing countries. In the show, Ruby Skye's sister, Hailey, fundraises for the campaign. Golick has even set up a personal page for Hailey on the campaign's website to accept donations.

Although the show is online only, Golick said she thinks the show has higher production values than many network television shows for kids. Most children's shows shoot in a studio and spend around three days per episode. *Ruby Skye P.I.* shoots an hour's content on location in Toronto over 10 days. The haunted library is shot in University of Toronto's Emmanuel College library.

This show isn't Golick's first time telling a story on the web. More than five years ago, when Facebook had just opened its registration to people outside of university, Golick began a project called boymeetsgrrl.

"I started to think you could tell a television story by using social media and letting characters tell their own stories," she said. She used the classic "boy meets girl" story and created two characters. The boy was a video-blogger who was sharing his story about meeting a girl. Suddenly, she ran into the frame and told him he had given her an STI (sexually transmitted infection).

Jill Golick, left, with web series actress Mariee Maslove, who plays Hailey Skye on *Ruby Skye P.I.*
(Julie Strassman-Cohn photo)

A Facebook account was created for the female character, where she would post notes asking people what she should do about the situation, and within 24 hours, people from all over the world became engrossed in the storyline, suggested diagnoses for whatever he had given her, and giving her relationship advice.

"It's such a surprise as a storyteller that people are participating in this way," Golick said. "They hated the guy. They said to her, 'Get rid of him.'"

Although she tried to make it obvious that the story and characters were fictional, she said not everybody figured it out.

"There's definitely a blurring of fact and fiction when you move into the web-space," she said, adding that the vast majority knew it was a work of fiction, but some people got very upset.

Ruby Skye P.I.'s characters have been much more obviously fiction. All the photos have a logo on them, and the characters don't interact with people in a real way.

However, given that online media is growing all the time, viewers should remember that not everything they find online is true.

Although there are several challenges that come with producing a web series – particularly in financing and finding an audience – Golick has been very successful. The number of views hit the one million mark recently, and they had one day with 100,000 views.

However, there's still a long way to go. That number is still quite small compared to network television shows.

"I think it's going to be a while before the web is mature enough to support this kind of a narrative, dramatic story," Golick said, but her experience shows that young people are not afraid of new kinds of content. The web is the right marketplace for a show for teenagers, she said.

To watch episodes of Ruby Skye P.I. visit: rubyskyepi.com

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Einstein's ambivalent relationship with Zionism

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The renowned scientist Albert Einstein had an ambivalent relationship with Zionism, a topic Ze'ev Rosenkranz expertly explores in *Einstein Before Israel: Zionist Icon or Iconoclast?* (Princeton University Press).

Rosenkranz is well positioned to delve into this subject, being senior editor of the Einstein Papers Project at the California Institute of Technology and a former curator of the Albert Einstein Archives at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

In this comprehensive account of Einstein's association with the Zionist movement, he examines the years from 1919 to 1933, an extremely important period in Einstein's life. A German Jew, Einstein burst onto the world stage in 1919 after British astronomers verified his landmark general theory of relativity. With Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933, he left Germany once and for all and settled in Princeton, N.J.

Born in Ulm, in the southern state of Wurttemberg, Einstein was a victim of childhood antisemitism. The only Jewish pupil in his elementary school class, he was taunted by antisemitic students about his physiognomy. Their biting barbs left an impression, as did Einstein's failure to find a job in academia after graduating from the Zurich Polytechnic in 1900. Rosenkranz speculates that his Jewishness may have been the reason he was the only one in his class not to land a teaching position after graduating.

In 1909, after working at the Swiss Patent Office in Bern and expressing concern that his "semitic appearance" might jeopardize his career, he finally secured a job as a physics professor at the University of Zurich. Within a year, he was offered a full professorship at the German University in Prague, the home of budding novelist Franz Kafka.

Einstein's first recorded encounter with Zionists occurred in Prague. He was neither influenced nor ideologically impressed by them, Rosenkranz writes. Indeed, Einstein disparagingly called them "medieval and unworldly people."

Einstein, having adopted Swiss citizenship in 1901, moved to Berlin in 1914, a few months before the outbreak of World War I, to take up a posting at the Prussian Academy of Sciences.

Shortly afterward, he rejected an invitation from the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg to visit Russia, saying he was upset by the "brutal manner" in which my "ethnic comrades are being persecuted." This was most likely a reference to the notorious blood libel trial of Menahem Mendel Beilis.

Rosenkranz suggests that Einstein's attitude toward Zionism crystallized in 1919, when he told Kurt Blumenfeld, a prominent Zionist in Germany, that he was ready to work for the Zionist cause. These events coincided with his divorce from his first wife, the Serbian Mileva Maric, and his marriage to his cousin, Elsa.

Einstein supported Zionism despite his general opposition to nationalism, explaining that his acceptance of Jewish nationalism was a way of dealing with his rootlessness as a Jew in Weimar, Germany.

Zionism appealed to him on an emotional level, according to Rosenkranz. "He sensed that this was a movement that could further some of the goals of utmost importance to him: the creation of a refuge for Jews from eastern Europe and the elevation of the self-esteem of his fellow Jews in the West so that they could overcome their 'servile disposition' toward their host countries."

To Einstein, Jews could only earn the respect of non-Jews by daring "to view themselves as a nation." He subscribed to the belief, shared by German Zionists, that Jews should focus on their own national dignity rather than on antisemitism. Zionism, he noted, offered "the Jewish people joy in [their] own existence."

Yet, as Rosenkranz observes, Einstein's pro-Zionist stance was also a function of his interest in establishing a university in Jerusalem to fulfil the educational needs of the Jewish population in Palestine and to provide jobs for Jewish refugees from eastern Europe. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem would be the fulfillment of this dream.

In 1921, Einstein accepted an invitation from Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization, to join him on a fundraising tour of the United States on behalf of the Hebrew University. In summarizing the strenuous two-month trip, Einstein informed a close friend that the journey had given him "the great satisfaction of having been very useful to the Zionist cause and of having assured the founding of the [Hebrew] university."

Two years later, Einstein visited Palestine for the first time. Arriving via the Egyptian city of Port Said, he was welcomed to Jerusalem by the British high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel. After a round of city tours and receptions, including a tour of Mount Scopus, the Jewish National Library and the Bezalel Art Academy, he proceeded to Tel Aviv, where he was greeted by its first mayor, Meir Dizengoff.

Einstein subsequently visited the Mikve Israel agricultural school and the town of Rishon LeZion before boarding a train for Haifa, where he paused at the Technion. From Haifa, he embarked on a tour of the Galilee, visiting the Nahalal co-operative farm (where the future Israeli general and defence minister Moshe Dayan was raised), Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee.

Einstein was impressed by the dynamic, entrepreneurial spirit of the Yishuv, the Jewish community of Palestine. He concluded that while "Palestine will not solve the Jewish problem, the revival of Palestine will mean the liberation and revival of the Jewish soul."

Although he was acutely aware of Jewish-Arab tensions in Palestine, he downplayed its potential explosiveness, Rosenkranz says. But after the director of the Jewish National Fund called for the removal of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine, following deadly clashes in the summer of 1929 that claimed 133 Jewish and 116 Arab lives, Einstein was appalled.

He wanted the Zionist leadership to take a conciliatory approach to the majority Arab population: "If we do not succeed in finding a path of sincere co-operation… with the Arabs, then we will have learned nothing from our 2,000-year-old ordeal and will deserve the fate that will await us."

Disillusioned with mainstream Zionist policy on Arab-Jewish relations, Einstein drifted into the dovish Brith Shalom camp. In a stunning comment in support of a binational entity, he declared, "I should much rather see reasonable agreement with the Arabs on the basis of living together in peace than the creation of a Jewish state."

Rosenkranz writes that Einstein reserved his greatest hope for his pet project, the Hebrew University, which to him represented "the quintessence of his expectations from Zionism: academic brilliance, personal integrity, ethnic solidarity and the pure pursuit of scholarly truth."

But even on this level, Einstein was to be disappointed. "His perception of the intolerance demonstrated toward supporters of Brith Shalom at the university further alienated him from developments on the ground in Jerusalem," Rosenkranz observes.

Due to the Holocaust, the creation of Israel and the first Arab-Israel war, however, Einstein would be preoccupied with the Zionist movement until his death in 1955.

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King David Stars play Goliaths of Toronto soccer

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

If you thought playing soccer in the blustery, bone-chilling conditions of November was tough, then December ought to be – a lot warmer.

That's when they move the game indoors, so instead of bundling up against the cold, the boys and girls of the King David Stars Academy will continue their soccer training in ideal conditions. Soccer, it turns out, is something like hockey in that it has become a 12-month sport, with aficionados heading indoors when the weather does not permit them to play outside.

Inside, they play futsal, a brand of soccer developed in Latin America that features a smaller ball. "It's lightning quick, it teaches close control, skill and quick thinking," said Martin Scott, who co-owns the Academy. "Playing that in the winter makes the outdoor game so much better."

The 60 members of the academy's "elite" section – there are another 40 in the "incubator," the development division – will play in the Driftwood Hispanic Soccer League (DHSL). That's one of the city's most competitive circuits, which has produced a number of professional players, Scott said. The King David Stars Academy will field four teams, ranging in age from four- and five-year-olds to 10- and 11-year-olds.

The boys and girls generally really are Davids compared to the Goliaths they compete against, said Scott, who operated the Maccabi Toronto soccer program for 32 years. Opponents are usually much bigger and sometimes older, as the academy often puts younger players with older ones to speed their development, and where their skills warrant, he said.

Martin Scott

Going into the winter season, Scott believes he has reason for optimism. At the tail end of the outdoor season, playing in the SAAC (Soccer Academy Alliance Canada), his 2004 boys (the date refers to their year of birth) outperformed all other academy teams. They were the best among Toronto teams in a season-ending tournament and lost in a penalty shootout to a loaded guest team from outside the city, Scott said.

Scott attributes the success of the academy teams to the challenging training regimen and the quality coaching provided. His partner, Boris Krimus, is the head coach.

Krimus played professionally in Israel and Russia in both countries' elite leagues. A former defender, he specializes in the technical aspects of the game – everything from breathing properly during runs to striking the ball most effectively, Scott said.

Other coaches include Raphael Fell, who played for North York Hearts, and Dejan Vugrincic, a former Yugoslav professional.

The kids in the academy's elite program practise four times a week and play one game, Scott said. SAAC was flexible enough to schedule the academy's games on Sunday, allowing Orthodox players to participate, he added.

The academy approach differs from the one practised by more traditional club teams, Scott continued. "This model has more focus on developing the individual player, not necessarily on the team."

Academy players play a more possession game, something like the Spanish world champions, who feature a lot of quick, short passes.

"We try to focus on developing the most difficult position, the creative midfielder," he said. "The first thing we do is train kids to pass the ball and change their focus to passing, moving and doing something else."

Popularized by the Dutch team, Ajax, the academy approach was transplanted to Barcelona by 1970s Dutch superstar Johan Cruyff.

It's that style that permits the sometimes undersized King David teams to get the better of their bigger opponents, Scott said.

Greenberg signs minor league deal with the Orioles

JTA

BALTIMORE, Md. — Jewish player Adam Greenberg gets a chance to resume his professional baseball career after signing a minor league deal with the Baltimore Orioles.

Greenberg, 31, has signed a minor-league contract with the Orioles and will work to get a spot on their Class AAA farm team in Norfolk, Va.

Chosen by the Chicago Cubs in the ninth round of the 2002 draft, Greenberg was beaned in his only Major League at-bat, as a pinch-hitter on July 9, 2005. He suffered a concussion.

The Cubs released Greenberg in June 2006. After that, he played in the minor leagues with the Los Angeles Dodgers, Kansas City Royals and Cincinnati Reds. He spent 2009, 2010 and 2011 playing for the Bridgeport Bluefish of the independent Atlantic League.

Greenberg's story resurfaced in September when he was tapped to replace the injured Gabe Kapler for Team Israel in the World Baseball Classic qualifiers in Jupiter, Fla. In his only at-bat of the qualifiers, Greenberg walked against South Africa and scored on a single by Shawn Green coupled with an error.

At approximately the same time, an online campaign called "One at Bat" had fans rallying for Greenberg to be given another shot at the majors. Greenberg was offered the second chance on Sept. 28 when the Marlins surprised him with a one-day contract announced live on NBC's *Today* show. He struck out as a pinch hitter in a game against the New York Mets, but returned to the dugout smiling and was greeted by high fives and hugs from his Marlins teammates for the day.

"To get the opportunity with the Orioles means everything to me," he said.

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HEEBONICS

Community professional balances eclectic interests, demanding job

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Mindy Eklove never expected to end up as a Jewish community professional.

A student of nutrition who writes a food blog in her spare time, Eklove also devotes three nights a week to muay thai boxing and has acted in two independent films.

The 31-year-old – who grew up in Montreal, as the third of six children in a tightly knit modern Orthodox family – moved to Toronto in May 2007 to work for Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA (then UIA Federations Canada) as national director of young leadership.

In 2011, she also became director of coast-to-coast Israel and overseas.

She balances a demanding job that involves a lot of travel by being "really good with time management," she said in an interview in her office at the Lipa Green Centre. "I come in early, usually before 7:30, and... I stay late if needed, or come in on Sunday."

But she doesn't work late often, she added. "I'm very organized, despite the organized mess," she said, referring to the untidy piles of paper on her desk. "I'm extremely type A. I get things done. I get them done fast. I'm very efficient and detail-oriented... I also tend to surround myself with things I love, and I do better."

In November, at the General Assembly of Jewish Federations of North America in Baltimore, Eklove received a young professionals' award from the Jewish Communal Service Association of North America (JCSA).

In her speech at the award presentation, she said that joining the B'nai Brith Youth Organization (BBYO) as a teenager changed her life.

Eklove became a member after a Grade 9 trip to Israel with Herzliah High School, when she became friends with some girls who belonged to the organization.

She went on to become regional president, and later – beginning as a part-time job when she was a theatre student at Concordia University – she became regional director for the Eastern Canada region of BBYO. "The teenagers were fantastic. We had a great time," she said.

At the same time, she was teaching Jewish history and heritage at afternoon schools and in a Jewish heritage program at a local elementary school.

Her former boss, Linda Kislowicz, now CEO of Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA, suggested that she apply for the federation job in Toronto.

Eklove had no previous involvement in the Jewish federation world and knew little about it, she said.

Mindy Eklove [*Frances Kraft photo*]

She spent the first few months on the job familiarizing herself with the system and visiting the affiliated communities, "then forged ahead."

It helped that she had "a really strong support system," including Kislowicz and Michael Soberman, UIA's director of national initiatives for the next generation, who had hired her.

"I'm a really strong believer in mentorship," she said. "I hope I'll be able to do that in the future."

Soberman, who nominated Eklove for the JCSA award, told *The CJN* that although Eklove was relatively young and "didn't have tons of experience" when he met her, he was "blown away by her enthusiasm, passion and ability to take on new challenges."

Eklove, in turn, credits Soberman and her father, Charles, as her two biggest influences. In her acceptance speech, Eklove described her father as "one of the smartest and most Jewishly educated people I know."

At home, she told *The CJN*, her dad "always talked about Jewish values... and would encourage us to do the same."

Denominationally, she describes herself as "non-practising Orthodox. That's what I identify with and what makes the most sense to me. It's not the lifestyle I want now, but it's the one I believe in the most."

As a child growing up in Hampstead, Eklove was at home for family dinners "every single night, and Friday was special." As well, there were family activities such as charades or board games every weekend.

Family comes first, Eklove said. "You have to understand what is important and what isn't. I work with deadlines. If I have to miss a yoga class to meet my deadlines, I do. I'm scheduled, but also flexible enough that when things come up, I can handle them."

That ability stood her in good stead recently when she was working toward her master's degree in Jewish professional services from Spertus College in Chicago.

Eklove said it's a privilege for her to see the impact that federation funds have on people's lives. "It's my job," she said. "But it's a privilege."

Unlike some people who work at high-intensity careers and suffer burnout, Eklove said she has become more enthusiastic and more excited to come to work. Her job "just gets more interesting."

Because she had much to learn at the beginning, she feels that now she is able to focus on "things that really matter. That makes this job really incredible.

"I always wanted to do something that changed people's lives. To be able to do that for the Jewish community is being able to marry a lot of the values I hold dear."

More news for young Jews on heebonics.ca

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Trying not to judge

Dear Ella,

Every new year, I try to improve on one thing. I don't like to call it a New Year's resolution, but that's pretty much what it is. I should let you know that I'm rarely successful at any of my commitments, except once I did actually quit smoking.

This year, however, I'm going to attempt a real toughy. I'm going to make an effort to not judge people. Usually, I'm extremely judgmental, not only assuming things about complete strangers based on their appearance, but also judging friends and family about the way they choose to run their lives, and often their kids' lives.

Ask Ella

By Ella Burakowski

I'm single, have never been married and have never had children, but somehow I seem to know what makes sense in certain situations, and I often feel like conking someone over the head and saying, "Are you nuts?" Situations seem so clear to me and yet I see people I care about making the most ridiculous life decisions. But no more! This is the year I put a stop to that. I'm setting myself up for failure, aren't I?

No More Judging

Dear No More Judging,

A toughy indeed. At least you've been able to identify an uncomplimentary trait and are making an effort to fix it. Will you be successful? Time, awareness and practice will tell.

It's difficult not to be judgmental. Almost everyone does it without even realizing it. If people are honest, they'll admit to judging the young man wearing fairly new Nikes at a red light holding up a sign for money, or a group of teenage boys wearing hoodies and baggy pants, or the guy in the luxury sedan talking on his cellphone who just cut them off in traffic, or even the mom of the screaming kid in the grocery store. We make these judgments even though we've never met the person or have no idea of the situation. We also make judgments about friends and family – perhaps a friend who doesn't work, or a parent whose teen has gone wild or a cousin who's overweight, or even a nasty boss or co-worker.

Maybe the guy who cut you off just found out his child has been rushed to the hospital. Maybe your friend isn't working because he or she is depressed, afraid or dealing with another emotional problem.

There's a very fine line between snap judgment and reasoned opinion. The type of judgment you're referring to comes from a quick, reactive thought, based on your own life experience and ego. A reasoned opinion is more thought-driven and leaves the door open for discussion. Snap judgments are finite, closed, automatic and made based on the way you've conducted your own life and how you feel about yourself.

To be successful, start with never assuming you know what's going on in someone's life, and never jump to conclusions. I commend you on attempting to fix this difficult habit. It may not be possible to stop judging completely, but every time you catch yourself, you'll have become a little bit of a better person.

Remember, others are judging you, too, so this may be one of those times when what goes around, comes around.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: ellacjn@gmail.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

MEATLOAF MUFFINS

- 2 lb. lean ground beef
- 1 can condensed vegetable soup
- 1/2 c chopped onion
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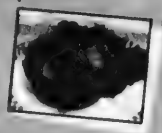
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 3/4 c ketchup



Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly grease a 12 cup muffin pan. Mix ground beef, soup, onion, bread crumbs, eggs, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Scoop mixture evenly into prepared muffin cups.
Bake 1 hour in oven; remove from oven after 50 min., drizzle ketchup and put back into oven for 10 min.

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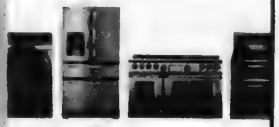

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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships (CCPPP) which has awarded the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM), the Collectif Santé Montréal and Infrastructure Québec the 2012 Gold Prize for financing construction of the new CHUM.

The recent gala of the Canadian Friends of Migdal Ohr, where Rabbi Yitzchak Grossman, chief rabbi of Migdal HaEmek, founder and dean of Migdal Ohr educational institutions, talked about the work the school does to help disadvantaged children in Israel.

Former Winnipegger creates financial guide for North Americans considering aliyah.

In Jamaica you can swim with dolphins and pray in a sanctuary with a sand-covered floor.

The Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre is urging the Canadian government to remove Hungary and possibly other eastern European countries from the list of designated "safe" countries of origin created by the new Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act, formerly known as the omnibus refugee Bill C-31.

Whom can you trust with end-of-life decisions?

It is almost a given that older individuals invariably appoint their children to be their substitute decision-makers when they set out to create a power of attorney for personal care, whether or not it includes an advance directive known colloquially as a "living will."

The understandable assumption is this: who can you trust to better fulfil your most important decisions about end-of-life care than your most cherished family members? It's one thing if you have never communicated your wishes to your children, something I suggest is a serious abrogation of crucial communication. It's another if, after you have expressed your deep-felt wishes, your children choose to reinterpret or apparently ignore your instructions for their own personal reasons or values.

Senior Side of Life

Michael Gordon

I am not referring to the unfortunately common phenomenon of what family therapists may refer to as "dysfunctional families" of which there seem to be a wide spectrum, but to the fact that varying degrees of family strife and conflict are not uncommon. I am concerned as much about apparently fully functional and ostensibly loving and respectful families who become dissociated from those they are supposed to represent when important decisions have to be made, and couch their decisions in terms of apparent psychological conflict. This type of conflict is often called "moral distress" when health-care professionals find that they are acting on decision-making processes that conflict deeply with their professional and personal values.

I have had cases where the older patient's wishes that my colleagues and I were asked to comment on appeared to be clearly expressed and documented but were overridden or ignored by apparently loving and devoted children. A commonly repeated scenario is that an older person writes a living will in the presence of a responsible legal advisor and has consistently indicated a mentally competent wish to not have a permanent feeding tube provided under defined circumstances.

Yet, the children end up requesting that such a tube be inserted even in the face of the apparently contradictory instructions. This often occurs in late-stage dementia or other brain diseases where the level of mental interaction with those the person loves will never return to any semblance of function acceptable to them.

I have heard children claim, even in the face of very clear instructions about not wishing permanent artificial nutrition and hydration (a feeding tube) in a well-documented living will, that they "cannot bring themselves to make that decision," or that they "could not live with themselves in making such a decision."

I have witnessed cases that eventually get referred to the legal tribunal that adjudicates such situations. Then, even in the face of a decision that upholds the living will instructions, the family pursues all other legal means possible to allow them to not carry out the wishes of their parent. These cases often involve families that espouse love and devotion as the reason for their failure to follow the instructions.

What is the solution, short of designating a non-family member you can trust as your substitute decision-maker, someone who is not intimately involved emotionally in the necessary decisions? At a minimum, you need to to discuss your wishes with your loved ones and have them assure you as much as anyone can that they understand what you are asking and that they are willing and able to respect your wishes, even if these wishes may be in conflict with their own beliefs, values and emotional capabilities.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest. His latest book is Late-Stage Dementia, Promoting Comfort, Compassion and Care. His previous book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his memoir, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

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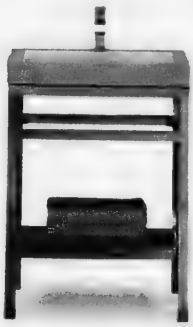

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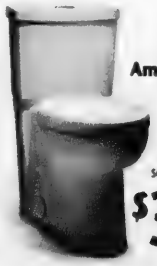

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This Week

National

Hamilton mother, son need new kidneys. *Page 3*

Jews for Judaism takes message to Web. *Page 6*

Nikki Yanofsky part of tribute DVD to Streisand. *Page 13*

Spice of Life

French onion soup perfect for cold days. *Page 24*

Heebonics

Torontonian creates group for gay men. *Page 42*

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One-third of Israelis still undecided: poll

Election less than two weeks away

Stephan Miller
The Times of Israel

A new pre-election poll conducted exclusively for *The Times of Israel* shows that a remarkable 31 per cent of likely voters in the Jan. 22 Israeli elections remain undecided.

The perceptions, ideology and demographics of that undecided bloc lean slightly more to the centre-left than to the right, suggesting that the final two weeks of the campaign may see a narrowing of the gap between the right-wing and centre-left blocs. It may be that the profusion of centre-left parties has resulted in a relatively substantial proportion of centre-left voters weighing their options even at this late stage.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's centre-right Likud-Beiteinu will still almost certainly win the most seats, and will almost certainly be better placed than the centre-left parties to build the next coalition, the survey indicates, but the margins of his victory may well be narrower than most recent polls have suggested, and his coalition dilemmas more complex.

For more election coverage, see pages 9 and 34

Formulated by *The Times of Israel* and the political consultancy firm (202) Strategies, with field work conducted by TRI-Strategic Research between Dec. 25 and Jan. 2, the survey is the most accurate publicly available poll to date, having questioned a relatively large sample of 803 *likely* voters – as opposed to the Hebrew media's norm of 500 *eligible* voters. Of those 803, also in contrast to the Hebrew media norm, 10 per cent of *The Times of Israel* surveys were conducted by cellphone, and another 10 per cent were conducted in Arabic.

The poll shows the Likud-Beiteinu alliance at 34 seats after the undecideds have been factored in on a proportional basis, Shelly Yachimovich's Labor party rising to 21, a strong Jewish Home (Habayit Hayehudi) under the leadership of recently elected party leader Naftali Bennett at 15, and a falling Hatnua party under Tzipi Livni at six. Deeper analysis of the survey's findings, however, suggests that the undecideds may not ultimately divide proportionately, and that a slightly greater proportion of them are wavering between the various centre-left and left-wing parties, rather than between the right-wing parties.

Shelly Yachimovich, head of the Israeli Labor party, is seen riding her bike through the streets of Tel Aviv as part of her party's 2013 election campaign.

[Flash90 photo]

Respondents were asked who they would vote for if elections were held that day. Likely voters representing a full 31 per cent of the electorate – or 37 seats in the 120-member Knesset – said they did not yet know. Another five per cent said they would vote for parties that would not come close to receiving the two per cent of the popular vote required to claim a Knesset seat – including Am Shalem, Otzma Leyisrael and Kadima.

Continued on page 32

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Shas leader urges followers to reject IDF – please see page 31

CANADA

Jubilee Medals

WINNIPEG — Three members of the Jewish community were presented with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medals recently. Larry Vickar, Ivan Berkowitz and Joseph Wilder were recognized for their support of a wide variety of charities and community involvement. The medal was created to mark the 2012 celebrations of the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne.

WORLD

Al Jazeera in U.S.A.

NEW YORK —The Al Jazeera news network has purchased Current TV, the cable outlet founded by former vice-president Al Gore and intends to start a U.S.-based news channel. The sale price was not disclosed, but it is estimated to be up to $500 million (U.S.). Time Warner Cable, which reaches about 12 million homes in the United States, said it was terminating its contract to carry Current TV. Current also is distributed by Comcast Corp. and DirecTV, with 22.4 million and 19.8 million subscribers, respectively. The new Al Jazeera channel will begin airing this year. Al Jazeera is owned by the government of Qatar.

A Mufti in Gaza

SYDNEY — Leading a delegation of Australian sheiks, the mufti of Australia visited Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in the Gaza Strip, triggering condemnation from the country's Jewish community and a potential government probe. Dr. Ibrahim (Abu Mohammed) Salem said he wanted to learn "steadfastness, sacrifice and the defence of one's rights" from Hamas leaders. The military wing of Hamas is listed as a proscribed terrorist organization by the Australian government. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs said authorities would investigate any allegations of unlawful behaviour.

Trees to Memorialize Shooting Victims

NEW YORK — More than 2,000 people have donated funds to plant a grove of more than 3,000 trees in Israel in memory of the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown.

Hadassah has raised more than $61,000 (U.S.) toward the planting of trees honouring the 26 victims of the Dec. 14 massacre. The trees will be part of the Be'er Sheva River Park, a 1,700-acre water, environmental and commercial area being constructed by the Jewish National Fund in Israel's desert city.

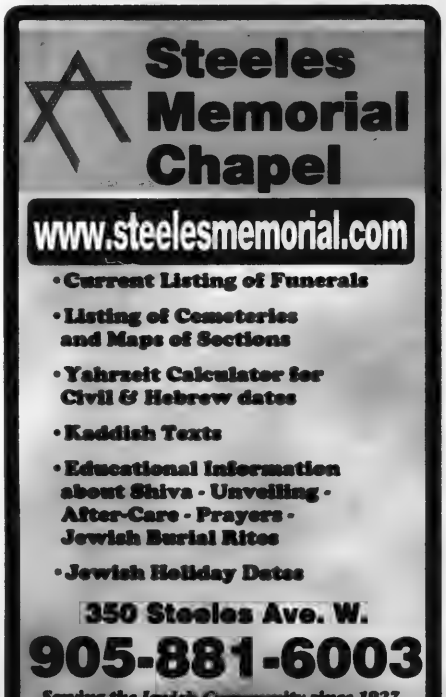
The idea for the Newtown grove grew from a request by Veronique Pozner, whose son, Noah, was the only Jewish victim of the shooting at the Connecticut school. Pozner said memorial contributions could be directed toward the planting of trees in Israel.

The president of Hadassah, Marcie Natan, said her organization decided it wanted to honour all the victims of the massacre, not just Noah.

"Everybody was so affected by the massacre and wanted to do something to express their solidarity with the families," Natan said. "Each of us have had the experience of non-Jews who have found it very meaningful when a tree is planted in the Holy Land."

Oscar Says No

LOS ANGELES — Israel's 2012 Academy Award entry failed to make the list of nine semifinalists among foreign-language films. Israel's entry, *Fill the Void*, was eliminated, and the country's Oscar hopes now rest in the documentary feature category, where *The Gatekeepers*, from director Dror Moreh, and *5 Broken Cameras*, a collaboration between Emud Burnat and Guy Davidi, a Palestinian and an Israeli respectively, are among the 15 semifinalists.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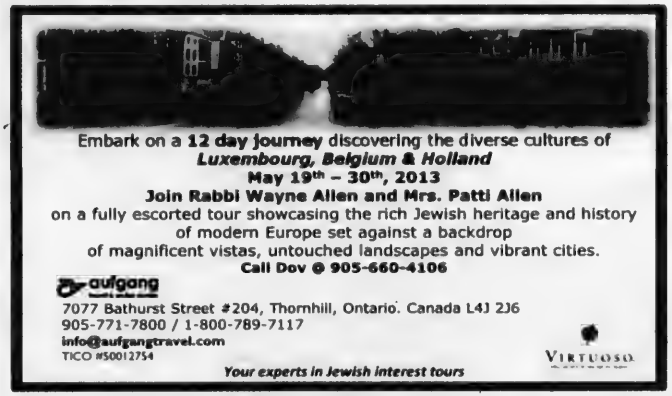
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Mother and son seek kidney transplants

Arie Pekar, second from right, was hoping to receive a kidney from his brother, Joshua, second from left. But Joshua was not a suitable donor, so Arie waits, along with his mom, Ilana, right, who also needs a kidney. They both suffer from the same genetic disease. Arie's wife Joy, left, hopes sharing their story will help the family. ***(Cathie Coward photo)***

Abigail Cukier
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — Arie Pekar was fooling around one day with his mom's blood pressure machine when he discovered his reading was exceptionally high.

His mom, Ilana, has a blood pressure machine because she was then doing home dialysis for polycystic kidney disease (PKD), which causes cysts to develop and interfere with the organ's ability to filter waste from the blood. Very high blood pressure is an early sign of this genetic disease.

Arie was tested and, at age 21, he found out he had inherited the condition.

Because Arie was diagnosed early and while he was in good health, doctors were optimistic about his prognosis. But despite preventive treatments and a healthy lifestyle, his disease is progressing quickly.

The Dundas, Ont., resident, now 33, was told about a year ago to prepare for a kidney transplant.

Friends and family have been tested and ruled out. His brother, Joshua, 30, is a perfect match. Over almost a year, he passed all screening tests to be able to donate a kidney to Arie – except for one. Although Joshua does not have PKD, doctors say his kidneys don't function perfectly. While this will most likely not affect his health, it prohibits him from being a donor.

"This was a devastating shock," said Ilana. "Joshua was so gung-ho on doing this for Arie, who was banking on it. My concern is for Arie to get a kidney before dialysis. In the meantime, his kidneys are declining. We don't know what will happen.

"I welcome anything toward myself, but it's very difficult to see him burdened by this."

Continued on page 19

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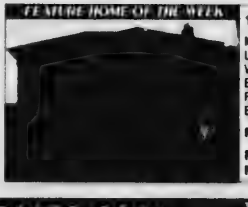
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A grandmother's blessing

Twenty-five years ago today my grandmother passed away. In commemoration of her yahrzeit, I reproduce an article that first appeared on Feb. 5, 1987.

From the editor's desk...

It is through the interplay of life's opposites that we gain insight into ourselves.

We are moved by this reflection because in the silence of still moments, we understand very clearly that this is the truth of the human condition.

With my young children, I recently went to visit my grandmother, a lovely woman, an old woman, a woman of 90. Unlike the opposites that are found in nature, there was no subtlety to the juxtaposition of opposites in this instance. My daughters, in the very dawn of their lives, their senses, their energy, their vitality awakening daily to unlimited possibilities. My grandmother, in the same room, struggling with dusk, depleted of physical essence, her life force receding. For her, no possibilities are left.

The real pathos of growing old is losing faith in one's possibilities. The day that she entered the nursing home is the day that she lost that faith.

As a rule, it is difficult to engraft the obligations of one's heart upon the hearts of one's children. After all, one person's loves may be another person's chores. This is ever more so the case when the parent's heart is deeply obliged to an enfeebled, blind, old woman whose very appearance, simply, is unsettling to the youngsters. And yet, this old woman is my grandmother, the mother of my mother, the woman whose home was my home, whose arms were my arms, whose laughter was my laughter, whose love was my love. But she will never be to my children what she was to me; nor can I make it so. Knowing this, I ache.

When we arrive at the nursing home, the children cling to each other and to me. They are frightened, frankly, by the faces, the sounds, the gestures, the misshapen postures of so many of the people, who, from their wheelchairs, greet them with curiosity in the main lobby. All eyes focus upon the four young little curly tops who have entered their home. This merely quickens the pace of the girls. We go directly to the elevator. It smells unmistakably, though faintly, of dried urine. The girls look at each other, then at me, in silent acknowledgment of the fact.

The same faces, the same sounds, the same gestures, the same postures, though of different persons, are assembled in a concave congregation of wheelchairs and walkers as we emerge from the elevator.

The girls still hold tightly to each other.

We enter my grandmother's room, her home. She is standing slightly bent over, holding on to her walker.

She is inclined toward the doorway, but she is not walking. Her look is toward the doorway, but she does not see.

I call out to her. I call her name. I announce my arrival loudly, affectionately.

Like a strong, reviving breeze into a limp sail, the sound of my voice immediately straightens her up. More to herself than to me, in a sighing whisper, she says my name twice.

"I have the girls with me. They came to see you. They wanted to come."

I walk quickly, directly to her. I kiss her on the forehead and in her hair. I hold her face in my hands, tracing and caressing its gaunt, taut shape with my fingers. Her eyes close as I touch her. She places a hand over mine as it presses lightly upon her skin. She is still standing. And the children are carefully watching my love for my grandmother.

She can only see the shapes of the four young visitors who are now standing in a tiny cluster at her side. She cannot see their faces. She reaches for them, asking me to identify each child for her as she settles her hands upon a child's shoulders.

Miraculously, without instruction, each child steps forward without hesitation to embrace and be embraced by this very old woman, to kiss her and to offer up the sound of her voice and the touch and contact of her body. They have left their fear in the hallway and for this I am truly grateful.

I guide my grandmother to the largest chair in her one-room home. I sit down beside her. I do not let go of her hand. The girls hover around us, close enough to my grandmother that she is constantly touching them and "staring" at them and even laughing.

The conversation is quite secondary to the occasion although it is unceasing. There are no silent moments because silence is the woman's normal companion. For now, this very short time being, I her grandson and my four children, are her companions.

Inevitably, our visit must end.

I whisper to my grandmother that it is time for me to take the girls home. I cannot hide my melancholy. She senses this.

"Bring the little girls forward so that I may bless them."

Like Joseph at his father's final bedside, I present each of the girls, one at a time, for the invocation of my grandmother's blessing.

Each in her turn, a little girl approaches her. My grandmother embraces them and kisses them one at a time. She carefully speaks her words of promise and of possibility to each girl in a language none of the children understands.

The tears are in my eyes alone.

Outside, as we leave the building, my grandmother's home, the girls run and skip to the car parked close by.

I walk slowly, now alone with my fear.

And the person for whom I fear, I have just left behind.

(One year later, my grandmother passed away.)

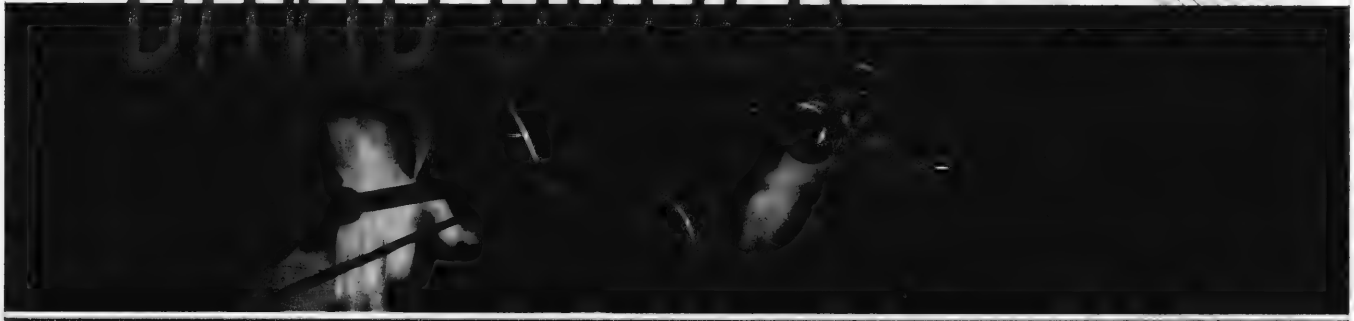
–MRD

UJA's Campaign Closing Celebration

United Jewish Appeal

Join United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto as we celebrate the success of our Annual Campaign 2013 for what is sure to be an unforgettable experience. The evening will feature renowned Israeli author and journalist **Yossi Klein Halevi** and one of the most dynamic singer-songwriter instrumentalists in the world **David Broza.**

DAVID BROZA



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Dessert Reception / Kashruth observed

Jews for Judaism goes digital in its fight

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Julius Ciss and Rabbi Michael Skobac are well-known among "messianic Jews," and when Ciss showed up at a recent program in a seniors residence, organizers asked him to leave.

For years, Ciss and Rabbi Skobac have been monitoring the activities of organizations targeting Jews, showing up at their meetings and conferences with a counter-message: that the "messianic" community is not offering Jews a different way to fulfil their Judaism, but are enticing people to adopt the Christian faith.

What particularly concerns them is the "deceptive" manner in which recruitment is conducted: the flyer advertising the Chanukah program made no mention of the fact that the sponsor was a Christian organization. In fact, they say, in keeping with Christian outreach efforts to Jews, it misleadingly makes it appear the event is Jewish, when it's not.

"We want to show people that it's not a Jewish event," Ciss said in an interview in Jews for Judaism's cramped quarters. "It's a missionary event."

Though the event included Jewish traditions, like lighting candles and singing songs, the missionaries provide followup literature hoping to entice participants into, eventually, "believing in Jesus," Ciss said.

Displaying plenty of chutzpah, Ciss stood at a window outside the room, holding a sign informing participants that the event they were attending was not really kosher.

Though Jews for Judaism Canada employed a low-tech message on that occasion, it has increasingly turned to more up-to-date digital formats to counter missionary activities.

Evangelists have already adopted Facebook and Twitter to recruit. "They see it as incredibly fertile grounds for them," Rabbi Skobac said. Their spin is to position Jesus as the full and final expression of Judaism and not as an alternative religion.

Jews for Judaism has placed a video on YouTube addressing that argument. It has paid for an ad on Google that takes viewers to YouTube with videos by Rabbi Skobac. "We're getting incredible results," he said, with 120,000 views in April alone and more than 50,000 on KosherTube.

Rabbi Skobac, who had to "get schlepped onto Facebook," now has 4,300 friends. "We do a lot of Jews for Judaism work through Facebook. We get 10 inquiries a day through our Facebook portal," he said.

Using 21st-century media techniques helps Jews for Judaism keep the fight on a level playing field, but Ciss and Rabbi Skobac believe missionary groups are deceptive in their fundamental message. They wouldn't otherwise leave out the sponsoring group when they publicize ostensibly Jewish events.

"It's not making it clear that it's a Christian organization trying to convert you to Christianity," Rabbi Skobac said.

Chosen People Ministries recently held a training session, and "many of this year's participants are Filipinos, many of them caregivers in Jewish homes and senior residences," Rabbi Skobac said.

"We've always known that missionaries target seniors and people in nursing homes. Caregivers who are proselytizing is going on worldwide. These are people who are often religious" and want to share their beliefs. "They don't want that poor old Jewish person to go to hell if they don't embrace Jesus," he said.

"Missionaries see caregivers as potential recruiters to target people who are vulnerable," he added. "We're not trying to create a panic, to imply that all Filipino caregivers are a problem, just to make people aware this is going on."

There are some 180 missionary groups operating in North America, including some that consist of Jews who've converted. "It is not diminishing," Ciss said.

"It is not as if these people are trying but not succeeding," Rabbi Skobac continued. "It's a lot of work to convert the small numbers of people converting."

Sometimes the effort begins innocuously enough, with missionaries spending time in coffee shops in Jewish neighbourhoods, reading their Bibles and trying to start conversations about Scripture. Another tactic is to send a couple of dozen missionaries to the annual Walk for Israel. They'd wear a T-shirt that stated, "Ask me about my rabbi," or "I love (using a heart) Yeshua," the Hebrew name for Jesus.

When it comes right down to it, the primary message of missionaries is not one of biblical interpretation. "Our experience has been that generally Jews don't convert to Christianity because of what the Bible says. It's for other reasons. Usually, it's feeling a spiritual vacuum," Rabbi Skobac said.

It's the same reason some Jews explore Buddhism. The problem is "they don't know much about Judaism; they had a shallow religious experience. They have a hole in the soul."

They feel Christianity provides a spiritual outlet and "once they embrace Christianity, they get interested in the Bible."

"Jews for Judaism exposes them to Jews who take God seriously, who pray to God every day and not necessarily from a prayer book.

"We get them to know who we are as people of faith and let them see there is something outside of the church.

"They're afraid. They're on a lifeboat and (they fear) if they step off, there's nothing there. We show Judaism's spiritual side. We spread the word that Judaism has this stuff... that Jewish teachings affect the core of our lives."

Turkey develops ties with Iraqi Kurds

Last week's column ended on a note about how, in a rapidly changing Middle East undergoing strategic realignment, Turkey has been moving away from Iran and the Iranian-backed Syrian regime. Moreover, Turkey shares some strategic interests with Israel.

There is another major piece of this picture. Turkey has also soured on the Iranian-influenced central government in Iraq headed by Shia leader Nuri al-Maliki, and is instead developing strong ties with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) in Erbil in northern Iraq. Ankara is increasingly relying on oil and gas from this autonomous Kurdish region, much to the consternation of Baghdad.

Mideast analyst Jonathan Spyer addressed this issue in the Dec. 27 *Jerusalem Post*: "Ankara, which once viewed the development of a Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq with extreme suspicion, now appears to see Erbil as a possible ally against Baghdad and Tehran."

This move is ironic given that Turkey has a fractious relationship with its own sizable Kurdish minority numbering almost 20 million in the eastern part of the country. While Iraqi Kurds are semi-independent and may yet strive for complete autonomy from Baghdad, Turkey's Kurds are still struggling for independence even after having renounced their desire for sovereignty. Since coming to power in 2003, Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Erdogan made some improvements in the lives of the Kurds (30,000 to 40,000 of whom were killed in clashes with previous Turkish governments, especially in the 1990s). However, in the past couple of years there have been setbacks and Erdogan recently clamped down harshly on Kurdish militants of the outlawed PKK, based mainly in northern Iraq. Clashes last year between the Turkish army and Kurdish insurgents left more than 700 dead, including a number of Kurdish civilians.

So what might be the implications of Ankara's budding relations with the KRG for Turkey's own historically oppressed Kurds?

In *Iraq, Kurds, Turks and Oil: A Tortuous Triangle*, the *Economist* (Dec. 22) explained that Erdogan's government is trying to capitalize on divisions among the Kurds: "Turkey's government is using its commercial clout to press the Iraqi Kurds' president, Masoud Barzani, to help restrain militant Kurds within Turkey."

That commercial clout is significant. "A wide-ranging energy deal is in the works that will see state-backed Turkish firms and western oil majors plough money into Kurdish infrastructure and oilfields, connecting them to Turkey and the world beyond. The deal could eventually allow for up to 2M [barrels per day] of Kurdish oil exports to go through Turkey. [In 2011] trade between Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan amounted to $8 billion," the *Economist* reported.

The term "Kurdistan" conveys its own irony since the Kurds – now more than 35 million strong in Iraq (six million), Iran (10 million), Syria (1.6 million) and Turkey – had been promised a state of their own, Kurdistan, in the aftermath of World War I. It was not to be. They have largely been ignored. No clamour has been raised internationally for their statehood.

Ofra Bengio, head of the Kurdish Studies Program at Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center, noted last month in *Ha'aretz* that "the Kurds in general are an ancient nation who have lived in their homeland from time immemorial. They have a unique language, culture and identity, all of which differentiate them from their [Arab] neighbours in the various lands where they live." According to Bengio, historically, they have a claim to self-determination at least as strong, if not stronger than that of the Palestinians. But, unfortunately, they lack advocates and proponents.

Many years ago, the *New Republic* remarked sardonically that the real plight of the Kurds was not to have had the Jews as their enemy, for otherwise the world would certainly have taken up their cause.

As the face of the post-Arab Spring Middle East continues to change, it will be interesting to keep an eye on important developments involving the Kurds – especially in Turkey – given the model they see in neighbouring Iraq. "Kurdistan" may finally become a more familiar term in the news this year.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

Israelis demonstrate on behalf of a free Kurdistan.
[*Flash90 photo*]

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Palestinian indifference to Palestinian suffering

Like a string of three shining pearls held up against the sun, three discrete reports last week from Palestinian sources cast new revelations, if not actual new light, on the way their leaders treat their own people and truth.

• Each for different reasons, Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA) have spurned requests from the United Nations to take in some of the Palestinians fleeing for their lives from Syria.

Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas leader of Gaza, justified his refusal on ideology: he wants his suffering brethren to resettle in Israel. The PA explained its shrug of the indifferent shoulder on the basis of funds: it cannot afford to receive them.

• Yasser Arafat's widow, Suha, told Dubai TV that her husband had indeed planned the second intifadah all along. The Palestine Liberation Organization leader would not agree to the pleas and entreaties of U.S. president Bill Clinton and Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak to finally, peacefully, end the conflict. As Suha disclosed, her much venerated husband viewed negotiation and compromise as "betray[ing] the Palestinian cause."

• The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics published figures stating that by the year 2020, there will be more Arabs than Jews in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian figures may or may not be accurate. But they are the proverbial red herring: the only figures that count are the number of Jews in the State of Israel.

Israel has already separated from Gaza. The majority of Israelis wish to separate from the West Bank, too. They know it is the moral and pragmatically correct solution for truly ensuring the safety, security and Jewish majority of the Jewish state. But they seek a means of doing so that very distinctly does not follow the Gaza withdrawal precedent. That means separation, that is, a two-state solution, must be negotiated. However, the PA refuses to negotiate.

Over the past four years, the PA has demanded the right to dictate the terms under which negotiations must begin. And it has cleverly manipulated world opinion into providing diplomatic cover for its own refusal to sit at the table with Israel.

Thus it is especially disingenuous and exceptionally cloying to read former PA official Hanan Ashrawi say: "If the situation [the demographic trends according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics] carries on this way, at the end we'll be a majority, but we're giving the Israelis a chance to understand the Palestinians could have their own democratic country that would neighbour Israel." Her statement is entirely hollow. It is aimed at a fawning foreign media and diplomatic corps. It is her very own PA of Mahmoud Abbas (and Arafat before him) that has refused from the first to give birth *through peaceful means* of a democratic country. Indeed it even refuses today to provide safe harbour for the wretched Palestinians trying to flee Syria.

Palestinian leaders continue to ill serve their people.

Dry Bones

BLOODSHED IN SYRIA, TERROR IN PAKISTAN, ATTACKS IN AFRICA ARE ALL PART OF A GLOBAL MISUNDERSTANDING
THE QUESTION IS NOT HOW DID THE WORLD GET INTO THIS FIX!
THE QUESTION IS HOW DO WE GET OUT OF IT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "WE" INFIDEL?

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Positive feelings about rabbi not reported

You have done a great disservice to my shul, my congregation and my rabbi, Steven Schonblum. The article "Rabbi's contract not renewed at Beth Radom," (Jan. 3), makes negative assertions against Rabbi Schonblum in a manner that led me to believe it continued an effort to hurt the rabbi and his future. I express my dismay in the strongest possible terms.

The story should have made a greater effort to broaden its background information about the rabbi. It did not properly investigate. It did not report the strong positive feelings that many within the congregation have for Rabbi Schonblum. The closing comment about the rabbi not answering requests for his response was insufficient. He may not, at this time, have been able to comment or respond.

Peoples' views may differ, but to fail to give respect and honour to a man who has done his job and more than his job for the vast majority of the congregants is wrong. Rabbi Schonblum does not deserve this treatment. He has stood by me and my family in bad and good times. He has made my family's shul experiences very personal events that have stayed with each of us. He has acted and done everything I expected and would expect my rabbi to do.

Long ago, Rabbi Harold Lerner, of the Pride of Israel, said to my wife and I, "It is your job as parents to bring your children to shul, but it is my job as rabbi to keep them here." This is what Rabbi Schonblum has done for me and my family, and for many others. He has shared his goodness, his caring and his support for each and every person with whom he has come into contact.

Elliot Berlin
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

Congregants value rabbi's counsel

I was surprised and saddened by the biased article "Rabbi's contract not renewed at Beth Radom," (Jan. 3) about Rabbi Steven Schonblum. He is the reason we joined Beth Radom Congregation. He has been the spiritual leader of our family for 14 years, beginning from before he became spiritual leader of the shul. He has always been available for us, in difficult times and happy times. Your article should have enlisted the large number of members who value his counsel and are disgusted with the present board, in its vendetta against him.

Bernice Slotnick
Toronto

• • •

Con man on subway

Further to the letter titled "Con man on Toronto subway," (Jan. 3), I had a very similar experience, but was fortunate not to have ultimately given the man money. I did contact the police and subway authorities. I also posted a warning on a local email list that goes out to many Orthodox women in the city. I was amazed/alarmed at the response. Many women wrote back saying that a similar story happened to them/their friend or loved one. In each case, the con artist targeted his Jewish audience well. I hope more exposure like this will discourage this opportunistic thief.

Andrea Skosowski
Toronto

• • •

Antisemitism on the ice

It was great to read about Andrew Goldberg's exciting hockey career ("Mississauga power forward works hard in draft year," Dec. 20). I wish him all the luck in the world. However, I am disturbed by the statement, "He occasionally hears on-ice taunting about being Jewish, but he thinks the other players are only 'trying to get me off my game. In hockey, it's chirping.'" My suggestion is that whether the comments or chirps are about Jews, or Muslims, or blacks, or gays or the disabled, and whether they take place on Twitter, in the classroom, in the workplace or on the ice, that they are in fact a form of racism and bigotry, and in Goldberg's case, antisemitism. He should let his opponents know that.

Mark Wise
Thornhill, Ont.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

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A primer on the Israeli elections

David H. Goldberg

The landscape in Israel is shifting as the political parties scramble for their share of the 120 seats in the 19th Knesset. Here is a thumbnail sketch of developments, by party bloc.

Centre-Right Bloc

The merged **Likud-Beiteinu**'s campaign banners proclaim: "A strong prime minister, a strong Israel" and "When Netanyahu talks, people listen." Benjamin Netanyahu is portrayed as the only Israeli leader with the backbone and international experience to face down Iran's nuclear mullahs and approve controversial construction for Jerusalem and the settlements. The party is projected to win between 33 and 35 Knesset seats, down from its current 42.

Some Likudniks have expressed concern about the steady bleeding of support to the national religious **Habayit Hayehudi**. But such losses are said to be tolerable for Netanyahu as long as Likud-Beiteinu remains dominant and the overall Knesset configuration is skewed in favour of the party's "natural" coalition partners, the nationalist bloc and the haredim.

But it is in Netanyahu's strategic interest to leave open the possibility of a "secular" coalition devoid of those parties and involving alternate partners from the centrist bloc. It is uncertain how Avigdor Lieberman's legal difficulties might affect Likud-Beiteinu's electoral fortunes.

A relative neophyte politically, Naftali Bennett has successfully re-energized the **Habayit Hayehudi (Jewish Home)-New National Religious Party**. The party, running on a joint slate with **Ichud Leumi** (National Union) is forecast to take up to 15 seats. It is stridently opposed to Palestinian statehood and demands that Netanyahu unconditionally retract acceptance of the two-state formula in his 2009 Bar-Ilan University speech.

It promotes Jewish settlement in all of Greater Israel and proposes annexing parts of the West Bank currently fully controlled by Israel – Area C – and offering Israeli citizenship to the small number of Palestinians remaining there. It criticized the Gaza ceasefire, arguing that Netanyahu should have ordered the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) into Gaza to "topple Hamas" and end weapons smuggling.

Pundits attribute Habayit Hayehudi's popularity to Bennett's charisma and use of social media to extend the party's reach to audiences beyond the *datiim* (national religious sector), including "traditional" (i.e., non-Orthodox) Jews, women and western olim. The party is picking up the support of disenchanted nationalist Likud voters. It is also the beneficiary of a strong anti-Likud backlash among Israel's settlement and pro-settlement constituencies that are punishing Netanyahu for a litany of purported sins.

Bennett became embroiled in controversy after expressing his personal objection to an "immoral" IDF order to evacuate settlements. Likud launched attack ads exploiting Bennett's misstep, but the attacks were too personal. It is speculated that its decidedly hawkish views might limit Habayit Hayehudi's opportunities in coalition formation. But Bennett and the re-energized national religious community are undeniably political forces to be reckoned with.

Centre-Left Bloc

Avarice and arrogance prevented this bloc's leaders from presenting Israeli voters with a credible ideological alternative to Netanyahu. Their one hope is to cobble a "blocking majority" of 61 seats that would compel President Shimon Peres to invite another member of the next Knesset – other than Netanyahu – to try to form a coalition.

The **Labor** party regained its *mojo* under leader Shelly Yachimovich and by building on the widespread socio-economic discontent expressed in Israel's 2011 "tent city" protests. Campaigning on the slogan, "Bibi is good for the rich, Shelly is good for you," Labor's economic plan promises improvements in the daily lives of Israel's middle class and "have-nots" at the expense of the wealthy.

Benjamin Netanyahu

Naftali Bennett

Shelly Yachimovich

In a major policy departure, Labor's security-diplomatic platform pledges continued funding for settlements. In explaining this policy shift, Yachimovich emphasized that Labor "is not a leftist party and never was. It was a centrist party" that had among its ranks security hawks as well as doves, hawks like Yitzhak Rabin who approached peacemaking pragmatically rather than as a romantic ideal. Labor is expected to win 17 to18 Knesset seats, picking up former Kadima supporters as well as disenchanted liberal Likud voters. Yachimovich has not ruled out joining a Netanyahu-led coalition – the question is what type of leverage she might garner from Labor's anticipated status as the next Knesset's second-largest party.

Former foreign minister Tzipi Livni controversially constructed the electoral slate for her new **Hatnua** (The Movement) party by poaching MKs from other parties, decimating her former Kadima party in the process. Discussions with other parties toward forming a centrist "super-party" foundered over the leadership question: Livni's reported offer of a rotating premiership was rejected by Yachimovich. Livni's goal from Day 1 was to portray herself as the only electoral alternative to Netanyahu and "his government's dangerous policies." Her campaign focuses on the Palestinian issue. Livni accuses Netanyahu of having "buried" the two-state formula. She intends to revive it, she says, because it is only through a viable Palestinian agreement that Israel can secure its international status as a Jewish and democratic state.

Livni acknowledges Israel's socio-economic challenges, but says that "social justice can only be reached alongside a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." Livni endorses the strong Israeli national consensus concerning Jerusalem and the retention of settlement blocs in any final agreement. But, while supporting continued funding for most settlements, Livni demands an end to funding for *political* settlements from which, she claims, the overwhelming Israeli majority long ago divorced itself. Hatnua is expected to take 10 Knesset seats.

Controversy surrounds Livni's post-election status. Some pundits have her appointed a cabinet official responsible for Palestinian negotiations, others see Livni again withdrawing from politics rather than sitting in obscurity among the Knesset's opposition.

In introducing his new party, **Yesh Atid** (There Is A Future), Yair Lapid sought to portray himself as the "voice of Israel's centre," as a moderate on domestic political issues and a pragmatic hard-liner on security issues. His core campaign issue has focused on "equalizing the share of the burden," by demanding legislation compelling wholesale haredi military enlistment and entry into the workforce. Lapid protested the Netanyahu Government's exemption of 1,300 haredi men from military service in early December, charging that Netanyahu was pandering to his haredi coalition partners, **Shas** and **United Torah Judaism** (UTJ). Lapid also mocked Netanyahu's famous UN speech by presenting a diagram comparing the status of Israel's middle class to the Iranian nuclear threat, declaring that "raising taxes is our red line." Yesh Atid is polling around nine or 10 seats. Lapid is rumoured to be among those centrist politicians favoured by Netanyahu for a cabinet portfolio.

The **Kadima** party is in free-fall. The largest party in the outgoing Knesset, with 28 seats, now sits on the cusp of failing to acquire the two per cent of the popular vote required to claim a Knesset mandate.

Haredi Bloc

The Sephardi haredi **Shas** party's campaign focuses on two essential goals: maintaining the status quo affecting military deferments for haredi students, and protecting financial subsidies for large families. The odd leadership triumvirate imposed by spiritual leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef failed to maintain party unity. Incumbent leader Eli Yishai bristled at attempts by arch-rival Aryeh Deri, returning after a long exile due to criminal conviction, to reassert heretofore absolute control over the party. Externally, Shas has had to guard against voter support drifting to **Am Shalem** (Whole Nation), a new splinter faction founded by a former Shas MK who was exiled for questioning the party's commitment to defending the honour of Israel's downtrodden Sephardi community. Major controversy surrounded Benjamin Netanyahu's threat to wrest control of the Interior and Housing and Construction ministries "out of sectoral hands," in other words, from Shas. Deri charged that this threat was tantamount to ethnic discrimination against Israel's Sephardim and Mizrachim (those who come from eastern Mediterranean and Arab communities). The merger with Yisrael Beiteinu, Deri charged, had transformed Likud from "the party of the people" including many Sephardim, into "the party of arrogance that represents Russians and whites."

Some speculated that Deri's playing of the "ethnic card" reflected Shas' desperation at the prospect of being excluded from positions of influence in the next coalition. Others viewed Deri's outburst as a calculated move to secure for Shas the support of Sephardim who had been committed to Likud since Menachem Begin's days but who are now feeling estranged from the party. Shas should win about 11 Knesset seats. Its Ashkenazi haredi counterpart, **United Torah Judaism** should take 4 or 5 mandates.

The Arab Bloc

Israel's Arab leaders have consistently ignored their constituency's demand for one unified political party to represent their interests in the Knesset. Recent research indicates a disconnect between Arab voters' concerns with traditional local issues – education, poverty, unemployment, crime and violence – and the focus of Arab MKs on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and international BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) campaign. The core Arab parties are likely to retain their usual share of Knesset seats: **Hadash** (4), **Ra'am-Ta'al** (4), **Balad-National Democratic Assembly** (2). The disqualification from the election of Balad's Hanin Zoabi, due to her participation in the 2010 Mavi Marmara incident, was overturned on appeal to Israel's Supreme Court. Nevertheless, the Arab electorate's disappointment with and disconnect from the Arab MKs, combined with the failure of Israel's Jewish parties to establish meaningful connections with the Arab sector, will likely exacerbate a trend toward low voter participation among Israeli Arabs, with implications for Israeli democracy.

David H. Goldberg is an Israeli studies policy analyst.

Women are still scapegoats

As Vancouver's winter gloom deepens, we have been immersed in the Middle Ages though a series of lectures on DVD offered by The Great Courses. We have reached the 14th and 15th centuries.

Medieval Europe conjures up pictures of ladies in distress, the court of King Arthur and Robin Hood, as well as the Magna Carta, for the lawyers in the crowd, and the rise of feudalism, for the social historians. More ominously, the period conjures up the Hundred Years War and the Black Death.

We have just reached the lecture on witchcraft. Witch-hunting, leading to the era of witch-burning, began in earnest in the 14th century, when the suffering population of Christian Europe was ripe for any seemingly reasonable solution to the Great Mortality (as it was known) that killed up to half the population of Europe.

How did this explosion of persecution come about? Current theories focus on the Inquisition (not a surprise). The Inquisition began by targeting suspected heretics who challenged Catholic Church doctrines. As the Inquisition progressed in viciousness, it began to conflate magicians, who had been viewed as misguided but harmless unless they practised harmful magic, with heretics. As a result, witchcraft also came to be regarded as satanic worship.

Most witches were old or isolated women who were unable to take shelter with a family or shunned by the community. But, of course, the Jews were persecuted, too.

Jean M. Gerber

in Vancouver

The 14th century was a fertile time for hunting witches, as whole villages were dying in a few days and there was no reasonable explanation for the terrible curse being visited on them. Once let out of the box, fear and loathing of witches gathered steam well into the 17th century before simmering down and being replaced by more modern hatreds.

Why am I telling you this?

Well, once again the issue of women is the forefront of my mind: specifically women and the Kotel, the Western Wall. Once again, uppity women have been arrested for – gasp – praying out loud at the Kotel, not to mention wearing tallit and even tfillin, refusing to be pushed aside or threatened by stones, chairs or whatever missile comes to hand. The guardians of the Kotel, now aided by the state, have made the area in front of the Wall their permanent little empire. Woe to those women who would tread on their domain. Or pray.

This was not supposed to happen. The Kotel – the remains of Herod the Butcher's retaining wall and not a part of the Temple at all – was to be a symbol of our return to Zion. It was to be a place for all Jews. *All* Jews. Those heady days after 1967, when we flocked to the plaza in front of the wall, weeping not with sorrow but with joy at once again having access to the place, seem a distant memory. In fact they *are* a distant memory. The Kotel is now the privilege of a few, and many have been banished. Tourists in paper kippot may come to gawk, but prayer for women who seek an experience outside a narrow interpretation of Judaism is out of the question.

That the Kotel was never a synagogue is irrelevant to its self-appointed guardians.

To me, it seems that women once again are the scapegoats of a misogynistic few. We may not be burned as witches, but we can be thrown into jail. Whence this fear and loathing? How is it that our own spiritual needs go unrecognized, unless expressed behind a curtain of cloth, wood or stone?

We shudder at the repression of women in the Islamic world, as Islamic regimes continue to suppress and persecute women. What would a theocratic Israel look like? Would it be so different? Is this little war over the Kotel symptomatic of larger trends underway in Israel?

The effort to control every aspect of personal life is already entrenched in Israeli law, handing over matters of personal status to those who consider themselves arbiters of the inner life of women. Oddly, both the Zionist and anti-Zionist groups on the religious right agree on one thing: women must not be allowed to sully the ears of men with their seductive voices or appear without proper garments. Or else they cause the men to sin.

I understand the Middle Ages. It's the modern one that perplexes me.

A business model for universities?

Universities are in financial trouble, and that is probably an inane understatement.

In many cases, it costs too much to attend them and they are grossly in debt, way over their ability to adequately pay for the resources needed. This is true of most places of learning and especially true of most public institutions. It is even applicable to many private schools. Those who support Jewish education know well of this problem.

But the university issue recently was highlighted in Quebec as students took to the streets and successfully fought an attempt to raise tuition. The increased payment schedule was minor, but the strike was major and some believe it brought down the Liberal government in Quebec.

Funding for universities here has taken a major hit, and there is no reprieve in sight. Solutions are misplaced or ambiguous as everyone ducks the responsibility to fund education. There is a long history both general and particular. Education is not an entitlement, but a responsibility and few are being responsible.

Some have suggested that we should adopt a business model that would streamline our approach to the classroom and to budgetary conundrums. A business model suggests that if you offer a course but not many students register, you cancel that class. Stop producing a product that does not sell. Fire the teacher whose "sales" output is consistently low, and you clean up the budget of non-producing departments. A business model.

But the university is not a business. Its product is education, not jeans!

First, we must find a way to measure that. In fact, I would say we are not necessarily clear on what our product is or on what our end goals ought to be. How do we define an educated graduate? Should they know how to read, or to write an expository essay? Should they be able to get a job in their desired field? Do we help them get a job? What are our goals and do they vary depending on the sector of the university entered into? Should there be some standards for all university graduates?

But wait, maybe we can learn something from a more sophisticated approach to business studies and use a business model.

A business is concerned ultimately with its retail position, with its profit margin. Will people buy what I am selling? So if my product is an education, diversity is good and perhaps some small classes are necessary for some forms of learning. Seminars are quite productive, and we know productivity is a good word for businesses. Even in universities, teachers are rated on their productivity. But the system needs to be overhauled so that quantity is considered alongside quality.

Large classrooms work only in some forms of education. Memorizing and repeat-after-me styles of learning are forged in those environments. But the process of critical thinking and debate requires a different element. Small is sometimes very good for the product. Mixing things up in the university, both at the graduate and undergraduate level, is desirable. We need not be so predictable in our methods and structures. If creative learning is to be initiated, we must establish it.

Norma Baumel Joseph

in Montreal

Furthermore, no business model is built on the concept of the researcher/innovator being the seller/marketer. Yet the university model clearly expects the professor to do the research and be the teacher. In fact, the prof is expected to also do service; that means s/he is also expected to do the administrative work of a manager. The result of this confusion of roles is that the rewards go to the research part of the job. This is the recognition and mainstay of the job. It is the publish or perish phenomenon.

But it is, of course, a terrible error from our perspective of the product of an education. For our concern should be the education of the students, however defined. And many researchers are terrible teachers; they are not good sales personnel. Yet many departments hire candidates without ever seeing them in a classroom, without any concern for their pedagogic skills. Would you hire someone in your store if they had no experience and you never watched them with a customer?

Whose business model are we following? Is the "business model" of a university all messed up?

We can learn from business, just let's learn correctly.

Israel and Iran wage a covert war

Israel and Iran have been waging a murky covert war for years now. This shadowy war has been punctuated by a succession of attacks, counterattacks, assassinations, cyber warfare, drone overflights and material assistance to proxies.

As 2013 gets underway, one can expect more of the same.

Israel is motivated by a desire to cripple or destroy Iran's nuclear weapons program and to inflict blows on its allies in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon and Sudan.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Iran, an Islamic theocracy, is driven by two overriding objectives – to obliterate Israel and to extend its influence in the Middle East.

One facet of this war came into public view shortly after the end of last November's eight-day border war between Israel and Hamas, an Iranian client. On three major road junctions in the Gaza Strip, large billboards were erected extolling Iran for its assistance to the Palestinian cause. The message on the billboards, inscribed in Arabic, English, Farsi and Hebrew, read, "Thank you, Iran," in what was the first explicit acknowledgment of Iran's role in arming Hamas.

During the recent Gaza war, Hamas and Islamic Jihad fired Fajr-5 rockets toward Tel Aviv, setting off its first air-raid alert since it was hit by Iraqi Scuds in the 1991 Gulf War, and at nearby Rishon LeZion. These projectiles, with a range of 75 kilometres, were supplied by Iran, a fervent supporter of radical Palestinian factions.

Israel downed many of the Fajr-5 rockets fired by Hamas and Islamic Jihad. That Hamas had access to such weapons in the first place speaks volumes about Iran's unwavering commitment to Palestinian rejectionist factions.

It's debatable how the rockets reached Gaza, which has been subjected to an Israeli naval blockade since Hamas' seizure of the coastal enclave from the mainstream Fatah movement in 2007 in a violent coup.

They may have been smuggled through a network of tunnels from the Sinai Peninsula into Gaza. Alternatively, as the leader of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, Gen. Mohammed Ali Jafari, suggested, the Fajr-5 technology was transferred by Iran to Palestinian workshops in Gaza, which were targeted by Israeli Air Force during the recent fighting.

Iran was only too glad to advertise its contribution to the Palestinians. Ali Larijani, the speaker of Iran's parliament, said he was "honoured" that Iran had materially helped Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, called Gaza's prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, to offer congratulations for Hamas' "victory" over Israel. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, chided Muslims nations for not having rallied behind Gaza in its showdown with Israel.

For their part, Palestinian leaders expressed gratitude to Iran. Khaled Meshal, the head of Hamas' political bureau, thanked Iran for its military and financial support. Ziad Nakhleh, the deputy leader of Islamic Jihad, openly admitted that the rockets in his arsenal were of Iranian origin. Mahmoud Zahar, one of the founders of Hamas, predicted that Iran would increase its aid package to Gaza.

By all accounts, Iran smuggles arms to Gaza by way of a circuitous route.

Iranian ships from the port of Bandar Abbas drop them off in Sudan, which signed a military cooperation agreement with Iran in 2008. From there, they are shipped northward to the lawless Sinai Peninsula and through tunnels to Gaza.

Being acutely aware of Iran's clandestine activities, Israel has devoted considerable resources to staunch the flow of weapons to the Palestinians in Gaza.

In the past decade, Israeli naval commandos have intercepted several ships laden with Iranian weapons. In the most celebrated case, in January 2002, Israel seized the Karine-A – a freighter loaded with 50 tons of missiles, mortars, explosives, rifles and mines worth $400 million – in the Red Sea.

Three years ago, in what developed into an international incident in Dubai, Mossad agents killed Mohammed Mabhouh, a Hamas official who procured arms from Iran.

This past October, a munitions or rocket factory in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, was bombed by a flight of unidentified jets. Sudan, having accused Israel of being behind the attack, promised a painful response. Israel maintained an official silence, neither denying nor taking credit for the bombing.

If the Israeli Air Force carried out this stealth strike, 1,900 kilometres from a base in Israel, Iran was certainly put on notice that its nuclear facilities may not be immune from destruction.

But Israel's message was not only directed at Iran. Israel, having bombed several Palestinian arms convoys in Sudan in the past three years in which apparently hundreds of Palestinians were killed, made one important point by striking the Sudanese factory.

Israel proved yet again that Sudan – whose president is sought by the International Criminal Court for having committed atrocities in the Darfur region – is a source of instability in the Middle East by virtue of its status as a transit point of arms smuggling from Iran to Gaza.

Short of actually attacking Iran's nuclear facilities, which it has threatened to do, Israel has tried to sabotage its atomic program through kidnappings, assassinations and cyber warfare.

In 2007, the Mossad reportedly abducted Ali Reza Asgari, Iran's deputy defence minister, who has not been heard from since. In the past few years, most recently last January, five Iranian scientists connected with Iran's nuclear program have been killed. Israel has denied responsibility, but Iran has pointed an accusatory finger at Israel. After last January's assassination, Israel's chief of staff, Gen. Benny Gantz, was quoted as saying that Iran should expect more "unnatural" events to occur.

Gen. Benny Gantz

Over the last two years, Israel, in conjunction with the United States, has launched a cyber assault on Iran's nuclear program in an operation known as Olympic Games. Authorized by U.S. president George W. Bush in 2006, Olympic Games' computer viruses, notably Stuxnet, have temporarily disabled centrifuges that enrich uranium. Two months ago, Iran announced the establishment of a special command centre to counter industrial sabotage of this kind.

Apart from Iran's militarized nuclear program, Israel is most concerned about its missile capabilities, since Iranian missiles can supposedly reach Israel.

Toward the close of 2011, a key figure in Iran's missile program, Hassan Moghaddam, was killed when a massive explosion levelled an ammunition depot near Tehran. Israel was immediately accused as the chief suspect.

Iran has struck back with a vengeance.

Iran and its Lebanese surrogate, Hezbollah, have been accused of masterminding attacks against Israeli embassies and embassy personnel, as well as Israeli tourists, in Bulgaria, India, Georgia, Kenya, Thailand, Argentina and Azerbaijan (which has dismissed reports that any preemptive strike on Iran would be launched from bases in Azerbaijan).

Iran, too, has boasted that Iranian-manufactured surveillance drones have made dozens of flights into Israeli airspace to collect reconnaissance data and probe Israel's air defences. These flights have originated in Lebanon and have been under the control of Hezbollah, the recipient of Iranian largesse.

It seems likely that Israel's covert war with Iran will escalate as Tehran moves inexorably closer toward building a nuclear device and thereby engulfing the Middle East in further tension.

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ROMSPEN

Israel advocacy group joins Canadian campuses

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Anti-Israel sentiment on campus is growing and creating a hostile environment, and more resources are needed for pro-Israel students to combat these claims, Stand With Us CEO Roz Rothstein says.

The Los Angeles-based Israel education organization is expanding to Canadian campuses this year in hopes of helping to fight what Rothstein described in a phone interview when she was in Toronto recently as an increasingly serious situation on campuses.

"[Stand With Us] will work with other organizations and bring them all together with just one objective: to give a message to change the narrative and the lies about Israel," said Meryle Kates, executive director of Stand With Us Canada.

The American organization, which has offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel and France, recently opened its first Canadian location in Toronto, bringing the total number of chapters to 17.

Rothstein said campuses in Canada are halfway between the United States and the United Kingdom in terms of the success of their anti-Israel campaigns. In the U.K., she said, Jewish students might be afraid to wear a Jewish star as a necklace. In the United States, anti-Israel ideas haven't taken hold nearly as much.

From left are Meryle Kates, executive director of Stand With Us Canada, and Roz Rothstein, CEO of Stand With Us.
[Greg Tjepkema photo]

"They try to use the system and free speech... to destroy Israel's image," Rothstein said, adding that anti-Israel Americans are pushing to be more effective, but their efforts aren't working quite as well as in Canada.

Several student unions on Canadian campuses have adopted anti-Israel stances – most recently at the University of Toronto and York University.

These endorsements are "meaningless on the campus," Rothstein said. "It's not going to do anything, but what it does is bring a very negative, hostile dialogue to the campus."

Hillel has protested that some of these resolutions have passed because anti-Israel organizations or individuals add them to agendas about three days before a council meeting, giving pro-Israel students no time to respond.

This isn't always the case, however. For example, York University's graduate students' association representatives told *The CJN* the item was placed on the agenda at least a week before the meeting, though Kates said Hillel disputes that assertion.

Regardless, Rothstein said last-minute additions are often used, and Stand With Us knows to expect this and will try to prepare students to be ready when it happens. "It could come as no surprise," she said.

Anti-Israel students paint Israel as the biggest human rights abuser on the planet, Rothstein said, forcing a conversation onto campus that puts pro-Israel students on the defensive.

To respond to campus Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) endorsements, Rothstein said Stand With Us will work with existing organizations, supporting them in whatever they decide to do.

York's graduate students' union president Carolyn Hibbs told *The CJN* motions that aim to reconsider passed resolutions require a supermajority – in this case, a two-thirds majority – in order to pass.

The main goals of the Toronto office are to give students a liaison to discuss campus issues, and a place to get funding, speakers, materials and guidance, Rothstein said, "so that they can be involved and become leaders on campus."

The organization plans to distribute materials to fight Israeli Apartheid Week, the annual series of lectures and events on university campuses across Canada that focuses primarily on promoting the BDS campaign. Rothstein said these events on Canadian campuses are often darker and more aggressive than on American campuses.

"We're going to be shipping a huge display that talks about Israel's size and diversity," Rothstein said, adding that it will also have information about Hamas and its charter. She said Stand With Us is important because it is entirely focused on teaching about Israel.

"Everybody else's mission statement has maybe a little bit of teaching Israel," Rothstein said, "but that's all we do."

She said the organization is the largest producer of material about Israel, which it hopes will help pro-Israel students fight for the hearts of other students on campus.

"What I've realized being here is you have a lot of caring and passionate people and organizations," she said, but she's concerned that too many students only here the anti-Israel side of the story.

"I think Stand With Us will be a nice addition to the tapestry to help combat the issues we're seeing here," she said.

Bogoroch & Associates LLP is very proud to announce that **Heidi R. Brown** has been admitted to the Partnership effective January 1, 2013.

Heidi Brown was called to the Ontario Bar in 1993 and spent the first seven years of her career as counsel with The Office of the Children's Lawyer.

She joined Bogoroch & Associates in November 1999 and has since specialized in personal injury and medical malpractice litigation. She has achieved excellent results for her clients, who admire and respect the dedication, hard work and compassion she brings to their case. She is a board member of the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association and has been invited to present at many continuing legal educational conferences and seminars organized by the Advocates' Society, Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, Osgoode Law School Professional Development and others.

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Nikki shines in all-star Streisand tribute DVD

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — Barbra Streisand fans who remember her October concerts in Montreal and across Canada will enjoy watching 13 artists singing her most beloved songs in *A Music Cares Tribute to Barbra Streisand* recently released by Shout Factory in both Blu-ray and DVD formats.

The 70-year-old Streisand, considered by many music critics the greatest singer of all time, was saluted in February 2011 by Music Cares in Los Angeles for her contributions to music. Highlights from the evening are in the one-hour recording.

The DVD showcases an illustrious roster of performers, including Canadians Faith Hill and Diana Krall, along with Tony Bennett, Barry Manilow and Stevie Wonder covering Streisand hit songs, such as *Send in The Clowns* (Hill), *Down With Love* (Krall), *Smile* (Bennett), *Memory* (Manilow) and *People* (Wonder).

Standing out was the youngest of the performers, then-17-year-old Nikki Yanofsky of Montreal, with her interpetation of a medley of *Lazy Afternoon/On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*, accompanied by jazz pianist Herbie Hancock.

Nikki Yanofsky

Yanofsky began the medley as a ballad (as Streisand performed the songs) with long, drawn-out notes, and midway, she made the tempo more jazzy and upbeat, snapping her fingers. She ended her four-minute performance by belting out the final note to a standing ovation from the audience, including Streisand.

"To perform for Barbra Streisand, well, that's a dream come true," Yanofsky said in a phone interview. "My mother and I saw all her films from *Funny Girl* to *Yentl*, and to share the stage in her honour with Herbie Hancock, Barry Manilow and Stevie Wonder was a special moment for me. There is no singer alive than can be as perfect as Barbra Streisand."

Yanofsky more than held her own with the other singers and insisted she was never nervous about her performance.

"I rehearsed often and was ready, so there was nothing to be nervous about. I was very pleased with the result and will never forget that night."

Yanofsky, who hopes to have a long, illustrious career in music as Streisand has, may look back at her performance as a memorable milestone, much as Streisand did when she first performed on Judy Garland's television show in 1963.

After seeing her in concert, Tony Bennett paid Yanofsky a compliment, calling her "the best singer to come along since Judy Garland."

Yanofsky is well-known in Canada and is hoping to achieve similar recognition in the United States. In the past two months, she toured in Los Angeles, sang in an all-star tribute to songwriter Carole King, and will be performing in Las Vegas in February.

"Nikki is already more established and mature than most singers her age. She will inevitably be compared to the greatest of singers before long," said jazz music promoter Larry Rosen, who booked Yanofsky in Las Vegas.

Other notable performances on the DVD include Lea Michele's interpretation of *My Man* and the duet of Kristen Chenowith and Matthew Morrison singing *One Last Bell To Answer/A House Is Not A Home*.

Streisand herself performs two songs: *Windmills of Your Mind* and *I'll Never Say Goodbye*.

The only quibble about the DVD is that it was heavily edited, and some popular Streisand songs that she performed at the event, including *Evergreen*, *Happy Days Are Here Again* and *The Way We Were* were omitted.

However, hearing the memorable performance by Yanofsky and the unique interpretations of Streisand songs by Manilow and Wonder, in particular, make the DVD a treasure.

A Music Cares Tribute to Barbra Streisand is available online. For more information on the DVD, go to www.shoutfactory.com

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We are all busy and are forced to prioritize between competing important matters.

We cannot do everything, so we are forced to choose. High on the agenda for any Canadian must be the concern for Canada. We dare not take our great country for granted. There are challenges ahead in so many areas.

High among these challenges, perhaps even highest because of its importance, is the matter of co-operation between the variety of religions and ethnicities that Canada has embraced. Within that grouping, the most potentially explosive is the relationship between the Muslim community and the Jewish community. This is so because of the unfortunate, and I would add inexcusable, enmity that has been generated against the Jews on an international scale. Jews have not called for the annihilation of any other group. Jews have not advocated a holy war. Yet they hear this being advocated against them. How can they not be concerned and worried? Let's be clear. Jews make up a puny 15 million people, compared to about one billion Muslims. Jews are not a threat. But Jews are threatened. On campuses, in intellectual fora, even on the street, Jews live with an acute awareness of this tension that can explode at any moment.

In an ideal world, this type of tension would simply not exist. But we are not living in an ideal world. Here in Canada, there have been pockets of co-operation between the Jewish and Muslim communities, as my partner in this joint endeavour, Mohammed Azhar Ali Khan, shares in his piece. But to say that there is an abiding friendship between these communities would be a real stretch. Can such a friendship develop? Possibly. But it will not come without great effort. The challenge will be to buck the international trend, to even defy it and reject it. That will take courage and resolve.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka

But mere talk remains cheap. It is via real, facts on the ground action, that the communities can develop real friendship. Dare we dream that if that develops, the friendship will be a powerful counterforce to the prevailing winds of hate. To create tranquil, harmonious facts on the ground will take time, together with the resolve. We are looking at an agenda of co-operation that will start with small things, with co-operative efforts. Years ago many religious communities banded together in Ottawa to actively promote blood donation.

The need for blood remains a pressing matter, as does the need for our communities to come together. Working in tandem to actively promote blood donation will help both urgent issues. Beyond joint statements, I am talking of having a jointly sponsored blood drive bringing together the Muslim and Jewish communities in every major city in Canada.

On one day across Canada, the Muslim community and the Jewish community would sponsor an endeavour (blood donation) that will bring all Canadians together to save Canadian lives, to give life to Canada, and to bring energy and vigour to an effort that is so vital – bringing our communities together. We would be fooling ourselves if we said that there is no hate in Canada. We would be equally irresponsible if we did nothing to counter it. And we would be unwise if all we did was issue statements condemning hate, bigotry, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and any other phobia. The way to counter hate is with overt acts of friendship, kindness, co-operation, compassion – blood drives, co-operative fundraising for worthy charities, joint communal celebrations on Canada Day and Thanksgiving Day, school exchanges, etc.

We can all agree these are worthwhile ideas. But they can only work if there are champions among us ready to dive in, at every level, in every community, to make this happen. It will take the full co-operation of the organized Muslim and Jewish communities to make this work. It obviously starts with discussion, with a meeting of the minds and hearts, and branches out from there.

Every day lost in trying to push this issue forward is a day of lost opportunity, a day in which things could have, and should have been better. The joint sharing of ideas in this forum, with Mohammed Azhar Ali Khan, a true gentleman, reflects the many conversations we have had on this pressing issue. Our hope is that this public sharing will help bring our communities together, on a national scale, in a spirit of understanding and co-operation that will help ensure Canada's greatness for generations to come. If we have the will, and make the time, it will happen.

Otherwise, well, there is no otherwise.

Rabbi Bulka is rabbi of Congregation Machzikei Hadas and chair of Trillium Gift of Life Network responsible for organ and tissue donation and transplantation in Ontario. Among his many honours, he was awarded the "Key to the City" of Ottawa for his community endeavours.

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Rabbi Reuven Bulka and I agree that hate and cruelty violate the principles of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and those of Canada too.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) treated non-Muslims with justice and compassion. He made pacts with Jews and idol worshippers in Medina and respected his covenants.

Dr. Muqtedar Khan of the University of Delaware says Rabbi Mukhayriq of Tha'labadh tribe in Medina fought alongside Prophet Muhammad in the battle of Uhud and was martyred. Rabbi Mukhayriq also donated seven gardens with which the prophet formed the first waqf – a charitable endowment.

Imam Mohamad Jebara of the Cordova Academy in Ottawa states: "Jews were expelled from Jerusalem in the year 70 CE by the Romans, who destroyed the temple of Herod, commencing the Jewish Diaspora. When Rome adopted the Christian faith after 325 CE they maintained a strict ban on Jews coming near Jerusalem. This ban remained until the Christians of Jerusalem surrendered the city to the Muslim caliph Umar.

Muslims then permitted the Jews to come to Jerusalem for the first time in over 600 years, but only for pilgrimage as the Christians had stated in the surrender terms that they will only surrender the city to the Muslims on condition that the Jews not be permitted to live in the city. Later, during the Abbasid caliphate, Muslims allowed Jews to settle in the city again. Jews remained there till the city fell to the Crusaders in July 1099. Jews were again forbidden to enter Jerusalem till Salahuddin liberated the city and Muslims then allowed Jews free entry into Jerusalem with no restrictions.

Generally, Jews lived in peace under Arab, Ottoman and Muslim Spanish caliphs. When Spain expelled Jews in the 15th century, European countries were reluctant to accept them. The Ottoman Empire, however, welcomed them. During Hitler's time too, German Jews sought refuge in Turkey and among Muslims elsewhere.

Some Muslims assisted Jews during the Holocaust. Faith Matters, a British organization, identified such Muslims in a booklet, *The Role of Righteous Muslim Persons*. They were from many countries and were among those Jerusalem's Yad Vashem called Righteous Gentiles.

Sadly, Jews have also been persecuted in Muslim countries by unjust rulers who also persecuted others. Muslims suffered from their own unjust rulers and from colonial occupiers. Jews suffered greatly for centuries – antisemitism in the Soviet empire and in the West culminated in the Holocaust.

The Holy Quran also criticizes the action of some Jews. It criticizes Muslims too.

Says the Holy Quran: "O people, we have created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the one who is the most pious among you. God has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)." (4:13)

Mohammed Azhar Ali Khan

In the 1980s the Ottawa Muslim Association, which I led at that time, cooperated with Christian and Jewish organizations in a meeting on Parliament Hill to celebrate their shared heritage as descendents of the Prophet Abraham. This was the first time in Canada that Jewish, Christian and Muslim groups worked together. Now such co-operation is quite common.

Jewish Family Services in Ottawa also provides social services to Somalis, and has set up a mentoring program for them. This has existed for some time.

For several years mosques and synagogues are being twinned in Toronto and other cities in Canada and the United States, to expand better understanding.

Jews and Muslims differ on the Middle East. Canadian Muslims passionately believe in a just peace in the Middle East that treats Israelis and Palestinians as equals in every respect.

That said, Jews and Muslims must work together and with Canadians of other faiths to promote human rights, equality, justice and opportunity for all Canadians and make Canada a model of peace and justice in a troubled world.

Mohammed Azhar Ali Khan is a retired journalist, civil servant and refugee judge. He founded the Muslim Coordinating Council which seeks to uplift the Muslim community and work with Canadians of other faiths to promote human rights for all Canadians. He has received the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario and the Queen's Diamond and Golden Jubilee medals for his work as a journalist,his leadership of Muslims and for promoting better understanding between Canadians of different faiths

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Financial guide aids those considering aliyah

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — So you're thinking of making aliyah. But do you know what you are signing up for? A fair number of Jewish North Americans who take that leap of faith that is aliyah soon limp back home in frustration.

Brent (Baruch) Labinsky is confident that his new book, *A Financial Guide to Aliyah and Life in Israel*, will help make the transition for new olim smoother and greatly improve their odds of making a successful aliyah.

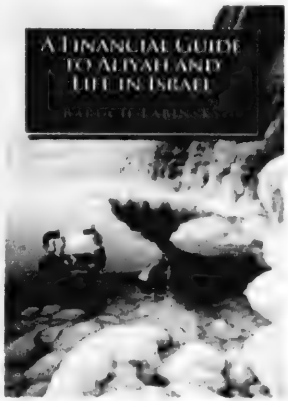
The former Winnipegger and his wife, the former Tammy Esser from Toronto, made aliyah in 1993, shortly after their marriage. Baruch – who is a financial planner by profession – and Tammy now live in Ramat Beth Shemesh, near Jerusalem, and have seven children.

"When we made aliyah," Labinsky recalls, "we learned by way of the school of hard knocks how difficult dealing with the bureaucracy here can be."

While there is information about the aliyah process in different places, there is no one co-ordinated source, Labinsky notes. That is what he hopes his book will remedy.

The 230-page book covers the gamut of issues, including having a financial plan, insurance issues, understanding the Israeli employment market, asset management in Israel, retirement and estate planning, the banking system, the tax system, renting or purchasing a home and living on an Israeli salary.

"The Israeli system may seem similar to what North Americans are used to," Labinsky says, "but it is in reality quite different. Taxes, for example, are structured differently. Most Israelis don't have to file tax returns. Taxes are automatically taken off their pay cheques. Only the self-employed are required to file returns.



"And the investment environment is very different," Labinsky says.

He notes that the Israeli standard of living is much closer to the North American standard than it used to be. Nevertheless, you have to be a lot more careful about how you spend your money, Labinsky cautions. Cars and homes are much more expensive. And you really have to save for larger expenditures such as simchahs or retirement.

Readers of the book may want to start at the back at "Frequently Asked Questions." Labinsky tackles questions such as where to go after you get off the plane (he recommends that you rent a place first until you have adjusted, built up a social network and decided where you want to live) and whether to take time to learn Hebrew in an ulpan or look for work immediately (he suggests doing both at the same time). He also answers questions about how and where to open a bank account, what benefits new olim are entitled to, how to manage your finances in Israel and what to bring with you to Israel and how much it may cost.

"The number of olim who are coming from North America has been growing in recent years thanks to programs such as Nefesh B'Nefesh," he says. "And there are tremendous opportunities. Virtually all North American olim find jobs within a year."

He adds that high-tech industry in Israel, in particular, is flourishing. "Modern-day Israel is an economic miracle," he says. "The stock market is outperforming other major stock markets around the world."

Labinsky is scheduled to be in Toronto Jan. 15 to 17, 2013, to talk about his book and the financial aspects of making aliyah.

The book is available online at his website, http://labinsky.com, and from amazon.com.

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Sun., Jan. 20th @ 7:30 pm

Dr. Arne Kislenko
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Sun., Jan. 20th @ 2:00 pm

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Sun., Jan. 27th @ 7:45 pm

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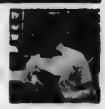
Israel - Repairing the World



What do the mathematics behind the MARS rover and bacteria that reduce mosquito-caused malaria by 90% have in common? Discover the gifts to the world from Israel. Rabbi Wise will present his research and findings about Israel that will amaze you. Everyone welcome. No pre-registration required.

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Conference examines plight of Roma

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL—The Kleinmann Family Foundation (KFF), which since 1995 has sponsored educational activities on the Holocaust and the dangers of prejudice, has turned its attention to the plight of the Roma.

With Concordia University, the KFF organized a day-long conference last month, open free of charge to the public, titled "History Speaks: Do We Listen? Porrajmos and the Resurgence of 'Anti-Gypsy' Extremism."

Porrajmos is a Romani word meaning devouring or destruction and refers to Nazi Germany's attempted extermination of the Roma, pejoratively known as "Gypsies."

At the event's launch, held at the Goethe-Institut Montréal, a German government-sponsored cultural centre, the New Democrats' Canadian heritage critic, Tyrone Benskin, took aim at the federal government's recent reform of the refugee system.

Passed in June, Bill C-31 has been criticized by the Jewish community, among others, as likely to make it more difficult for persecuted people, in particular the Roma in Europe, to find asylum in Canada.

"Sadly, our own government, with Bill C-31, is hurting the people it is supposed to be protecting. Canada should be a leader in stamping out racism in all its forms," said Benskin, a Montreal MP for the riding of Jeanne-Le Ber.

Benskin, who is black, believes the legislation is "targeting" the Roma "because they do not fit in the box of the majority... We can't close our eyes to those who are vulnerable."

Benskin, who was first elected to Parliament in 2011, noted that Jews, Roma and blacks share a history of having been persecuted and murdered by the Nazis and of having been "regarded with fear," which led to prejudice.

Executive director Naomi Kramer said this was the first time the KFF had sponsored an event related to the Roma.

"The reason is that it is relevant in Canada, as it is worldwide. The Roma are having difficulty getting into Canada, because most come from Hungary and, as it is part of the European Union, they cannot be considered as refugees. Yet they are experiencing discrimination and violence that is impossible to live with."

The launch included remarks by German Consul General Walter Leuchs, who said the Roma persecution under the Nazis should be better known, and Sebastian Knotz, a young man from Austria currently serving as a *Gedenkdiener*, or Holocaust memorial intern, at the KFF.

Founded in 1991, the volunteer program is an acknowledgement of Austria's role in the Nazi genocide.

The event also heard a moving tribute to the memory of Gabrielle Tyrnauer, a Jewish refugee from Nazism and a pioneering scholar of Roma history, by colleague and friend Yehudi Lindeman, a retired McGill University professor and, like Tyrnauer, a child survivor of the Holocaust.

During the 1980s and '90s, Tyrnauer (1932-2004), a native of Vienna, recorded the oral testimonies of many Roma survivors of Nazi persecution and published reports for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, among others, on what was then a neglected subject.

On view was a digital exhibition of photos of modern-day Roma life in Romania taken by David Ward of Concordia a few years ago. Titled *Marginal*, with text by Salman Rushdie, the pictures depict the extreme poverty of a people living outside the mainstream, yet maintaining a strong family and cultural life.

The conference concluded with a screening of *A People Uncounted* the first feature-length documentary by Toronto-based filmmaker Aaron Yeger.

Filmed in 11 countries, it surveys the history and culture of the Roma, depicting them as a people both romanticized and vilified in popular culture.

Kramer said a second conference on the Roma is being planned for next year.

"The fate of Romani communities in many ways paralleled the fate of Jews during World War II," she said.

"With widespread support from the European population at large, which harboured social prejudice towards the Roma, they were singled out by the Nazis as 'racially inferior,' and sent to forced-labour and death camps," she said.

Historians estimate that about 500,000, or 25 per cent of European Roma, where annihilated, according to data cited by the KFF.

The KFF was founded by the late Peter Kleinmann, a Montreal businessman born in Munkacs, Hungary, who survived the Gross-Rosen, Flossenburg and Auschwitz camps. He frequently spoke to students about the Holocaust.

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LOVE

French Jewish dentists looking to relocate

Professionals seeking new home in Quebec

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Barry Dolman, the first Jewish president of the Quebec Order of Dentists, returned from France in November shaken by the anxiety expressed by Jewish dentists about their future in that country.

Dolman, who was elected head of the professional organization in November 2011, recently returned from Paris for meetings in connection with a historic agreement between Quebec and France that allows greater mobility of professionals, including dentists, between the two jurisdictions, notably through mutual recognition of qualifications.

"While in France, I had the occasion to speak to a number of Jewish dentists actively looking to relocate to Quebec because of the ever-increasing religious intolerance in that country," Dolman told *The CJN*.

"As the president of the licensing authority, I was able to answer their questions relating to the legal process, but was shocked by their personal inquiries.

"Normal questions about finding access to synagogues, Jewish education and kosher food were followed by 'Are there areas in Montreal where Jewish residents are well tolerated or accepted?'

"I must say my jaw dropped, and in that one inquiry, the entire dilemma of these colleagues became clear."

Barry Dolman

These Jewish dentists have good livelihoods and live comfortably in the material sense, but they are very uneasy. Many felt there's no future for their children in France, Dolman said.

Dolman, who has been practising dentistry for 37 years, was elected in a general vote open to the order's more than 4,700 members throughout the province to a four-year term.

"This is not the first breakthrough I have made as a Jewish dentist within my profession," he said. "But it's probably the most significant given this current political context."

He added: "Early on in my career, unlike some of my colleagues and friends who left when the Parti Québécois was originally elected [in 1976], I made a decision to remain in Montreal with my young family. It was certainly news at the time and made the front page of *The Globe and Mail*."

Dolman said the fact he graduated from both McGill University (B.Sc., 1971) and the Université de Montréal (DDM, 1975) has enabled him to embrace the city's cultural duality.

Dolman decided in 2010 to challenge the sitting president of the order, Diane Legault, a former Liberal member of the National Assembly and the first woman to become its president when she was elected in 2006.

"My colleagues said it was more than a long shot, as there had never been a Jewish president," he recalled.

"I was elected across the province from Abitibi to Quebec City with a two-thirds majority in every constituency except in Gaspé, where I lost by one vote," said Dolman.

He believes this is a positive statement from a society that is so often divided over language.

He is also the current chair of the Canadian section of the Pierre Fauchard Academy, an international dental organization founded in 1936, and a past president of the Canadian Dental Association. He has been a member of the Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity, an organization of Jewish dentists, since 1975.

After hearing the concerns of these French Jewish dentists first hand, Dolman said he returned to Quebec all the more appreciative.

"I realize that, although we often hear complaints about the language policy, we are very fortunate to live where we are, have what we have, and are respected for who and what we are and how we have contributed to the society in which we live."

The order's mission is to maintain high standards of dental practice and ethical conduct, and to promote oral health among Quebecers.

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For more information contact Staci at **905-303-1821 x.3037**

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Transplant preferable before dialysis begins

Continued from page 3

Arie's wife, Joy, says although he doesn't look sick, Arie is usually exceptionally tired, as the kidney is responsible for creating a hormone that triggers the body to create red blood cells. The disease can also cause nausea, skin conditions and trouble with digestion. The cysts on Arie's kidney sometimes rupture, leaving him in extreme pain and incapacitated for up to a week.

"I am a private person but this is why we have had to come forward," Arie said. "We are at a point where we need to share our story." He added the family has received support and offers of help from many colleagues, acquaintances and even strangers.

Doctors say they would like to do the transplant before Arie starts dialysis, as this could make for a better prognosis. But because he is not on dialysis, he is not on the deceased donors transplant waiting list. This is why he needs a living donor.

And so does his mom.

Ilana has been on dialysis for 19 years. She was diagnosed with PKD shortly after giving birth to Arie. She was not told it was genetic, nor that there was a 50 per cent chance her children would inherit the disease.

After having Joshua, she started seeing a nephrologist who told her she would be on dialysis by age 45. She started when she was 40.

Ilana, a Burlington, Ont., resident, goes for dialysis six days a week for three hours each time. Her shoulders and back ache. And the dialysis causes her to have brittle bones that sometimes fracture for no reason. It also makes her brain feel "cloudy."

"Dialysis prolongs life, but it's not a cure," Ilana said.

Arie's dad gave her a kidney 16 years ago, which her body rejected. Two years later, a second kidney from a deceased donor also failed. Both times, she became very ill due to a reaction to the anti-rejection drugs.

"I fought really hard for those kidneys. They nearly did me in," Ilana said, adding doctors are ready to try again.

This time, Ilana needs a living donor so the transplant can be scheduled and they can desensitize her body to the new organ by suppressing her immune system without her waiting on the list.

"A lot of people don't live as long as me on dialysis," Ilana said. "What can I say? I am not ready to throw in the towel yet. I have to see that my children are safe."

For more information about the Pekars, visit Facebook at bit.ly/wnvdd9 or visit Twitter at bit.ly/Vy0fkd. Email address: momandmeneedakidney@gmail.com.

Organ donation: the ultimate mitzvah

The chairman of the board of Ontario's organ and tissue donation agency says educating the Jewish community about organ donation is a continual battle.

Donating an organ is not only acceptable – it is the ultimate mitzvah, said Rabbi Reuven Bulka of Congregation Machzikei Hadas in Ottawa, who is chairman of the Trillium Gift of Life Network.

"We have been hard-wired over thousands of years. It is not easy to take a mindset and recalculate it.

"But saving of a life is considered the premier fulfilment of the Jewish religion, whether that is donating money to the poor, lifting one's spirits or actually saving their bodily life."

Rabbi Bulka says that saving a life supersedes halachic restrictions such as the need for immediate burial after death.

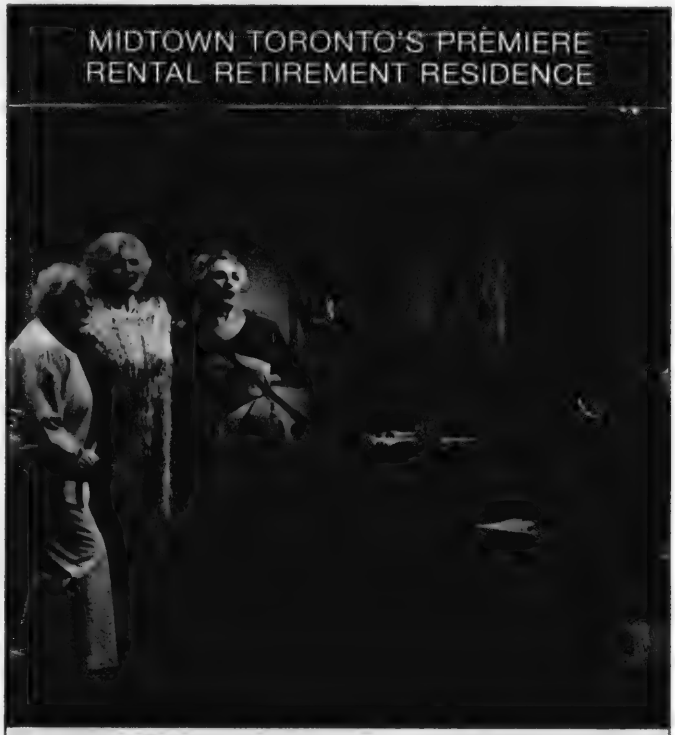
As for the belief that we must be buried whole, Rabbi Bulka points out that a person who has had his colon removed due to cancer is not being buried in his entirety.

"If this idea is standing in the way of donating an organ, it doesn't make any sense," he said.

"Jews have been at the forefront of lifesaving since time immemorial. We have come up with the best medicines. Some of our greatest sages were doctors.

"We need our leaders to spring up. Our teachers and rabbis have to beat their drums on this and affirm that it's the highest mitzvah. It's not just acceptable, it's the highest mitzvah. If people ask, 'Is it something I must do?' The answer must be 'yes, yes, yes.' Then we will get action."

—A.C.



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It's not enough to hear the message

Rabbi David Rosenthal

In my family, it's known that I make all the important, far-reaching decisions, and leave the small, trivial ones to my wife. I decide when Israel should bomb Iran, how to solve the Palestinian problem, how to alleviate the economic problems and how to solve world hunger. My wife merely decides where we're going to live, how to bring up our kids and what to spend our money on.

There's a passage in the Torah informing us of Jethro's – Moses' father-in-law – hearing about the Exodus and coming to the Jewish nation to convert. The Torah emphasizes that Jethro heard about the huge miracles that HaShem had done ("*Vayishma*"). The inference is that no one else heard about it. That's equivalent to saying President Harry S. Truman heard about the Hiroshima bombing, but no one else did. A little absurd, no? Events of such cataclysmic proportion are hard to keep under wraps. The whole world knew about the plagues and the splitting of the sea.

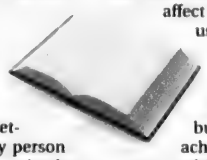
So, what is the Torah trying to tell us?

There are actually two meanings behind the word *lishmoa* (to hear, in Hebrew). First, it's the physical act of listening, i.e. the sound waves hitting your eardrum and being received by your brain. Second, it means understanding what's being said, *internalizing* the meaning behind the words.

The quintessential prayer for the Jew, *Shema Yisrael*, comes from the same word. It's not "Hear O Israel" as it's traditionally translated. Rather it's "Understand and internalize."

From the fact that Jethro was the only person to come to join the Jewish People, the Torah is letting us know that the only person who truly *heard* about the miracles was Jethro. Many were certainly told what happened. But the fact that none of them did anything about it shows that they really didn't understand the ramifications. They didn't *hear* the message.

Rabbinic Reflections



Now to bring this to a more practical level. Recent world events have left a lot of us shocked and numb – from Hurricane Sandy to the school massacre in Connecticut, there is so much pain and sadness in the world. The question we need to ask ourselves is: Were we changed in any tangible way? Did we take action? Did it cause any introspection or change? We are bombarded by news and information, yet they seems to have less and less effect on us.

Instead of sitting at the Shabbat table discussing solutions to problems not within our control, maybe we should aim our sights a little lower, a little more realistically and ask ourselves how these events can affect us personally, to help us change and grow. Changing ourselves is a little less dramatic than bombing nuclear reactors in Iran, but it's much harder to achieve because it means pushing ourselves, tangibly changing.

The intimation from Jethro is that we must *hear* the messages from world events. We must *internalize* and act upon the things we perceive, and not merely content ourselves with being the backseat driver in world politics.

Rabbi David Rosenthal is the director of outreach and development at the Thornhill Woods Shul and Jewish Centre for Learning and Living in Thornhill, Ont.

Lessons to be learned from hockey lockout

I lost my interest in professional hockey long ago. While it may be a function of "growing up," I imagine there is more too it than that. After all, my interest in baseball has waned little, and I still enjoy Olympic hockey – I guess that's not professional hockey.

The encouragement of violent play, the disregard for player safety coupled with the arrogance of so many (something that infects almost all professional sport), greed and more have turned off this former fan. Apparently my lack of interest is not so uncommon, even in Canada. What likely makes me a bit unique is my interest in the NHL "lockout." The lessons it teaches about human nature are numerous, more than I can address in this short article. But let's start with greed.

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

"Whoever has a hundred wants two hundred," our sages teach. It boggles the mind how people in their 20s, most with bleak job prospects outside of hockey, are willing to sacrifice a year of a short career because, on average, they earn "only" $2.5 million a year – up close to 70 per cent since the last lockout. Wealth rarely brings happiness – much more often it brings envy and jealousy – those with millions are often upset they don't have hundreds of millions. How sad!

Even more startling is the number of players who, at a fraction of the salary they would earn in the NHL, are playing overseas. What possible logic could there be for this other than the human desire to defeat the other? Claims by players that they play for the love of the game are both patently false and absolutely true. Man truly will bite off his nose to spite his face.

Undoubtedly labour negotiators will argue that this is a most naive view and such extreme measures are necessary. That may be true if your goal is victory or at least saving face rather than what is in one's best interest. Concern for the impact on third parties – restaurant owners, ticket sellers, those who really do need the money – is considered a sign of weakness.

While some fans murmur about boycotting hockey outside of a few markets where hockey has never had deep roots, I will be shocked if any negative impact is felt in hockey hotbeds like Toronto. Our sages long understood that claims of what one might do in any given circumstance carry very little weight – what we say we will do and what we do are usually quite different. This is the basis behind the concept of *Asmachta*, a non-binding agreement, where statements such as, "if I don't do such and such, I will give you $1,000," are unenforceable as they do not generate reliance. All know that words alone are pretty meaningless.

The lockout has generated much anger and frustration highlighting the rabbinic dictum that the character of a person can be seen by "*kiso, koso, ka'aso,*" his money, anger and drinking.

By the time this article is printed, the two sides may have dug in so deep that the season will be cancelled. Even if they reach some kind of agreement, I am looking forward to the sound of "Play Ball".

Comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

דער יידיש ווינקל

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–מיר זענען קאמענדירט צו האלטן שטארק דעם אנדענק אן קיינמאל נישט צו פארגעסן די זעקס מיליאן מארטירער וואס האבן געפאלן אין דער חורבן.

–מיר זענען פארבאטן אפלייקענען אדער צו זיין פארצוייפולט וען גאט, נישט קוקענדיק ארוף - ארגומענטן מיר האבן מיט אים אדער א פארשוואכטער גלויבנע אדער א נישט גלויבנע כדי יידישקייט זאל אונטערגין.

–מיר זענען פארבאטן, טוף קל טוף, צו זיין אין יוש וען דער וועלט וי דער פלאץ וו דאס מלכות פון גאט וועט בליין, כדי נישט צו מאכן די וועלט א פלאץ אן א באטייט אין וועמען גאט איז טויט, אדער אן באטייט, און אלץ איז דערלויבן.

אחעקצוהארפן אט די אימפעראטיוון, איז ענטפער צו היטלערס נצחן ביים טויטן לאגער אוישוויץ איז צו געבן היטלער א נעוונינס נאך זיין טויט."

וער איז ער דער פילאסאף אן רב וואס האט די גאוה פארצושטעלן א 614טער מצוה? פאקענהיים איז נעוען א וועלט באריממטער פילאסאף, גאבאלן איז יידשלאנד אין 1916 און געשטארבן אין ישראל אין 2003. ער איז אריס פון יידשלאנד נאך קריסטאלנאכט אן נעקומען קיין קאנאדא וו, צוויישן לעבן און טויט, איז ער נעוען א פראפעסאר אין טארנטער אוניווערסיטעט. אין זיין לערע אן דיכטונג האט ער פראבירט נעבן נייע איינבליקן צו דער יידישער טעאלאגיע.

זיינע וואגיקע וערק האלט מען נאך אלץ טייער. ער האט נעגעבן גרויס פילאסאפיש אכט צו דעם קיעם פון אונדזער יידיש פאלק. איך אט די וועלט קען מען זען דער פונדאמענט פון זיין 614טן מצוה.

שרייב אין האט נעדאנקען וועגן אונדזער וויקל שרייבט וועלט פעסט אדער בליין- פעסט : info@cjnews.com

A book for the thoughtful, 'skeptical' Orthodox

Orthodox Jews commonly believe that "Torah from heaven" is the central tenet of the Jewish religion. But what precisely does that belief entail? A courageous new book by Rabbi Norman Solomon, *Torah from Heaven: The Reconstruction of Faith*, tries to answer that question. The book has an impressive range, from scholarship about biblical times to 21st-century theology and almost all periods in between.

Views & Reviews

Martin Lockshin

Rabbi Solomon worked as an Orthodox congregational rabbi in England for 22 years before joining academia. He is now retired, but is still affiliated with Oxford University. He describes himself as part of the "skeptical" Orthodox, a group that he claims is larger than most people realize.

Usually "Torah from heaven" in Orthodox circles is understood to mean that God dictated the entire text of the first five books of the Bible (with the possible exception of the last eight verses of Deuteronomy) to Moses, who then wrote it down. Furthermore, the text of the Torah scroll that we have in our synagogues today is precisely what Moses wrote. Rabbi Solomon quotes Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, the leader of neo-Orthodox Judaism in the 19th century: "When we raise aloft this Torah… we jubilantly proclaim *Vezot Hatorah* ['This is the Torah which Moses set before the Israelites,' Deuteronomy 4:43]… that it is still the same Torah which Moses brought to Israel 'through the mouth of God through the hand of Moses,' the same Torah, pure and unadulterated."

But Rabbi Solomon notes that the Hebrew word "torah" in the Bible just means "teaching" or "instruction." Even Rashi (1040-1105), the greatest Jewish Bible commentator and surely unskeptically Orthodox, explained that the verse in Deuteronomy simply means that Moses' speech containing his teachings (torah) is about to begin – i.e. "This," what follows in the following chapters, "is the torah [teaching] which Moses set [i.e. spoke] before the Israelites." Only many centuries after Moses did people begin to use the word Torah to refer to the first five books of the Bible and did anyone write down the claim that Moses was the author of the so-called Five Books of Moses. (The word "torah" in the verse in Deuteronomy 31:9, "Moses wrote this torah," is not a reference to the Five Books of Moses but to the recording of a specific "teaching," or at most a set of teachings, as was recognized even by a number of traditionalist Bible commentators such as Rabbi Ovadya Seforno [c. 1475-1550].)

Rabbi Solomon argues further that historical scholarship makes it impossible to believe that Moses was the author of Genesis to Deuteronomy, or that our text of the Torah today is identical to the original one. The Talmud often quotes biblical verses whose wording or spelling differs from our own (as do Rashi and basically every other Bible commentator who lived before the days of the printing press).

Not satisfied with tackling this formidable set of problems, Rabbi Solomon goes on to note how rabbis in later centuries greatly expanded the range of the word "torah." By considering most (or all) of rabbinic teachings (and sometimes also works of Jewish mysticism) as Torah or Oral Torah, they made those teachings authoritative and inviolable. For example, because of this expanded definition of God's Torah, Rabbi Ben-Zion Uzziel (1880-1953), a Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel, apparently considered the talmudic statement that a newborn baby gets its blood specifically from its mother (Babylonian Talmud Niddah 31a) as legally binding. He therefore ruled that blood typing could not be used as a means of ascertaining paternity, since "any scientific examination is nullified by this trustworthy tradition [that a baby's blood comes from its mother, not its father] of our sages, all of whose words were spoken by divine inspiration."

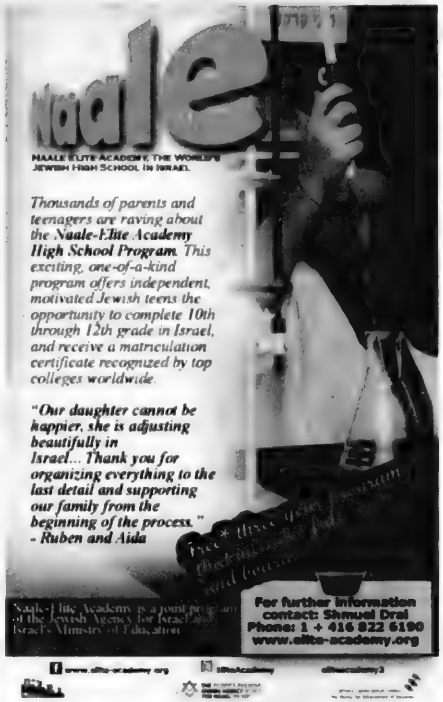
Other Orthodox rabbis disagreed with Rabbi Uzziel, finding ways to accept even those medical conclusions that appeared to contradict a "Torah" teaching. Rabbi Solomon shows that rabbis or Jewish thinkers over many generations tried to develop what he calls a "reconciling hermeneutic" – they used different strategies for dealing with perceived contradictions between what "Torah" teaches us and what we learn from science, archeology, ethics or history. While he never says this openly, it seems that he sees these harmonizing efforts as a waste of time.

Few contemporary thinkers who identify as Orthodox or are commonly perceived to be Orthodox address these issues with such candour. Toward the end of this book, Rabbi Solomon summarizes a few who do, including Menachem Kellner, Tamar Ross and David Halivni. He examines their theological suggestions, criticizes them and then presents his own theology.

Rabbi Solomon's thesis is straightforward: "The classical doctrine of 'Torah from heaven'… with its erroneous historical claims and occasionally questionable moral consequences, cannot be upheld by the serious historian, scientist or philosopher." And yet the claims that "Torah is from heaven" and that Moses wrote the Torah are, in a certain sense "true," as they are Judaism's "foundational myth."

Rabbi Solomon rushes to explain that he uses the word "myth" not in the sense of something untrue. "Myths are among the most important symbols of our life; they say what *cannot be reduced to nameable facts.*" Furthermore, "a story can be at one and the same time both myth and history, and it is certainly more persuasive if it is both; but even *without* the support of history it can function effectively as myth."

Rabbi Solomon's radical thesis is unlikely to win the open support of Orthodox leaders. In fact, I'm guessing that many of them will dismiss this devout Jew out of hand. Of course, it will appeal to the thoughtful, skeptical Orthodox. And despite all the detail in the book, it is very readable and comprehensible even for a beginner. It should be required reading for any modern woman or man who thinks seriously about Jewish theology in general, and the question of Torah from heaven in particular.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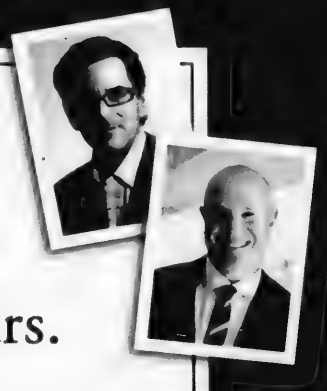

We want to see your name in the stars.

As we write to you, we reflect on what marks both a great honour and a great opportunity. An honour because we're unveiling an impressive list of shining stars whose generous gifts have gone beyond the call of their community. An opportunity because this is your chance to make a contribution if you haven't already. As many in our community are already aware, our Constellation of Distinction raises funds for Mount Sinai Hospital's highest priority needs - needs that are the most challenging for us to meet and yet the most critical for our Hospital. Our continued work in advancing world-renowned research and fostering the very best in patient care depends heavily on your generosity. The time for you to shine is running out. This year's Constellation of Distinction will be closing shortly and your contributions are essential to our efforts. This letter is a call to our most cherished friends and supporters. Please join this year's Constellation and take your place among our shining stars.

Brent Belzberg
Chair, Board of Directors,
Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation

Brian Gluckstein
Chair, 2012 Constellation of Distinction

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This list represents a few of the shining stars who have already helped our Constellation shine even brighter. Please consider adding your star to our Constellation by January 31. *List as of December 12, 2012.*

Together we shine even brighter.

MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL FOUNDATION
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It's a great time to revisit classic dishes

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

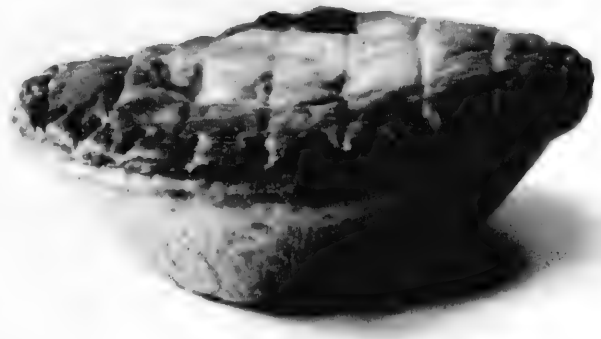
Is it not amazing that there are so many cookbooks and recipes published every year? Even for me, constantly on the prowl for new ideas and dishes, the sheer breadth of available recipes is staggering.

Most chefs and cookbook authors will tell you that a recipe is simply a starting point, that a recipe is used to familiarize you with the ingredients, techniques and order of putting things together. Because, really, cooking is all about confidence.

Once you've made a dish once, you feel confident enough to make it again and again, and even to personalize it. That's where classic renditions come in. I've updated the time-honoured chicken pie by making it with an olive oil pastry and used a pareve sauce so that the chicken is enveloped in a tasty and velvety bath. The vegetables called for are but a suggestion. You can use green beans or peas instead of the artichokes, shiitake mushrooms instead of button mushrooms and fennel instead of the celery. It's up to you.

CHICKEN POT PIE IN OLIVE OIL PASTRY

You can use all white meat or all dark meat or a combination for this one-dish meal. The pastry can be made up to three days ahead. Be sure to soften it before rolling it out and flour your work surface generously to prevent it from sticking.



2 tbsp. olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
1/2 lb. mushrooms, stems removed, sliced
1/2 lb. quartered small new potatoes
1 tsp. each salt and Italian seasoning
1/2 tsp. pepper
2 cups chopped cooked chicken
1 cup chopped canned artichokes (or frozen green beans or peas)

Sauce:
2 tbsp. olive oil
2 tbsp. all purpose flour
1 cup chicken stock
1/2 cup coconut or soy milk

Pastry:
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking powder
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/3 cup coconut or soy milk
egg

Glaze:
1egg yolk

Pastry: In a large bowl, whisk together flour, salt and baking powder. In separate bowl, whisk together oil, coconut milk and egg and pour over dry ingredients. Using wooden spoon, stir to form a fairly smooth dough. Turn out onto lightly floured surface and knead until smooth, about 2 minutes. Press into disc, wrap with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. (Make-ahead: refrigerate for up to 5 days.)

Continued on page 25

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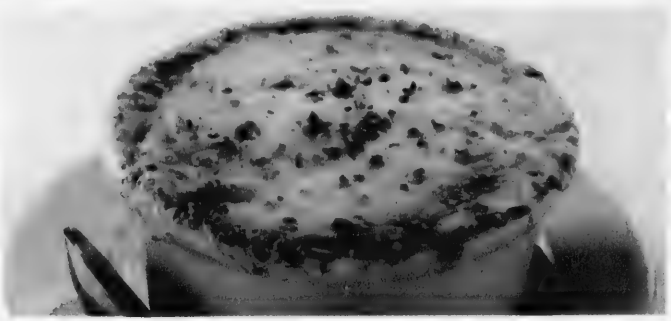

Onion soup is always great

Continued from page 24

Heat olive oil in saucepan set over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, celery, mushrooms, potatoes, salt, Italian seasoning and pepper. Cook, stirring, for 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are softened. Stir in chicken and artichokes; set aside.

Sauce: Heat oil in saucepan set over medium high heat. When hot, whisk in flour and cook, whisking, for 1 minute. Pour in stock and coconut milk. Bring to boil. Reduce heat slight and boil gently for about 8 minutes or until slightly thickened. Stir into chicken and vegetable mixture.

Preheat oven to 375. On lightly floured surface, roll out slightly more than half of pastry to 1/8th-inch thickness. Fit into bottom of a 9-inch glass pie plate. Scrape chicken-vegetable mixture into pastry-lined pie plate. Roll out remaining pastry. Moisten edge of bottom pastry with some of the egg for the glaze. Fit remaining pastry on top of filling, pressing it to adhere to bottom pastry. Crimp edges. Brush egg all over surface of pastry. Cut two steam vents on top of pastry. Bake in centre of preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes or until filling is bubbling and pastry is golden. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

FRENCH ONION SOUP

Traditionally made with a rich beef stock, this soup is also wonderful when assembled with homemade or store bought vegetable stock. Caramelizing the onions to a deep golden colour helps impart the dark hue and richness associated with this classic meal. Day-old French bread is perfect for the topping.

3 tbsp. olive oil
5 large onions, peeled and sliced
1 large clove garlic, minced
2 tbsp. all purpose flour
1/3 cup sherry or brandy
4 cups vegetable stock, preferably low sodium
4 thick slices dry French bread
1-1/2 cups shredded Emmental or Swiss cheese

Heat oil in deep pot set over medium-high heat. Stir in onions until well coated. Cover with tight fitting lid. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes. Remove lid. Reduce heat to medium. Cook, stirring often, for 25 to 30 minutes or until onions are golden brown. Stir in garlic for 1 minute. Sprinkle with flour and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in sherry. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2 to 3 minutes. Add vegetable stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes. (Soup can be brought to room temperature, covered and refrigerated for up to 48 hours. Reheat gently before proceeding.)

To serve, preheat broiler. Ladle soup evenly into 4 ovenproof bowls. Top each with bread, submerging slightly to moisten. Sprinkle generously with cheese. Brown just until the cheese has melted, 3 to 5 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

For more recipes, go to cjnews.com

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Mazel Tov מזל טוב

Best wishes to Sean & Miri Shapiro who were married on Nov. 18th. Mazel tov to Sonia & Lou Shapiro, Rita & Michael Katz and families.

Wendy & Michael Herman and Shirley & Bob Ross are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Averil Mara & Daniel Jason.

Niall & Meriel Gordon & Lawrence & Ruth Goodman are thrilled to announce the engagement of Ronit and Brandon. Proud grandparents Gladys Spain and Flora and Sydney Rosenfield.

Happy 60th anniversary Bea & Norman Bloomberg. Love, Elaine & Keith, Alan, Michael & Michelle, and grandkids, Sari, Michelle, Kathryn, Bayley, Benjamin, Seth and Liam.

Happy 85th birthday to Edith Pollock from her great-grandchildren Adam and Paige Uditsky.

Darren Efram Hazan celebrated his first Chanukah with parents, Mike & Dani. The Hazan and Aginsky families welcomed him into the world on Aug. 11.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

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What's New

By LILA BARBOUR

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Deadline reminder: Jan. 14 is the deadline for Jan. 24 and Jan. 21 is the deadline for Jan. 31. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com. This week's What's New was done by Carolyn Blackman.

Thursday, Jan. 10

YIDDISH MUSICAL THEATRE

"The Life, Legends and Music of Abraham Ellstein and Sholom Secunda," with **Cantor Marshall Loomer**, 7:30 p.m., Beth David, 416-633-5500, bethdavid.com.

ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Salomon Benzimra discusses the Palestinian narrative and its impact on the Arab-Israeli conflict, 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

Friday, Jan. 11

TU B'SHVAT TOT SHABBAT

Temple Sinai's program for tots. Dinner, 6 p.m., service, 7:15 p.m. Call education office, 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net. Registration required.

Saturday, Jan. 12

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel-Mississauga's Conservative egalitarian. Shabbat service Jan. 12, 10 a.m. in Oakville. Kiddush and guest speaker. www.bnaishalom.ca, info@bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

TORAH CLASS

Beth Tikvah's Torah class will study Vayera.

Sunday, Jan. 13

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Without a Home, in Yiddish with subtitles, will be screened 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah. Members free, guests $5. RSVP to **Sandy**, 416-458-1440 or 416-736-8073, or yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

***YOM IYUN* FOR WOMEN**

Yeshiva University Beit Midrash Zichron and Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto adult education present "The Challenge of Continuity." Shiur, 10 a.m., Israeli film, 10:45 a.m., workshop, 11:45 a.m. Free. RSVP, 647-234-7299, info@torontotorah.com.

Monday, Jan. 14

ROCK AND ROLL BOWLING

Join Temple Sinai for shmoozing, dancing and bowling at The Ballroom, 416-487-4161, hayley@templesinai.net.

Tuesday, Jan. 15

JEWISH DIABETES CHAPTER

A naturopath will speak at Pride of Israel, 8 p.m., $1. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403.

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

Screening of *Footnote*, Beth Tikvah, 2 p.m. $5 at the door.

PANEL DISCUSSION

"The United Church, the General Council and Israel" with **Rev. Andrew Love**, co-chair Protestant consultation on Israel and the Middle East, and **Len Rudner**, director of community relations and outreach, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. Beth David, 8 p.m., $5.

Wednesday, Jan. 16

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Sheila Thompson, artist and felt maker, brings her training as

Continued on page 27

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Continued from page 26

geographer and ecologist to the interpretation of landscapes through the art of felt-making. Guests $5., 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

OTHER NEWS

TORAH TOTS

Register for Chabad Markham's Torah Tots before Jan. 21 to receive a discount. Daycare starts September. **Goldie**, 905-886-0420, ext. 227.

YIDDISH LEBT

Classes for adults and kids sponsored by Committee for Yiddish, all levels. 9:30 a.m.- noon. Begins Jan. 13, Beth David. Adults $150, kids, $20. committeeforyiddish.com, **Barbara**, 416-631-5843.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

A spousal bereavement group for ages 55+ runs Jan. 29 through March 5, 2-4 p.m., Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 418 or 462.

NEW TO TWO

Shaar Shalom Sisterhood and Youth present a program for babies and toddlers and their grown-ups, starting in January. To register, call 905-889-4975.

MOMS & TOTS

Beth David's musical class for mothers and babies ages 3 to 24 months runs Friday mornings, Jan. 11– March 29, 9:30 or 10:30 a.m. Limited spaces. **Debbie**, 416-633-5500, ext. 0, to register.

JOB READINESS PROGRAM

JVS and Kerry's Place Autism Services' Asperger's Job Readiness Program provides a workshop to develop job skills, one-on-one sessions and a placement for those between 18 and 30. Registration is open for Feb 11. 416-649-1619 or schong@jvstoronto.org.

HONOUR MOTHERS

Act To End Violence Against Women seeks volunteers to work on a committee to honour the women in your life on Mother's Day with flowers, while remembering abused women who are in shelters. joy.levy@rogers.com or **Joy**, 416-520-9901.

ADULT LEARNING

The Melton School of Adult Learning holds a class at Beth Emeth taught by **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**: *The Book Of Jonah*, 10-11 a.m. Jan. 24-Feb 28. toronto@meltonschool.org to register. Space limited.

MINI-PROGRAMS

Sign your child, age 12 months to five years, to one of Temple Sinai's mini-programs, starting in January. Includes Mini Chefs at Work, Super Scientist, Junior Circuit and sportball. Morning, lunchtime and afternoon programs. Education office, 416-487-3281, education@templesinai.net.

FRUMBA-LITE

A cardio dance program for women. Mondays 1:15 p.m., Thursdays 10:30 a.m. or 7:30 p.m,, Pride of Israel Synagogue, $50 for 4 lessons. Info: 416- 226-0111, ext 10, or frumbadance@gmail.com.

CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW

Ulpan method with **Yael Lev**. Intermediate level Thursdays 1:30 p.m. , 8 lessons $120. Beginner's level, Part 2, Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. 10 lessons, Pride of Israel. Call 416-225-6151 or 416-226 - 0111, ext. 10.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

Effective parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 10. Topics include: how to nurture self-esteem, encourage problem solving, increase communication and setting limits. Begins Jan. 21 7-9 p.m.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids is a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. How and when to tell the children, as well as ideas and strategies to best meet your child's needs will be discussed. Thursday Jan. 24, the Promenade Mall, Suite 313, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, Jan. 16, includes buffet lunch; barber, hairdresser, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. Tuesdays, seniors gentle fitness with personal trainer, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Membership registration now open for 2013.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Lecture, Jan. 13, about Israel, 1:30-3:30 p.m., refreshments, $6 members, $8 non-members. Lecture, Jan. 15, "Love in Music: Romantic Love," 10-11:30 a.m., $3 members, $6 non-members. Wellness lecture, Jan. 17, diabetes education, 1:30-2:30 p.m, free.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Bridge club at Forest Hill Library has reopened and is looking for new members. Call Lea, evenings, 416-487-7630.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Miles Nadal JCC, info/registration: 416-924-6211, ext 155, "United Bakers 100th Anniversary with Ruthie Ladofsky," Jan. 17, 1:30 p.m., refreshments, 2 p.m., program. Cost: $4, pre-pay by Jan. 10.

Association of Jewish Seniors is holding a general meeting and breakfast, Jan. 17, 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim. A consultant on aging will speak about "Financial Planning 101."RSVP to **Tammy**, 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Edithvale Seniors gentle fitness offers Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement classes on Mondays 10:30 a.m. $60. A group is forming for easy-to-learn Tai Chi Chih, Thursdays 10:30 a.m. $85 for 6 lessons. Beginner's special: 2 students $150. Call **Helen**, 416-665-9050.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trip, including *Mary Poppins* on sale now.

Health management with **Gabby Cogan**, Thursdays 1:30-2:30 p.m. starts Jan. 17.

Social yoga with **Dorry Korn**,Thursdays 10:30 a.m.-noon starts Jan 10.

Casino Rama, Jan. 17.

The Impressionists-Superstars of the Modern Western Art World, Tuesdays, Jan. 15 to Feb. 5 (Part 1). Feb. 12 to March 5 (Part 2), 1-3 p.m. Can attend single sessions. Member fee, $40, Regular fee, $50.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

The Art & Craft of Short Fiction, Sundays, Jan. 13-March 24, 6:45-8:45 p.m. $235. Creative writing workshop for emerging writers, facilitated by coach, **Benjamin Hackman.** No experience required. sharonis@mnjcc.org 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

Taste of Jewish Environmentalism lunch and learn with **Sharoni Sibony,** Jan. 15, 12-1 p.m. Bring lunch and we provide fruits of the earth. sharonis@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

Shabbat and the Holidays, with **Baruch Sienna**, Thursdays, Jan.17-March 7, 7:30-9 p.m. Co-presented with City Shul. Info: sharonis@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two documentaries for the opening of the 35th season: Jan. 20, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Al Green Theatre, *An Article of Hope* and *Cohen on the Bridge*. Guest Speaker **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Individual seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening. No advance ticket sales. $15 general admission. $10 ages 18-35 (7:30 p.m. screening only). Info: 416-924-6211, ext. 606, esthera@mnjcc.org.

Awakening the Voice, Sounding the Soul: Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Jan. 23-June 26, 7:30 - 9 p.m., twice monthly. $10 drop-in or $80 for the series. Pro-rate available. Info: music@mnjcc.org.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. www.srcentre.ca.

Family Israeli Folk Dance, free open house for the family, Jan. 13, 2-3 p.m. and Jan. 20, 3.30-4:30 p.m. To register, call **Andrea** by Jan. 9, ext. 3006. Registration is now open for winter session. Visit Srcentre.ca, call 905-303-1821, ext. 3025.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Birnbaum, Sally	Dec. 20/12	355 St. Clair Ave. W.
Wallace, Myrna	Dec. 20/12	65 Skymark Dr.
Shulman, Henry	Dec. 20/12	1 Four Winds Dr.
Orzy, Edward David	Dec. 21/12	4 Acton Ave.
Manishevitz, Gertrude	Dec. 21/12	30 Watercliffe Rd.
Larman, Shirley Ann	Dec. 21/12	8 Park Vista
Prupas, Rose	Dec. 21/12	Private
Vodianoi, Zipora	Dec. 21/12	1925 Steeles Ave. E.
Polak, Perla	Dec. 22/12	Private
Payne, Pearl	Dec. 23/12	170 Red Maple Rd.
Shelepina, Faina	Dec. 23/12	14 St. Mathew St.
Ivanova, Polina	Dec. 23/12	Private
Kravetsky, Marvin	Dec. 24/12	3000 Bathurst St.
Appelbaum, Sidney Lawrence	Dec. 25/12	
Grinberg, Haim	Dec. 25/12	

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Enrique Fenig	Dec 14/12	2600 Bathurst Street
George Biro	Dec 14/12	15 Paddock Court
Eleanor Baskin	Dec 15/12	2 Neptune Drive
Jacob Orbach	Dec 15/12	52 Magpie Crescent
Lena Charndoff	Dec 16/12	866 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Arthur Kaufman	Dec 16/12	438 Richmond St. West
Eve Eisner	Dec 16/12	8 Fernwood Road
Irving Pancer	Dec 18/12	5935 Bathurst Street
Gary Silver	Dec 19/12	902-625 Roselawn Ave.
Aleksey Shtern	Dec 21/12	22 Festival Drive
Harry Samuels	Dec 20/12	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Sy Landau	Dec 20/12	76 Truman Road
Clara Raymond	Dec 22/12	3 Sprucedale Place
Aleksey Shtern	Dec 21/12	22 Festival Drive
Harry Samuels	Dec 20/12	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Sy Landau	Dec 20/12	76 Truman Road
Clara Raymond	Dec 22/12	3 Sprucedale Place
Esther Gershony	Dec 21/12	429 Walmer Road
Rose Taub	Dec 21/12	1280 Finch Avenue W.
Anna Stark	Dec 22/12	33 Empress Avenue
Annie Malien	Dec 23/12	368 Eglinton Avenue E.
Elaine Sone	Dec 23/12	333 Clarke Avenue W.
Frances Flodder	Dec 24/12	484 Steeles Avenue, W.
Stephen Stren	Dec 23/12	18 Junewood Crescent
Julia Zidel	Dec 25/12	29 Glen Rush Blvd.
Hannah Rensler	Dec 26/12	34 Carscadden Drive
Noreen Brown	Dec 25/12	388 Douglas Avenue
Dr. Morris (Morrie) Shaw	Dec 26/12	195 Merton Street
Freda Feldman	Dec 27/12	55 Ameer Avenue
Mary Touich	Dec 26/12	7430 Bathurst Street
David Edgar Goldstone	Dec 26/12	165 Cole Road
Fay Spencer	Dec 27/12	1555 Finch Avenue East
Matthew Shuster	Dec 28/12	36 Greenland Road

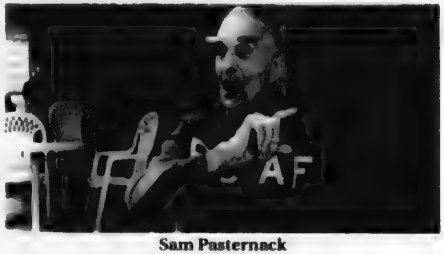
A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
HEBREW BASIC
NATIONAL JEWISH WEEKLY

Adele Lerner	Dec 14/12	47 St. Clair Ave. West
Hans Abrahamsohn	Dec 17/12	300-50 Graydon Hall
Jo Jo Tau Modeira	Dec 19/12	1501-45 Silverspring Blvd.
Sabine Behr	Dec 21/12	3636 Bathurst St.

Watch this space each week for monument dealers & shiva caterers

Sam Pasternack was a leader in Jewish War Veterans of Canada

Compiled by CJN staff


Sam Pasternack

Sam Pasternack, former national commander of the Jewish War Veterans of Canada, passed away on Dec. 10 at the age of 88.

An airman in the Royal Canadian Air Force from 1940 to 1945, Pasternack, a Torontonian, was a decorated World War II veteran.

During his wartime service, he flew supply missions out of northern Canada and Alaska to Russia.

He was also a passionate supporter of Israel, a respected and principled local businessman and a Jewish community leader and activist.

Rabbi Irwin Groner headed Conservative rabbinical body

JTA

Rabbi Irwin Groner, a former president of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly, has died.

Rabbi Groner, who led Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Detroit for more than four decades, died Dec. 30 at a hospital in that city. He was 81 and suffered from Parkinson's disease.

He guided the Rabbinical Assembly, the international association of Conservative rabbis, from 1990 to 1992, calling it "the highlight of my professional career," according to an obituary in the *Detroit Jewish News*.

Rabbi Groner was named the senior rabbi at Shaarey Zedek in 1967, a year after Rabbi Morris Adler was shot and killed by a young congregant. He had been the assistant rabbi since 1959.

The Conservative congregation named Rabbi Groner rabbi for life in 1978 and emeritus rabbi in 2003.

"He was a true giant in the rabbinical world," Rabbi Joseph Krakoff of Shaarey Zedek told the *Detroit Jewish News*. "He was an inspiring teacher, a magnificent preacher and a man who truly understood the depth of the human condition.

"Rabbi Groner approached every situation with a smile, a sense of humor and an acute sense of caring and concern."

Rabbi Groner began his career in Little Rock, Ark., at Agudath Achim Congregation when antisemitism magnified by the civil rights movement threatened the synagogue and its rabbi. During efforts to desegregate the city's schools, Rabbi Groner refused to cancel services due to bomb threats.

He served as a member of the board of governors for the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, the Rabbinic Cabinet of the United Jewish Appeal and the board of governors of the United Synagogue. In 1984, Gov. James Blanchard appointed Rabbi Groner the first clergyman to serve on Michigan's Judicial Tenure Commission, which settles grievances in the legal community. He also was active with area interfaith programs.

Rabbi Groner was ordained at the Hebrew Theological College of Chicago, his native city. He graduated from the University of Chicago.

Nobel Prize winner in medicine defied fascist antisemitism during WWII

JTA

Rita Levi-Montalcini, an Italian biologist who defied World War II fascist antisemitism and went on to win a Nobel Prize in medicine, died at the age of 103.

Rita Levi-Montalcini

Her niece told reporters that Levi-Montalcini died quietly in her sleep on Dec. 30 at her home in Rome.

Tributes poured in for one of Italy's most admired and honoured women. The Rome newspaper *Il Messaggero* said news of her death was greeted on the Internet "with the same affection and same outpouring of messages as would have accompanied the death of a rock star or cinema idol."

Recognized as a moral as well as intellectual authority, Levi-Montalcini was named a Senator for Life, one of Italy's highest honours, in 2001.

"A luminous figure in the history of science has passed away," President Giorgio Napolitano said in a statement. Napolitano praised Levi-Montalcini's scientific work as well as her commitment to fostering the rights of women.

Rome Mayor Gianni Alemanno called her death a great loss "for all of humanity." In a statement, Alemanno said Levi-Montalcini had represented "civic conscience, culture and the spirit of research of our time."

Levi-Montalcini, who never married, was born to a Jewish family in Turin in 1909. During World War II, because of antisemitic restrictions by the fascist government, she worked secretly in a clandestine laboratory that she built in her bedroom.

She and her family fled Turin in 1941, first to a mountain village and in 1943 to Florence, where they spent the rest of the war in hiding. After the war, Levi-Montalcini moved to the United States and eventually divided her time between the United States and Italy.

In 1986, she shared the Nobel Prize in medicine with American biochemist Stanley Cohen for groundbreaking research that unlocked the mysteries of the cell.

E-book promotes eating for a healthy brain

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The co-authors of Women of Baycrest's new e-cookbook, *MINDfull*, send a strong message about maintaining brain health.

"Food can be a powerful force in the battle to save the memories and minds of women and their loved ones everywhere," Carol Greenwood, senior scientist at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute and Canada's leading professor of nutrition and brain health, Daphna Rabinovitch, a food writer and recipe developer, and Joanna Gryfe, a food and media expert, say in their introduction.

MINDfull was spearheaded, by Greenwood, Rabinovitch said in an interview, because she is heavily involved in research into the aging brain, and her specialty is how nutrition is linked to the prevention of cognitive decline.

The book targets women from age 40 and up, she said, "because the choices we make can determine our brain's health and function much later in life.

"If we are what we eat, then we have to choose what we put on our plates carefully. Rather than thinking of it as limiting our diet, though, we have to think about how exciting food can be," Rabinovitch said.

Eating for a healthy brain is similar to eating for a healthy heart, she said. "Eat complex carbohydrates, dark leafy vegetables, and bright green vegetables such as spinach and swiss chard. As well, eat fruits, low-fat dairy products and lean protein."

The recipes promote the health benefits of a Mediterranean diet, and rely primarily on olive oil as a source of fat, and fish, chicken, dairy products and beans as a source of protein. Red meat is consumed, but monthly rather than weekly or daily, she said.

The e-cookbook is available as a $9.99 download from e-book retailers such as iTunes, Amazon and Kobo. Proceeds from the sale support Baycrest programs that promote excellence and innovations in aging and brain health.

Dr. Carol Greenwood with the curried lentil and wheatberry salad with mango – from her new cookbook *Mindfull*. ***[Kelly Connelly/Baycrest photo]***

BREAKFAST BURRITO

Nettie Cronish

1/4 cup chopped dried apricots
1/4 cup chopped dried apple or mango
1/4 cup dried cranberries
1 cup apple juice
a cardamom pod, cracked or 1 small cinnamon stick
1 398-ml can pinto or black beans, drained and rinsed
1/4 tsp. salt
4 10-in. tortillas
1/4 cup salsa and/or grated cheese optional

In a saucepan, combine apricots, apples, cranberries, apple juice and cardamom; heat over low heat for five minutes. Add beans and bring to boil. Reduce heat, boil gently, uncovered and stirring often, for about 10 minutes or until liquid has almost evaporated. Discard cardamom, add salt.

In a skillet, warm each tortilla over medium heat for 2 minutes, turning once

Place 1/2 cup filling in centre of tortilla. Fold bottom edge over filling. Fold sides over. Roll up from bottom. Slice in half. Serve at room temperature. If desired add salsa and or grated cheese on top and bake for 5 minutes until cheese melts.

Calories 180; protein 6 g; carbs 36 g; fat, total, 2g; fat, saturated, 0.5 g; transfat 0; cholesterol 0; fibre 6 g; sodium 330 mg.

MINDfull
Over 100 Delicious Recipes for Better Brain Health
CAROL GREENWOOD PHD, DAPHNA RABINOVITCH & JOANNA GRYFE
Baycrest

CARMALIZED ONION AND TOMATO PHYLLO TART

3 tbsp. olive oil
3 onions, thinly sliced
4 sheets phyllo pastry
1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
1/4 cup Dijon mustard
1 1/2 cups shredded Asiago cheese
2 tomatoes, sliced
1 large clove garlic, minced
1 tbsp. chopped fresh basil
1/4 tsp. pepper

Preheat oven to 375. Heat 2 tbsp. oil in large non-stick skillet, set over medium-low heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often until golden and carmelized, 30 to 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, cut each sheet of phyllo in half crosswise. Place 1 half on tea towel, keeping the rest covered with a damp towel. Brush sheet with some melted butter; place another sheet on top, a little askew so they are not perfectly aligned. Brush top phyllo with 1 tbsp. mustard. Keeping phyllo slightly askew, repeat layers, alternating brushing with butter and mustard until all the phyllo has been used. Transfer to 14x14-1/2 in. French tart pan with removable bottom. Fold phyllo edges under to fit.

Place onions on prepared tart; sprinkle with cheese. Top with overlapping slices of tomatoes. Sprinkle with garlic, basil and pepper. Drizzle remaining tbsp. oil over top.

Bake in centre of preheated oven until phyllo is golden, 30 to 45 minutes.

Calories 240; protein 6 g; carbs 14 g; fat total 18 g; saturated fat 8 g; transfat 0; cholesterol 35 mg; fibre 2g; sodium 430 mg.

The Staff of
The Canadian Jewish News
extends heartfelt condolences to our colleague and friend
Cynthia Gasner
and her entire family
on the passing of their beloved
RACHEL SWIRSKY ז"ל
(nee Mechanic)
May the family be spared further sorrow and may her memory be for a blessing.

SINGLES EVENTS
DEADLINE: Wednesday 4 p.m.
8 days preceding issue date

VACATIONS FOR JEWISH SINGLES
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Jewels of The Indian Ocean Cruise
April 17 - May 1, 2013
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Waqf continues to destroy Temple Mount artifacts

Aryeh Savir
Tazpit News Agency

JERUSALEM — A demonstration was held on Dec. 26 at the northern entrance to the Temple Mount in protest of the Waqf's continued destruction of archeological artifacts on the Temple Mount.

The demonstrators, lead by MK Aryeh Eldad, called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to intervene and to stop the obliteration of these unique antiques by the Waqf.

The Waqf, a Muslim Jordanian religious body entrusted with the management of the Temple Mount, has been renovating the Temple Mount for years. In the process, they have been moving mounds of earth off the mountain. These piles contain numerous archaeological artifacts from many centuries.

In 2004, the High Court of Justice passed a ruling prohibiting the removal of the dirt from the Temple Mount elsewhere until the contents are combed for artifacts. Since then, these artifacts have been lying at the bottom of the mountain in the accumulating mounds. Many of the artifacts dug up are currently being ruined by the weather, after being preserved for centuries.

Yitzchak Dvira, an archaeologist, has recently published a report about the Waqf's continued disregard of the High Court's ruling. In his report he states that since the ruling in 2004, many piles of earth have accumulated on the eastern side of the Temple Mount, and the Waqf continues to move the earth from the Temple Mount to dump sites in eastern Jerusalem.

Dvira has documented recent incidents of heavy machinery moving earth away from the Temple Mount. These actions have brought to light the loss of important artifacts to Jewish, Christian and Muslim history on the Temple Mount.

Member of Knesset Aryeh Eldad stands near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. ***(Flash90 photo)***

Dvira and his crew have sifted through piles of earth removed from the Mount and have recovered many artifacts belonging to various historical periods. They have recovered seals baring the names of priests mentioned in the book of Jeremiah, support beams from the First Temple, remnants of the structure of the Second Temple, arrow heads and horseshoe nails from the Crusades Period and even artifacts from the Muslim Period, which the Waqf neglected to preserve.

Dvira states that he sees dozens of such artifacts every day in the mounds on the side of the Temple Mount. He told Tazpit News Agency that he believes the earth piles should be removed from the Temple Mount, but it should be done in a supervised fashion, ensuring no further loss of artifacts.

Dvira submitted his report to the official bodies entrusted with the supervision of the enforcement of the High Court's ruling and the preservation of the artifacts. The police have released a statement in which they declare that all construction on the Temple Mount is under their close supervision, and that Dvira's claims are incorrect. As of now, all other bodies have not provided a response.

Dvira points out that all issues regarding the Temple Mount are overseen by the Prime Minister's office, and he suspects that there is consent on their part to the Waqf's actions. It was reported that Prime Minister Netanyahu met secretly with King Abdullah of Jordan last week. Dvira believes they discussed issues related to the Temple Mount. The Jordanians have been pressuring the Israeli government to allow the removal of the earth mounds on the side of the Temple Mount.

Dvira and the Temple Mount organizations warn that this continued neglect and disregard of the law will bring the further loss of unrecoverable historical relics. They intend to petition the High Court on the issue again.

A Small Wonders event for couples experiencing infertility

"Any Questions?"

A chance to anonymously ask your questions about infertility, treatments and medication

A MODERATED EVENING WITH

DR. KAREN GLASS
MD FRCSC
CReATe Fertility Centre

JOCELYN SMITH
LifeQuest Centre

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2013
at 7:45 pm
Small Wonders Centre
3845 Bathurst Street, Suite 103
Toronto, Ontario M3H 3N2

Refreshments will be served

RSVP and submit your questions (optional) please email event@smallwonders.ca or call 416 398 7720 by Friday, January 11, 2013. All advance reservations will receive an additional entry to a door prize raffle for a $50 gift certificate from Umami.

THE HARRY AND FRAIDA TOPPER 2013 LECTURE

Israel: Surviving in a Hostile World with Dr. Jonathan Fine

Thursday, January 17 at 8:00 PM
Secular and Religious Forms of Terrorism

For Young Professionals – Dr. Fine will explore the differences between secular, radical and religious, extremist agendas. Wine and cheese reception. No charge. Kindly RSVP to Marlene Lalla at 416-781-3514 ext. 234 or mlalla@beth-tzedec.org

Shabbat, January 19

1. Pulpit lecture – *Is There an Arab Spring? Hopes and Challenges* Is the Middle East really moving towards western-style democracy or is it falling to radical Islamic regimes committed to a vast Caliphate ruled by Sharia law?
2. Luncheon following services – *Democracies and Counter-Terrorism: Challenges and Solutions* This lecture will address the problems democracies face balancing due process and civil liberties with national security when confronting terrorism.

Cost for lunch: $36 for adults, $18 for children ages 6-14. By advance registration only. Please contact Arital at 416-781-3511 or info@beth-tzedec.org by Wednesday, January 16.

Sunday, January 20
Breakfast at 9:30 AM. Lecture at 10:00 AM
Israel's Negative Image in the World

This lecture surveys the current hostile climate, identifies key antagonists and their agendas and suggests how to deal with them. No charge.

Dr. Fine is academic advisor to the International Program in Government, Diplomacy and Strategy at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, and Research Fellow at IDC's International Institute for Counter Terrorism. He is a former advisor in arms control, conflict resolution and counter-terrorism. He was ordained as a Conservative Masorti Rabbi at the Solomon Schechter Institute in

בית צדק
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Morsi's anti-Israel bias seen in re-released video

JNS.org

In a video that was recently circulated by Egyptian media, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi described Zionists as "bloodsuckers," "warmongers" and "descendants of apes and pigs." He made the comments when he served as the Muslim Brotherhood's official spokesman in 2010, *Ynet* reported.

In the video translated last week by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), Morsi says, "The Zionists have no right to the land of Palestine." He also urges "military resistance" against Israel, and strongly condemns the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, which U.S. President Barack Obama was attempting to renew at that time.

"These futile [Israeli-Palestinian] negotiations are a waste of time and opportunities," Morsi said. "The Zionists buy time and gain more opportunities as the Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims lose time and opportunities and get nothing out of it."

The Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi gives an interview to Lebanese Al-Quds TV, in October 2010 [image capture MEMRI video]

He continued by slamming Zionism.

"No reasonable person can expect progress on this track," Morsi said. "Either [you accept] the Zionists and everything they want, or else there is war. This is what the occupiers of the land of Palestine know – these bloodsuckers who attack the Palestinians, these warmongers, these descendants of apes and pigs."

Ironically, the video was used in several Egyptian media outlets to condemn Morsi for his softening position on Israel since winning Egypt's first democratic elections last June. It was included with another clip that showed Egypt's ambassador to Israel, Atef Mohamed Salem Sayed Elahl, saying, "I come with a message of peace," after he presented his credentials to Israeli President Shimon Peres.

With files from Times of Israel.com.

Shas leader urges followers to leave rather than enlist

Asher Zeiger
The Times of Israel

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, spiritual leader of the haredi Shas party, said that in order to prevent haredi yeshiva students from being forced into military or national service, they may have no choice but to leave the country.

"God forbid, we will be compelled to leave the land of Israel... in order to free the yeshiva students" from being drafted, Rabbi Yosef said in a sermon last week.

He added that "we are surrounded by haters... by enemies... by evildoers who despise the Torah." He blasted Israeli politicians who call for the drafting of haredi young men. "When will [our yeshiva students] be great scholars if they are drafted into the military?"

The idea of haredim serving alongside the general population has long been a thorn in secular-Orthodox relations within Israeli society.

Last February, the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the Tal Law, which granted sweeping exemptions from military or national service to haredi Israelis.

Following the ruling, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that the Knesset would draft a revised, more equitable law within months.

In July, Netanyahu disbanded a committee headed by Kadima MK Yohanan Plesner that was seeking to draft a resolution to the issue, after some right-wing legislators resigned from the panel, citing its failure to institute a universal draft for Arab citizens as well as haredim.

Saying that adherents of the Torah are "in grave danger," Rabbi Yosef urged that in the upcoming Israeli elections, slated for Jan. 22, voters must "open [their] heart[s] and vote for the haredi parties" in order to prevent the enlistment of yeshiva students.

The rabbi further warned of the consequences awaiting anyone who voted for a non-religious party.

"On Judgment Day, God will accuse them, saying, 'You abandoned my Torah in the hands of the evildoers... who hate the Torah," he said.

Not all haredi Israelis agree with Rabbi Yosef's stance against equal service for all citizens. On Sunday, dozens of haredim arrived at the headquarters of the National Service Administration in Jerusalem to enlist in the national service corps.

According to a Government Press Office statement, more than 2,000 haredi men currently serve in the civil service corps, and of the men who have served to date, some 85 per cent were afterward successfully integrated in the workforce.

TimesofIsrael.com

Executive Director

Jewish Family Service Calgary (JFSC) is currently seeking a qualified individual to fill the role of Executive Director.

The Executive Director of JFSC is responsible for overseeing all aspects of agency functioning, with accountability to the Board of Directors, including:

- Implementing, upholding, and modelling the mission, goals and policies of the agency
- Managing and directing agency operations with integrity
- Providing leadership and representing the agency in the community
- Advocating for clients that the agency serves
- Collaborating with the Board to meet fundraising goals
- Identifying the needs of the Calgary community, and the specific needs of the Calgary Jewish community, as well as the political, cultural, social, and economic conditions and trends that impact the community

Qualifications

- MSW, RSW or equivalent education in a Human/Social Service field, or Business Administration
- 5 years of management experience in a community agency
- Knowledge of Jewish values and traditions
- Experience with a non-profit Board of Directors
- Fundraising experience and responsibilities

Qualified and interested candidates are invited to submit their application, by February 15, 2013, in confidence to *applications@jcilaw.com*.

Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted. Please do not contact JFSC office.

Jewish Family Service Calgary

36% of likely voters describe themselves as centrists

Continued from page 1

With the undecided votes and the votes for the failing fringe parties re-distributed on a proportionate basis across the spectrum, the results are as follows:

Looking through the data for clues regarding who is undecided on the right, the merger of Yisrael Beiteinu and Likud looms large. Likely voters who voted for Likud in 2009 intend to vote 59 per cent for Likud-Beiteinu and 10 per cent for Jewish Home, but a full 20 per cent remain undecided.

Most strikingly, an analysis of former Yisrael-Beiteinu voters reveals that they did not follow party chair Avigdor Lieberman to the alliance with the Likud in overwhelming numbers. In fact, only 32 per cent of those who voted for Yisrael-Beiteinu in 2009 intend to vote for Likud-Beiteinu today. A plurality of 36 per cent remain undecided, 12 per cent vote Labor, eight per cent vote Jewish Home and eight per cent vote Yesh Atid. Look for the Likud-Beiteinu campaign to refocus efforts on energizing its former voters.

While pundits claim that Israel is moving rightward, 36 per cent of likely voters describe themselves as centrists. This voting bloc is the most important group to watch in the coming days because, with 40 per cent of its members self-professedly undecided (approximately 14 per cent of likely voters, or 17 Knesset seats), it can help decide who sits in the next government.

The battle between Likud-Beiteinu and Jewish Home for votes on the right will not likely affect the general makeup of the next coalition. However, the 40 per cent of undecideds in the centre could go either rightward, to Likud-Beiteinu and Jewish Home, or leftward, to Labor, Yesh Atid and Hatnua, not to mention Shas.

Among centrist voters who have made up their minds, twice as many vote Labor as do Likud-Beiteinu. If this trend plays out among undecided centrists, then the prediction above – with its proportionate distribution of the undecided votes – under-represents support for Labor and over-represents Likud-Beiteinu and Jewish Home.

TimesofIsrael.com

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrives at a party for young Likud supporters in a Tel Aviv nightclub on Sunday evening, and called them to strengthen Likud-Beiteinu so he can succeed in a third term after the Jan. 22 election. ***(Flash 90 photo)***

RELIGION NO BAR TO GETTING WINGS: Tamar, the first observant female combat navigator in the Israeli Air Force, received her pilot's wings last week at a graduation ceremony at the Hatzerim air base in the Negev. Her face has been blurred for reasons of security, not modesty. ***(Israel Sun photo)***

MIZRACHI

EMUNAH

Mizrachi Canada and Emunah Women of Canada and all of our members, express sincere condolences to Rose Colchary, Lorraine Berenblut, Janice Jordan and Linda Kesten and their families, upon the passing of their dear husband and father, grandfather and great grandfather

Alex Colchary, ז"ל

He dedicated his life to religious Zionism and together with his dear wife Rose, fulfilled their dreams of Aliya recently. Alex has been long associated with Mizrachi as a council member; his dedication as President of the National Order of Hatzofim was well respected in our community since its inception here in Toronto. Together with Rose, they were well known for spearheading many Emunah fund raising efforts, especially for the Neve Michael Children's Village in Pardes Chana. He will be sorely missed by all.

May Hashem comfort the entire family amongst all those who mourn for Tzion and Yerushalayim.

Kurt Rothschild
President, World Mizrachi

Aryella Weisz
National President, Emunah Women

Jerry Rosenfield
President, Mizrachi Canada

Jack Kahn
Chairman of the Board, Mizrachi Canada

Alina Mayer
Co – President, Emunah Women, Toronto

Roberta Newman
Co – President, Emunah Women, Toronto

Allen Katz
President, Mizrachi Toronto

The Board of Directors and Staff of
Jewish Federations of Canada - UIA

express their heartfelt condolences to

Steven and Susie Cummings
Richard and Joanne Cummings
Nancy and Marc Gold

and their entire family on the passing of

Norma Cummings ז"ל
Beloved Mother and Mother-in-Law

May the families be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

Linda Kislowicz
President and CEO

Ralph Shedletsky
Chair Elect

JEWISH FEDERATIONS OF CANADA - UIA
הפדרציות היהודיות בקנדה - UIA
FÉDÉRATIONS JUIVES DU CANADA - UIA

Iranian Jewish man murdered in Tehran

Greg Tepper and Ilan Ben Zion
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — A Jewish man who was in a romantic relationship with the daughter of a member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard was murdered in his Tehran apartment last week.

The Jewish community suspects the woman of complicity in the killing of Daniel Mahgerefteh, 24, who belonged to one of Iran's wealthier Jewish families, Israel's Channel 2 News reported on Jan. 2.

Daniel Mahgerefteh
[Channel 2 Israel Television screen capture]

According to Armin Avi Kreuznacher, an Iranian-born Jew who emigrated from the country in 2010, Mahgerefteh was killed by the woman's family after the two had intimate relations and he refused to marry her.

"The murder was carried out as revenge for dishonouring the family," said Kreuznacher, who currently resides in Germany .

Police investigators reportedly told the woman that she had "done a good deed."

However, Iranian authorities maintained that Mahgerefteh was killed during a robbery. According to the official account, the killer, who was acquainted with Mahgerefteh, came to his apartment armed with a gun and shot his host in the back. He then stole his car, eventually parking it on one of Tehran's streets and hiding from the authorities.

Police reportedly apprehended the alleged murderer, who confessed to the deed.

Menashe Amir, an expert on Iran's Jewish community, told *The Times of Israel* that the official account of Mahgerefteh's murder was rife with inconsistencies.

The Jewish community is afraid following Mahgerefteh's murder, the second of its kind in as many months, he said.

In November, a 57-year-old Jewish woman was brutally stabbed to death, her body mutilated by Muslim attackers, in the Iranian city of Isfahan. The woman's family said it was a religiously motivated crime with a property dispute as its pretext.

Tuba N., whose family requested that her last name not be revealed for fear of further attacks, was murdered by her Muslim neighbours, who had harassed her family for years in an attempt to drive them from their home and confiscate the property for an adjoining mosque.

"The religious radicals even expropriated part of the house and attached it to the mosque's courtyard," Amir said. "The Jewish family appealed to the courts with the help of a local attorney" to seek redress for the conflict, "despite the threats to their lives."

A government census published earlier this year indicated there were 8,756 Jews left in Iran, about one-tenth of the country's Jewish population at the time of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

TimesofIsrael.com

Shalem to offer liberal arts degree

The Shalem Center in Jerusalem will open a liberal arts bachelor's degree program in the fall. Israel's Council for Higher Education approved recognition of Shalem, a conservative think-tank, as an academic institution. Shalem College will accept 50 students a year to pursue degrees in philosophy and Jewish thought, and Middle Eastern studies and Islam.

Israeli doctorates living abroad

Some 10 per cent of Israelis holding doctorates are living abroad, according to an Israeli government report. They have been living abroad for at least three years for work or study, according to a report released last week by the Central Bureau of Statistics, based on figures in 2011. Some 18,025 Israelis, or five per cent, who received an advanced degree between the years 1985 and 2005 have lived outside Israel for more than three years, the report found. The report was prepared for the Science and Technology Ministry's National Council for Research and Development.

Israel-Egypt border fence

The main section of Israel's border fence with Egypt, meant to keep infiltrators from entering the country, has been completed. The nearly 150-mile stretch of fence took two years to construct at a cost of about $430 million, the Israeli Defence Ministry said. The final, nearly 12-mile section of the border fence in the mountainous region near Eilat will be completed by May. The border includes electronic surveillance equipment such as cameras and radar.

Suha Arafat on second intifadah

Yasser Arafat planned the second intifadah, his widow said in a television interview. Suha Arafat said the late Palestine Liberation Organization leader told her, in Paris, about his plans immediately following the failed summit at Camp David in 2000 that included Arafat, U.S. president Bill Clinton and Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak. "He said to me, 'You should remain in Paris.' I asked him why, and he said, 'Because I am going to start an intifadah,'" Suha Arafat recalled earlier this month during an interview with Dubai TV, according to a translation released last week by the Middle East Media Research Institute.

Hamas, PA say no to Palestinians

Hamas and the Palestinian Authority rejected the United Nations' request that they take in Palestinian refugees who fled Syria during the ongoing brutal civil war, *Yediot Achronot* reported last week.

– JTA, JNS and Times of Israel

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A boring and dangerous election

Donniel Hartman

Opinion

I am an optimist, and new elections generally inspire me to hope. As new parties and new personalities enter into the fray, I find myself anticipating the new ideas and thinking that will enter into our political discourse and open up new horizons for Israel.

This optimism often causes me to vote for the latest new party, the one that has not yet disappointed me. My track record hasn't been that great, but as an optimist, I am not inclined to allow past failures to colour my hope for the future.

This election season started with great promise, and, indeed, new parties and very talented individuals have emerged across the political spectrum. The problem is that this influx hasn't generated the expected new ideas. It is possible that this is the consequence of an election whose outcome is already clear, with the only issue up for grabs being the elements that will constitute the right-wing bloc that will lead the country afterward – whether Likud-Beiteinu will get 35 or 38 seats, or Habayit Hayehudi, 12 or 15.

The parties aren't campaigning to win, for it is already clear who will win. The campaign is about increasing one's party size by one or two seats over the latest projections and most significantly, avoiding mistakes that might lead to a decline of one to two seats.

These elections are boring. Not only are they challenging for an unrepentant optimist such as me, they are also dangerous for Israel and its future. Israel and Zionism are about ideas, about ways in which the national homeland of the Jewish People will represent and embody aspirations for justice, decency and intelligence within our foreign, military, economic and social policies. They are about creating an exemplary society, which, while grounded within realpolitik, nevertheless continually aspires to change it for the better. When Israel stops leading with ideas, and our politicians are the great protectors of the status quo, Israel becomes ever-more distanced from its true purpose.

One of the more exasperating examples of the mediocre rut into which our political thinking has descended is the debate within Likud-Beiteinu as to whether to include in the party platform Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's 2009 Bar-Ilan University speech supporting a two-state solution for Israel and the Palestinians. The speech put an end to the affiliation of the Likud party with the dreams of a Greater Israel and tacitly admitted that settlements in certain areas of Judea and Samaria would have to be dismantled for the sake of peace.

The reason given by some of the more moderate voices within the party for removing the speech from the platform is that given Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's apparent policy to sidestep direct negotiations with Israel, we should not "reward" him with such a prize. There are others who today play a far more central role in the leadership of the Likud party, who want it removed because it contradicts their ideology, which still holds fast to the fantasy of a Greater Israel.

What both hold in common is the belief that the current status quo is sustainable and plays in Israel's favour. They are at home in a politics devoid of new ideas and may consider expending effort to produce them only after they are inspired by evidence of new thinking on the other side. This is a path that produces not a greater Israel, but a smaller one.

A second example of mediocrity is being exemplified by the Labor party's decision to avoid speaking about foreign policy in its current campaign, in the hope that a focus on economic and social justice disconnected from the party's past peace platform may "fool" one or two mandates away from the centre-right. This is a policy well at home in the current election culture and may ensure Labor the accolade of being the biggest party amongst those who lost. It is, however, a poor service to a party that in theory aspires to lead, and an even poorer service to the country.

Election day in Israel *[Israel Sun photo]*

In a democracy, the opposition plays a central role as generators of ideas and as watchdogs against stagnation. When the opposition is leading the charge down the path of complacency, the dangers to Israel's future are multiplied.

When functioning well, an election season serves to put forth noble and naive ideas that everyone knows need to be and inevitably will be tempered by the reality of the day after the elections. Cynics may argue that a campaign is about putting forth the lies that the population wants to hear. I believe that its purpose is to set forth the goals that give the electorate a window into the minds and hearts of those who aspire to represent us, the goals to which they are committed so long as reality doesn't get in the way.

We need to reconnect to the political discourse of hope and aspirations. Of course we have peace plans. Let's talk about them, debate them and figure out which ones best serve our values, goals, interests and concerns. The fact that we may have nobody to talk with has never stopped Jews from talking. We are the People of the Book, who have spent 3,000 years putting forth ideas and chiselling away at the rock of reality until we penetrate it.

Let the dreaming and talking begin. May the next month until the elections be filled with a competition over innovation, a rivalry to discover new ways to change the status quo and place Israel on a trajectory to a better future. The job of the politician is to lead. Please begin to do your job.

Donniel Hartman is president of Shalom Hartman Institute and director of the Engaging Israel Project.

'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

PA report says Israelis will soon be minority

Aaron Kalman
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — There will be an equal number of Palestinians and Jews in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip by 2016, and by 2020 Jews will be a minority in the area, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics said on Jan. 1.

Such a situation would end the chances for a two-state solution, former Palestinian Authority official Hanan Ashrawi said, implying that Palestinians would not be interested in just the West Bank and Gaza if they could demographically dominate a binational state from the Jordan to the Mediterranean.

At the end of 2012, there were 11.6 million Palestinians around the world, the report said, including 4.4 million in the Palestinian Authority and 1.4 million who were Israeli citizens. More than 36 per cent of the Israeli Arabs were under the age of 15, it found.

The fertility rate within the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been on the decline over recent years, the bureau reported. From an average of six children per family in 1997, the number dropped to 4.4 in 2008. As a result, the average household got smaller — from 6.4 to 5.6 in the PA.

The vast majority of the rest of the Palestinians were living in other Arab countries in the region, compared to only 655,000 who lived in non-Arab countries around the world.

Recent numbers released by the Central Bureau of Statistics in Jerusalem, showed Israel's population at just below eight million, with 6,015,000 of those Jewish. The country's growth rate is 1.8 per cent, while it is 2.4 per cent among Arabs.

If the predictions are true, it would cause "a demographic problem that would endanger the two-state solution and lead both sides, de facto, to a one-state solution," Ashrawi told Ynet. One state would be uncomfortable for Israelis and Palestinians, the former PA legislator said.

"If the situation carries on this way, at the end we'll be a majority, but we're giving the Israelis a chance to understand the Palestinians could have their own democratic country that would neighbour Israel," Ashrawi said.

The reason the Israelis weren't actively pursuing a two-state solution was because they could do "as they wished" in the field without anyone stopping them, Ashrawi — a former negotiator — told the Hebrew news site.

Jerusalem believes it can go on like this forever, she said. "The Israeli government needs to internalize that we're not going to disappear and that it'll have to accept the idea of a Palestinian state."

Some Israeli scholars question official Palestinian population statistics, claiming the Palestinians inflate the numbers.

TimesofIsrael.com

Intel developing 'perceptual computing' in Israel

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — With the computers of tomorrow, users will no longer have to input data. Powerful new software is going to enable computers and devices to figure out what information you need, and provide it without even having to be asked. And they will do so using cameras, sensors, and microphones that are capable of close-range hand and finger tracking, speech recognition, face analysis and 2D/3D object tracking.

It's the next generation of Intel technology, designed to boost computing devices to new levels of capability and productivity. And according to an Intel spokesperson, much of this technology is being developed at the company's Haifa development centre.

The new approach, called "perceptual computing," refers to equipping PCs, laptops, and other Intel-branded and partnered devices to become "context aware." Instead of passively waiting for you to enter data and "teach" the device, a perceptual computing-equipped device will use its built-in hardware and software to "learn" ways that make users' lives easier.

To that end, Intel is offering developers $1 million in prizes to come up with the software of tomorrow, in the Intel Perceptual Computing Challenge. The contest is open to anyone, and will reward the developers who come up with the applications that take the best advantage of Intel's new Perceptual Computing platform. The entries will be judged based on how perceptual an application is – how much does it utilize the sensors, cameras, etc. – how intuitive and easy to use the app is, how likely users are to want to adopt it. Four top winners will get $20,000 each (all figures US), with smaller prizes of $5,000 and $1,000 for lesser, but still good, efforts. Altogether, the company will be giving away one million dollars.

Intel CTO Justin Rattner laid out the perceptual computing vision at the 2010 Intel Developer Forum. "Imagine a device that uses a variety of sensory modalities to determine what you are doing at an instant, from being asleep in your bed to being out for a run with a friend," Rattner said. "By combing hard sensor information such as where you are and the conditions around you combined with soft sensors such as your calendar, your social network and past preferences, future devices will constantly learn about who you are, how you live, work and play.

"As your devices learn about your life, they can begin to anticipate your needs. Imagine your PC advising you to leave the house 10 minutes early for your next appointment due to a traffic tie-up on your way to work. Consider a 'context aware' remote control that instantly determines who is holding it and automatically selects the Smart TV preferences for that person. All this may sound like science fiction, but this is the promise of 'context-aware' computing and we can already demonstrate much of it in the lab."

Over two years later, the technology has moved beyond the lab, and into a development kit (SDK) that Intel is offering developers to build applications that will take full advantage of the perceptual computing platform. Several weeks ago, Intel announced that it had fully integrated voice recognition into the SDK. And, developers can now order an interactive gesture camera (developed in part by Intel and sold by Creative) in order to test their perceptual apps.

Israel has long loomed large in the Intel universe, having been the main development site for many of Intel's laptop processors; the Sandy Bridge processor, developed in Israel, was responsible for 40 per cent of Intel's sales worldwide in 2011. In return, Intel has been an important part of Israel's tech success. The company has four design centres and two fabrication plants in the country, and it is Israel's largest private sector employer. About 8,000 workers are employed by Intel Israel, and taking into account the company's ecosystem – partners, suppliers, support businesses – Intel is responsible for providing jobs to about one out of every 10 Israelis employed in the technology sector.

The computer world is changing, and Intel is changing as well – but the company plans to take Israel along for the ride. Mooly Eden, Intel corporate vice-president and general manager of the PC client group, who has been with Intel since 1982, was recently appointed CEO of Intel Israel. He also happens to be head of Intel's Perceptual Computing unit.

In a speech at this year's Intel Developer Forum, Intel senior VP David Perlmutter – an Israeli who is among the top candidates to replace Paul Otellini as CEO when the latter steps down next year – discussed the perceptual computing effort in depth, describing the "touchscreens, sensors, cameras and other things we are driving into small devices." As Intel moves computing to a whole new level, Israel will be moving along with it, he said.

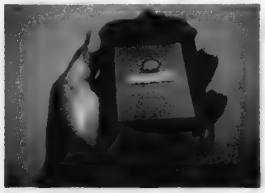
TimesofIsrael.com

Apple may be interested in Israeli map app Waze

Michal Shmulovich
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Apple is rumoured to be looking into buying the Israeli satellite navigation application Waze, which has become a worldwide hit thanks to its melding of crowd sourcing and traffic mapping.

A possible offer stands at about $400-$500 million (all figures US), industry insiders speculated, but the successful startup, which offers maps, driving directions and real-time traffic reports to mobile users, is estimated to be worth closer to $1 billion, according to the *Calcalist* financial newspaper.



A man holds an iPhone with the Waze application. *[Flash90 photo]*

U.S.-based tech blog TechCrunch reported that Waze is seeking $750 million, and negotiations could take time.

Waze, founded in 2009, uses satellite signals and reports of members to generate maps and real-time traffic data that it then offers to smartphone users around the world. Waze's image data improves as more users – the number now hovers around 30 million, according to the firm – join the network. The app displays users' information anonymously (unless they choose to identify themselves), and suggests quicker, alternative routes to drivers, as well as warning of potential hazards like traffic accidents and police activity.

Neither company has confirmed the reports of a takeover.

Waze has raised a total of $67 million so far from a series of investors. Its revenues in 2012 were $1 million, mostly from location-based ads, which integrate mobile advertising and the ability to pinpoint consumers.

Waze also caught the eye of other technology giants, like Facebook, which was reportedly considering acquiring the app.

In September, Apple dropped its contract with Google, which had previously supplied the data for the iPhone's own map app. However, customers complained about Apple's proprietary map software, claiming it was an inferior version of Google's, leading Apple to reinstate Google Maps as a downloadable, external app in December. Within 48 hours of its release as a free app, Google Maps for iPhone was downloaded over 10 million times, according to *The Telegraph*.

According to *YNet News*, Waze said there was a spike in the download of its app after Apple CEO Tim Cook, in an unusual move after the launch of iPhone 5, suggested that customers download rival mapping services, like Waze, until Apple had a chance to improve its own maps.

TimesofIsrael.com

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH TO SCREEN JACOB GORDON'S 1939 FILM *WITHOUT A HOME*

Acclaimed director **Jacob Gordon**'s last Yiddish film, *Without a Home* (*On a Heym*) starred **Shimon Dzigan**, **Ida Kaminska** and **Yisroel Shumacher**, and came out in 1939 just before the outbreak of World War II. The film "provides a poignant and dramatic picture of a difficult era, focusing on the bleak prospects for the survival of traditional Jewish family values."

Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** introduces the film at the Friends of Yiddish screening, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch), Sunday, Jan. 13, 2 p.m. Yiddish with English subtitles. FOY members free, guests $5; includes refreshments. Please RSVP early to Sandy, 416-458-1440, or email to yiddish18@yahoo.ca

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The Singer's Body: Professional vocal instructor **Orville Heyn** delivers The Singer's Body, a workshop presented by the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre's Institute for Lifelong Choral Wellness and SING! the Toronto Vocal Arts Festival. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday, Jan. 13, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. $25 per person. Register through SING! at www.torontovocalartsfestival.com

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Opera Appreciation: Active Seniors and Boomers of the Miles Nadal JCC presents About Operas of the Met, another of **Iain Scott**'s popular opera appreciation series. This is a rare opportunity to learn about four Metropolitan Opera productions to be broadcast live in 2013 in Toronto cinema theatres. Also includes video excerpts of diverse productions and performances by great opera singers. Four Tuesdays from Jan. 22 to Feb. 12, 1:30 p.m. $50 for the series, $16 drop-in per program if space permits. Phyllis, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

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Creative Writing Workshop: The Art & Craft of Short Fiction is a creative writing workshop for emerging writers, facilitated by creative writing coach **Benjamin Hackman**. Covers the basic techniques of short-fiction writing, including the drafting and revision of one complete story. No experience required. Miles Nadal JCC, Sundays from Jan. 13 to March 24, 6:45 to 8:45 p.m. $235. sharonis@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

• • •

Focus on Woody Allen: Critic **Kevin Courrier** presents five lectures with film clips on "Woody Allen Past and Present." The course ranges from the comedies that satirized stereotypes of WASP ideals to the success of *Annie Hall* and beyond. The opening session includes *Play It Again Sam, Take the Money and Run, Annie Hall, Bananas, Love and Death, Sleeper, Stardust Memories, Interiors, Hannah and Her Sisters* and *Midnight in Paris*. $56 for the series, $12 drop-in per class. Miles Nadal JCC. Monday evenings, Jan. 14 to Feb. 11, 7 to 9 p.m. film@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

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Two Documentaries: Toronto Jewish Film Society opens its 35th season with two documentaries. *An Article of Hope* documents the 2002 Columbia space shuttle mission in which Israeli astronaut **Ilan Ramon** perished. The shorter animated film, *Cohen on the Bridge*, highlights Israel's dramatic 1976 Entebbe rescue mission. With guest speaker **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday, Jan. 20, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Individual seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening, $15. 416-924-6211, ext. 606, esthera @mnjcc.org

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Arts in Brief

• Teatron's production of **Charlie Varon**'s play *Rabbi Sam* continues at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St., through Jan. 13. "It is about a guy who is trying to do something with the bigger picture that he sees in his world," says actor **Ron Boyd**, who plays the title role. 416-781-5527, www.teatrontheatre.com

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents **Ruthie Ladovsky** discussing United Bakers' 100th anniversary. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Jan. 17, refreshments at 1:30 p.m., program at 2 p.m. $4. Please pre-pay by Jan. 10. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Music educator and musician **Kobi Hass**' Songwriting Workshop is a practical, hands-on 10-week series focusing on song composition, themes, melodies, harmony, rhythm, lyrics and form. Some musical knowledge and basic ability to play an instrument required. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursdays from Jan. 31 to April 4, 7 to 9 p.m. $200. Registration, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Soundstream presents The Three Faces of Jerusalem, an afternoon of music and poetry inspired by the traditions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W., Sunday, Jan. 27, 3 p.m. $20 to $65. 416-408-0208, www.soundstreams.ca

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Miriam Unger Ben-Ze'ev

At the Galleries

• Joseph D. Carrier Art Gallery presents *Kaleidoscope in Motion & Colour*, an exhibition of works by artist **Miriam Unger Ben-Ze'ev**. Columbus Centre, 901 Lawrence Ave. W. at Dufferin Street. On view Jan. 9 to Feb. 4. Opening reception, Thursday, Jan. 10, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. www.carriergallery.com

• *A Co-existence – Photographs on Jewish Morocco*, an exhibition by **Aaron Vincent Elkaim**, is on view in the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery through Jan. 27.

• Ceramic artist **Clint Neufeld**, whose exhibition *Pipe Dreams of Madame Recamier* opens Jan. 10 at the Koffler Gallery Off-Site at General Hardware Contemporary, presents a one-day workshop about the creative process of mould-making for his spectacular ceramic sculptures. $75. Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St. Monday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. 416-638-1881, info@kofflerarts.org

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Exhibit features a variety of headcoverings

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

An eclectic and creative exhibit titled *Cover Thy Head: Headdresses and Identities* recently opened at the Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum at the Baycrest Health Sciences centre, with hats representing many cultures, regions and professions.

The exhibit includes a juried art show of 50 kippot (yarmulkes) submitted by artists from around the world.

There is also a photographic installation that features members of the Baycrest community in their favourite hats along with their personal stories.

People are invited to contribute their stories of hats that are meaningful to them.

Cover Thy Head is open to the public and will remain at Baycrest until July.

Lois Buckstein, who co-chairs the museum with Sandra Temes, told *The CJN*, "We see the *Cover Thy Head* exhibit as an opportunity to reflect on the beauty of diversity and, at the same time, to honour our Jewish heritage.

"In developing the hat exhibit, we built on the museum's long-standing tradition of inviting members of the community to contribute to the exhibit. In addition to our local community, we also reached out to the international art and Jewish communities for the juried competition."

She noted that Baycrest contacted artist groups, guilds, art schools, synagogues and social clubs to invite artists to submit original kippot they designed and created.

"We were amazed by the response," Buckstein said.

Continued on page 37

Musician merges spiritual and secular sounds

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Despite decades working in the music industry, Allan Soberman is still searching for his voice.

The 62-year-old musician has released the followup to his first album of prayer songs, which he called *Searching for my Voice*. The sequel is called *The Quest Continues*.

In the album, Soberman, whose years in the music industry included playing with the support act for a Billy Joel concert at Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens, takes tunes usually heard in synagogue and blends them with Beach Boy-esque harmonies.

The music takes audiences to where they last heard the melodies – most likely a synagogue, he says. This built-in familiarity is what draws much of the audience to the music.

"I've got them already," he says, "so I can put my craziness into part of it."

This "craziness" refers to what he calls the strangeness of the choir sounds. "Someone looking for a cantorial CD might be surprised," he says.

However, the music isn't just for religious – or even secular – Jews. Soberman says even people who don't recognize the sounds will enjoy it, and may feel a sense of spirituality simply because of the language of the songs, all of which are sung in Hebrew or Yiddish.

"I hope they would appreciate the musicality, the arrangements, the sounds," he says. "It's pretty hip stylistically but it still has those melodies."

Allan Soberman's new album mixes cantorial and pop influences.
[Edward Ambrocolus photo]

The tunes and words are especially familiar to Soberman, whose father, Morris, was a cantor at Beth Tzedec Congregation for more than 35 years.

Soberman got the idea for the album back in 1999, shortly after his father died. He found recordings of his father performing wedding receptions and singing bar mitzvah portions, which students would use to learn their portions. He took these recordings, cleaned them up, and released them in 2001 on an album called *A Dedication*.

"That's what started me on this road," he says.

The next album, *Searching for my Voice*, blended the cantorial songs with Soberman's own harmonic and folk style for the first time.

"I was treading on unknown waters," he said of that release. "What was I doing with *Shalom Alechem*?"

This album was much easier, he said, now that he has the experience and confidence.

However, life threw him more challenges during the recording of this album. Before the album was finished, Soberman's mother died, and even six months later, he says he's still "crawling out of the debris" of his mother's passing.

Nevertheless, the fact that he could incorporate so much of his own music – specifically the pop harmonies – into his father's music means he was able to find a little bit of closure with his family, he says.

"I'm the last one standing, so there's a lot of catharsis going on here," he says, speaking to *The CJN* from a telephone in his childhood basement.

Although it's only 12 years that Soberman has released these albums, he has been involved in the music industry for much longer. He spent decades playing mainly bass guitar on tour with big artists such as Grammy Award-winning Dan Hill and Ben Mink.

One of his favourite memories, he says, is performing shows with Billy Crystal at The Bitter End, a famous club in New York City. He says Crystal opened for his band one week, and they swapped spots for a second week.

"By the end of the two weeks, I knew his routine backwards," Soberman says.

Another notable moment for him was when Beach Boy Bruce Johnston expressed interest in getting involved with the publishing of Soberman's music.

"Nothing really ever came of it, but that was a big thrill for me to get phone calls from a guy who actually sang on *God Only Knows*. That was a big deal for me," he said.

His love for the Beach Boys is what inspired the harmonies that fill his new album. He recorded it alone, layering his voice to create a choral effect. Although it works well for an album, he says, it leads to challenges in performing the music.

The goal, he says, is to perform the music with a full choir, but he hasn't figured out the logistics of organizing it. Specifically, it's hard to find a choir before the show is booked, but he can't book a show without a choir.

"I can do the musical end, but how do you put the business end?" he says. In the meantime, he could perform with a small group – perhaps three or four people – but it wouldn't reflect the sound he imagines in his mind.

Ideally, the performance would take place as part of a larger event or festival, he says. Regardless, he would like to bring it to the Jewish community to share the music that has become so meaningful to him.

"It's my connection to going to shul with my father," he says. "It's me incorporating what I am into it."

For more information, visit sobermanmusic.com.

Exhibit features a variety of headcoverings

Continued from page 36

The judges for the competition were Sarah Quinton, curatorial director at the Textile Museum of Canada, and Chung-Im Kim, artist and associate professor at OCAD University.

Ken Goldman was awarded the first-place prize for his original design titled *With and Without*. Goldman shaved his hair into the shape of a kippah, and his head became a piece of art. He also received honorable mention for his creative kippah, *The Wandering Jew*.

Co-chairs of Baycrest's Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum Lois Buckstein (left) and Sandra Temes are seen at the *Cover Thy Head* exhibit.

Joyce Goodman won second place for her piece, *Footprints*. Third place was awarded to Ben Herskowitz for *A Bright Idea*, and the Juror's Choice Award was presented to Lea Winkler for *Seder Plate*.

Bianca Stern, director of the department of culture, arts and innovation at Baycrest, said the Heritage Museum is a small gem on the Baycrest campus.

"It's a hub of cultural learning. Every exhibit is a springboard for discussion groups, reminiscing, storytelling and a museum on wheels visits."

She added that through its exhibits, "the Justein Museum maintains an ongoing dialogue and connection to both the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community, bridging areas we all have in common."

Temes, who presented the awards said the museum is a cultural and integral part Baycrest for residents, staff, visitors and the Jewish community."

"I am delighted with the response to the exhibition," museum assistant Cassandra Zita said. "We've had great interest in our ongoing docent-led tours, from both Baycrest clients and local school groups.

"The feedback has been very positive. Visitors are pleasantly surprised at the diversity of head coverings we have collected. The hats on display have prompted great conversations and memories."

For museum hours or to schedule group tours, contact Cassandra Vita, 416-785-2500, ext. 5622, or czita@baycrest.org.

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Author treats obesity with light-hearted sensitivity

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

Edie Middlestein is grossly overweight, diabetic and about to have her second stent surgery. She is also in danger of needing a bypass surgery.

If that's not enough, after 30 years of marriage, her husband Richard has given up on her and is about to leave her. Their two adult children, Robin and Benny, are worried about what to do. Because one thing is clear: Edie is slowly eating herself to death.

So begins *The Middlesteins* (Grand Central), the delightful third novel by New York-based writer Jami Attenberg.

Each chapter shifts the perspective from one of the family members to another, but the focus is always the gluttonous matriarch, Edie.

Benny is an easy-going pot smoker who has a pair of teenage twins he and his wife, Rachelle, conceived during a drunken fling in the bathroom of a frat house on their graduation day.

Robin is a single teacher who is having an affair with her "I-guess-he's-my-boyfriend," Daniel, who lives in the apartment below hers.

Edie was always fat. She weighed 62 pounds at age five. Her immigrant mother always knew she was overweight, but how could she not feed her daughter? If it could stop her from crying, then what was wrong with it, she thought? She would also drop her groceries to carry her up the apartment stairs, because Edie was incapable of doing it herself.

Edie grew up in a house where her father and his friends would sit together talking about Golda Meir and their donations to Israel.

In high school, weighing over 200 pounds, Edie ate on behalf of Golda recovering from cancer. She ate in tribute to Israel. But most importantly, she ate because she loved to eat.

She became a lawyer but was given early retirement, and a "not unfair amount of money" to keep quiet about the fact that she was being let go because of her embarrassing (for the firm) weight.

Even the night before her surgery, she couldn't help herself if she went down to the kitchen for just a little sandwich.

She would go to McDonald's and order a rib sandwich and a Big Mac, but thoughtfully took out the middle slice of bread because she heard from Weight Watchers that half the battle was the bread.

Her husband, Richard, was the owner of a small chain of pharmacies, Middlestein pharmacies. It was a successful business until the '90s when his loyal Jewish clientele moved or died and the younger ones had no ties to him or the community.

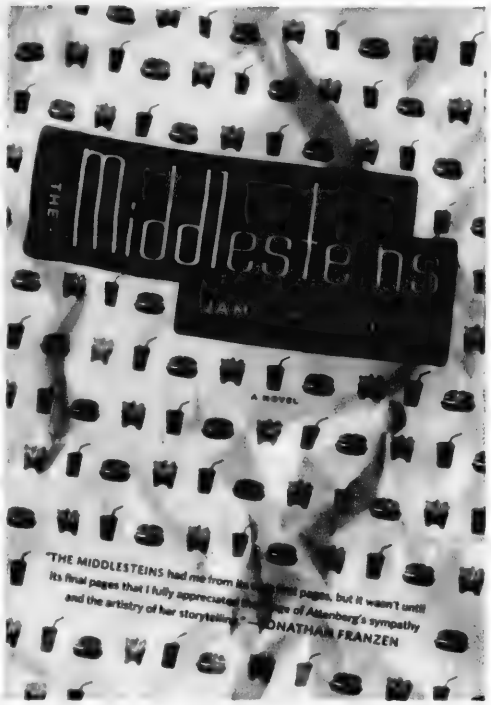
Attenberg does a good job of tackling this heavy subject with a light, humorous, yet compassionate touch

He begins meeting women online right after leaving his wife (he bookmarks a Jewish dating site on his computer). At first, he tries younger women, but when that never advances beyond first dates, he changes his parameters to women who are more age appropriate, a motley collection of widows and divorcees, and one woman, a "half-hooker" who is looking for him to "be my daddy."

His children take their mother's side during the separation and are disappointed that their father left their mother at such a crucial time. He is especially hurt that he is shut out from visiting his twin grandchildren.

Benny's wife, Rachelle, takes the lead in trying to save Edie, by making her healthy meals and encouraging Benny to visit her every day.

But Rachelle's care borders on the obsessive as she takes to following her mother-in-law around like an undercover cop, taking note of where and how often she's eating. "She's at the Superdairy – 3 hot dogs!!!" she would email or text her husband.


THE
Middlesteins
A NOVEL
"THE MIDDLESTEINS had me from its first few pages, but it wasn't until its final pages that I fully appreciated the genius of Attenberg's sympathy and the artistry of her storytelling."
JONATHAN FRANZEN

Robin, who was fat herself as a child before she consciously started to lose weight in high school, is especially bitter at her father for leaving instead of caring for her mother. She understands that Edie needs to stop eating right away, but is unable to convince her.

Although the main story line begins with news of Edie and Richard's separation and leads up to the twins' bnei mitzvah, the timeline is otherwise quite fluid, with several flashbacks and even a few flash-forwards.

The author takes the brave and unusual step of writing parts of the book in the future tense, and one chapter, about the aforementioned bnei mitzvah, is written in the rare first-person plural, as we see the event from the points of view of all the old Jewish friends of the family.

The novel seems to be asking who's to blame for Edie's obesity? Is it her mother for feeding her out of love and kindness? Is it her husband who only felt disgust and chose to leave her for thinner women? Is it her children who stood by, not intervening until it was too late? What about her friends and neighbours who watched her eat but didn't think it was their place to intervene? Or was it Edie herself who was smart enough to understand the consequences of her habit?

The Middlesteins is a light-hearted telling of a tragic story. Calling it a comedy might be an exaggeration. It is, after all, a sad tale and the main protagonist is dying. But Attenberg does a good job of tackling this heavy subject with a light, humorous, yet compassionate and sensitive touch. It does not get weighted down (yes, pun intended) with serious melodrama.

Readers will likely enjoy this slice-of-life novel.

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Stars of David eliminated in tournament semi-final

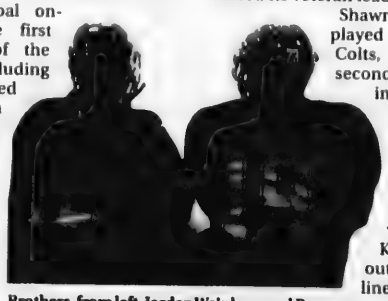
Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

As the reigning champs, it would have been nice if the Israeli Stars of David had advanced to the title game of the Canadian Multicultural Hockey Championships (CMHC).

Still better if they'd won their fourth championship in five years. But it was not to be, as an undermanned Davids fell 5-2 to the Nubian Kings in the tournament's premier division semi-finals. With key players either unavailable or injured – particularly its veteran leadership – the Stars of David didn't quite have what it takes to repeat, said the team's general manager Alex Voihanski.

The Stars of David never recovered from a four-goal onslaught in the first five minutes of the semi-final – including two goals allowed while enjoying a man advantage, he said.

"We were behind the 8-ball before you could blink," he said. "We took it to them after that and outscored them 2-1."



Brothers, from left, Jordan Weinberg and Bryan Weinberg take in the action at the Canadian Multicultural Hockey Championships.

The Kings, though big and talented, have lost to the Davids three years in a row coming into this winter's tournament, Voihanski added.

Still and all, the Davids did manage to record a 3-1 round robin record and make it to the final four of the tournament's premier elite division for the fifth year in a row.

The Davids bring speed and smarts to the event, but it was not enough to overcome the absence of key performers from previous years. Stacey Britstone, who played for the Oshawa Generals and Plymouth Whalers as a younger man, was unavailable due to recurring knee problems. He's been the Davids' captain. Former assistant captain Alon Eizenman, who played professionally in France, was likewise not available. In past tourneys, Eizenman centred the team's number 1 line, played on the power play, killed penalties and provided the steadying influence on the ice and in the dressing room, Voihanski stated.

Also missing from previous winning teams was goaltender Kevin Kline, a former NCAA division 1 netminder who has moved to Vancouver, and goalie Sal Cutillo, who has been a tournament MVP.

Adding to the team's woes was the injury after the round robin to Adam Weinberg, a first line winger and the team captain.

"It was a huge loss," said Voihanski. With our regulars gone, "we became a young team very quickly." The Stars of David, which have blended youth and experience to become the team to beat, missed its veteran leadership.

Shawn Frank, who played for the Barrie Colts, ended up the second leading scorer in the tournament while Noah Schwartz, who played for the Hamilton Red Wings and "had a cup of coffee" with the London Knights, rounded out the team's top line.

Another of the team's top players, Zach Sternberg, who plays defence for Lake Superior State, had to return to school prior to the elimination round. Sternberg was clearly the best defenceman in the tournament, said Voihanski.

Despite the early exit, there were other bright lights for the Davids: Adam Corrin made his debut on the team. He's a "smooth player, defensively oriented who has good hands," Voihanski said. He played for Colgate University in the first division of the NCAA.

"For the first time ever, we had an Arab Israeli on the team, Andrew Wakileh. His parents are Christian Arabs from Israel."

A former captain of the Markham Waxers, Wakileh plays with Voihanski in a men's league.

"He loved it. A lot of his friends are Jewish," Voihanski said.

The team was coached by Akiva Aaronson and Ziv Zukier.

Table tennis standout skips match for Shabbat

JTA

NEW YORK — An 11-year-old New York girl was disqualified from the 2012 U.S. National Table Tennis Championships when she opted not to play her final match, which fell on Shabbat.

Estee Ackerman of Long Island told the *New York Post* that, "Ping-pong is important to me, but my religion of Judaism is also very important to me."

Ackerman, who is ranked fourth nationally in the eight-to-11 age bracket, did not play in the match that fell on the evening of Dec. 21, a Friday night. She told the *Post* the unfortunate scheduling was "disappointing" after training six months for the tournament.

Some 800 players participated in the five-day event in Las Vegas. Ackerman said she does not blame event organizers for the scheduling conflict.

She told the newspaper that she hopes to one day represent the United States in table tennis at the Olympics.

Ackerman routinely beats players in their 20s and 30s, according to the *Post*.

The Canadian Jewish news

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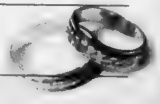
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30 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE
35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
50 ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
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82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
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145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM WANTED
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150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
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195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH./SHARE
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200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
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Toronto group brings gay Jewish men together

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

The last thing Corbin Seligman wanted to do was to date someone not Jewish. That's when he came up with the idea to throw events for Jewish gay men.

"I always joke about it, but I'm only half-joking when I say I want a Jewish doctor," said Seligman, a Toronto real estate agent. "Really, in the end, we [gay men] want that traditional family as much as possible because it's something you can't have."

He threw the idea around with his friends and realized the need was even greater than he first realized. A few weeks later, he started CUT Toronto, posted an event on Facebook and invited a few friends. He expected about 10 people but 150 showed up.

"I felt amazing," he said about the huge turnout. "I was on a high for a week after the first party."

Since its founding three years ago, Seligman has hosted about four events a year so Jewish gay men can meet each other, including holiday events such as the Xmas Eve Matzo Balls party last month. "I knew that there were Jewish gay guys in Toronto, but I didn't know that many because I had just moved back to Toronto from Montreal," he said.

His hunch was correct. He discovered there were many gay Jewish men in Toronto who had no casual venue to meet each other. He gets anywhere between 150 to 250 people at his parties – the majority of whom are gay Jewish men looking to meet young bachelors or just stay connected to the Jewish community.

From left, members of CUT Toronto, Eli Grimson and Corbin Seligman

From left, CUT Toronto event participants Aaron Boros, Corbin Seligman, Paul Druzin

"Lots of us only date other Jewish guys, which I think is sort of strange, because in the straight community a lot of people are straying away from that," he said. "Because we're already – I hesitate to say on the fringe – sort of different, we try to be as normal, with quotation marks, as possible."

That's the reason Andrew Oz decided to attend one of Seligman's events.

"If there are people who are looking to find community or a relationship with other queer Jews, then CUT seems to be the ideal place for that to happen. It is less formal and politically charged than many other events for the queer Jewish community," said Oz, a University of Toronto linguistics student. He met his current boyfriend at a CUT event two years ago.

"He and I would have absolutely not met had it not been for Corbin's party," said Oz. "It makes the parents happy in at least one regard."

The goal of the events is to provide a casual, fun atmosphere, sometimes with a Jewish theme, like their party for Rosh Hashanah, so that gay Jewish men can comfortably meet one another. They don't specifically pair up different singles, but encourage them to mingle and meet new people. "I wanted to keep it informal," said Seligman. "That's what people wanted – something more organic."

He said CUT differs from Kulanu – a Jewish, social, cultural and educational organization that is geared toward to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people in Toronto.

"We focus on the 'meet and greet and party' because Kulanu does a lot of stuff involving Pride Week. They do potluck Shabbat dinners and work in the community, so I wanted to shy away from that because I think that's branded in one way and I'm branded in another," he said.

While the events have been gaining more popularity with each passing one – "if I wait several months without doing one, then I get people messaging me, saying, 'When's the next one?'" Seligman says. He hopes to plan larger events in the future.

"I would love to organize a trip to Israel, to go to the Tel Aviv Pride Parade with a group of gay Jewish guys," said Seligman. "Just to sort of reconnect with gay men and Jewish roots."

After all, he pointed out, Jewish gay men have a lot of hurdles to overcome if they want to preserve their roots and create a Jewish family.

"Even though people in the community acknowledge that there must be a struggle between being gay and Jewish, they don't really get it. To find a surrogate takes a long time. Or to adopt. These processes are hard and expensive, and for us to not be able to easily have a traditional family makes us want it all that more," said Seligman.

"I want to be able to balance my Jewish identity with my sexual orientation," he said, "and I think that these events allow me to do just that while helping others to do the same."

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אז אני צפונית

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"תזכור, זו לא אותה טלי שמתארחת אצלינו עם בעלה והבנות. זו לא טלי המנומסת והאימהית. כשאנחנו יושבות לבד בקפה, יוצא ממנה פאן אחר. תתכונן."

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טלי: מה קורה, מאיר? כואבות לך הרגליים, שהיית חייב להתיישב לרגע?

מאיר (מביט בי בבהלה): חשבתי ככה קצת להצטרף אליכן. יש לי זמן פנוי.

טלי: להצטרף, אה? טוב, בכיף (ואלי). את שומעת, מצאתי בסיל תחבושות הגיניות מה זה יעילות, אפילו כשאני במחזור הכי קשה שלי.

מאיר (קם במהירות): טוב, אז אני חושב שבכל זאת כדאי שאני...

אני (קוטעת אותו): שב! (היא לא תחליט לי על בעלי, כן?) ברושם הראשוני, טלי אולי מצטיירת כאשה קצת קרה, אבל כשמכירים אותה באמת, מגלים שהיא בעצם רעת לב ואכזרית (אני מחייכת אליה ומזמינה לשלושתינו לאטה ועוגות).

טלי: נינה, את חייבת לקנות את ערכת המניקור עם הלאקים שקניתי אתמול. זה יעלה לך אלף דולר (מביטה על מאיר לתגובתו). מי יפנק אותנו אם לא אנחנו?

אני: אלף דולר את אומרת? אז זה בסייל, איזה יופי. אני אקנה שתיים.

מאיר (קם): אני חושב שאני אלך. תבטלי את העוגה שלי, אל תשלמי סתם.

אני: שב! (ולמראה התנגדותו) מאיר, אני אוהבת אותך. גם כשאני אורזת לך מזוודה ושמה אותה ליד הדלת, אני עדיין אוהבת אותך. אז שב ותשתה קפה.

טלי:אוי נזכרתי. אחותי עדיין מחפשת עבודה. היא די נואשת. אז מאיר, אם אתה מתקשר לפון-סקס מדי פעם, תהיה נחמד, אי אפשר לדעת, ג'אסט אין קייס...

מאיר: אני בחיים לא...

אני (קוטעת): מאיר ישים לב להבא, תסמכי עלי. אני אנחה אותו מה להגיד.

טלי (מתנשפת): אז זהו, נראה לי שאני גומרת עם הקוסמטיקאית החדשה שלי. בזמן האחרון, כשהיא מסירה את המסיכת נבט חיטה ושמה לי קרם בסיס, ואחר כך את המסקרה והפודרה, אני...

אני (קוטעת): חכי שנייה, באיזה פודרה היא משתמשת כדי להעלים לך את החצקון, זה שתמיד מופיע כשאת אוכלת שומן רווי?

טלי: משהו מיוחד לעור מעורב, אני קונה אותה בחנות ההיא ליד הנעליים. יצא לך כבר לראות את קולקציית נעלי הבריאות החדשה של...

מאיר: נזכרתי שאני חייב לזוז, ממי. ביי טלי, היה תענוג (קם והולך, כמעט רץ)

אני (לטלי): תודה, כבר חששתי שנצטרך להגיע אל האלרגיות של הבת שלך.

ROAST POTATOES
(WITH TRICK FOR CRISPINESS)

- 1 kg. potatoes
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tbsps. light soy sauce
- 1/2 c. oil
- few sprigs of herbs and/or halved garlic cloves

Pre-heat oven to 400° F. Peel potatoes; cut into large chunks. Place in a pot; cover with water. Add salt and soy sauce; bring to boil. Simmer 5 min.

While potatoes are simmering, pour oil into large roasting pan. Place pan in oven.

Drain water out of pot cooking the potatoes; put potatoes back into the pot. Put a lid on and give it a shake. This roughens the outer layer of the potato pieces giving them a crust when roasted. Carefully add potatoes to hot oil in roasting pan. Stir to coat well with oil. Spread into a single layer. Scatter herbs and garlic on top. Roast 40 min. or until browned and crisped, turning halfway through the cooking time. Transfer to a serving dish and serve.

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Shimon Skira, who talks about the advantages Shamoon College of Engineering in Be'er Sheva has brought to the young people in that southern Israeli city.

An exhibition about Montreal philosopher Raymond Klibansky which is on now until August 2013 at the Grand Bibliothèque de Montréal.

Six Palestinian and six Israeli history professors who involved with the non-profit organization, Peace Research Institute of the Middle East. They have written a book expressing the views of each side about three key events in Mideast history.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa notes that even the Israelis living in Canada celebrate the new year.

In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, United Synagogue Youth ventured outside the confines of its Jewish denomination and into the realm of a national political issue by holding a rally against gun violence during its recent international convention in Boston.

The Holocaust. The Roma. Canadian refugees?

Some call the Nazi persecution of the Gypsies "the forgotten Holocaust."

According to Toby Sonneman, the author of *Shared Sorrows: A Gypsy Family Remembers the Holocaust*, "this story still has not been told fully... and this lack of recognition impacts not only how we understand the past but also how we see the present."

Sonneman adds, "Without full acknowledgment that Gypsies were victims of the Holocaust, too little attention is paid to the current situation in Europe, where Gypsies are frequently victims of prejudice and racially motivated mob attacks."

Here are some facts you should know.

- The "Gypsies" or the "Roma," an ethnic group from India, arrived in Europe in the late Middle Ages and became a part of the ethnic mix of many countries.
- 1929: the Germany establishes the Centre for the Fight Against Gypsies.
- 1933: Jews, Gypsies and disabled are classified as "inferior peoples" in Germany.
- The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 aimed at the Jews are amended to include the Gypsies.
- 1936: the first German Gypsies are arrested and deported to Dachau concentration camp.
- 1938: June 13-18, 1,000 Gypsies are deported to concentration camps. Late summer, 3,000 more are deported from Austria. On Nov. 9-10, Kristallnacht, the notorious night of broken glass, occurred in Germany.
- 1940: 3,000 Gypsies are deported to Poland, and trainloads of Gypsies are transported from Vienna.
- 1941: Gypsy children are expelled from public schools in the Reich. Gypsies from Lackenbach concentration camp are deported to Lodz Ghetto in Poland.
- 1942: 5,000 Gypsies are deported from Lodz concentration camp to Chelmno and killed in mobile gas vans.
- 1942: Nazi extermination camps in occupied Poland begin gassing Jews, Gypsies and others, and Gypsies are transferred from Buchenwald to Auschwitz to build a Gypsy enclosure in Birkenau.
- 1943: most Gypsies in Germany are arrested and sent to Auschwitz.
- 1944: The Gypsy camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau is liquidated, and 3,000 Gypsies are gassed in a single night.
- 1945: Nazis evacuate Auschwitz and prisoners begin "death marches" toward Germany.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

It's generally thought 500,000 Gypsies were murdered by the Nazis. Some sources, however, suggest the number could be much higher.

On Aug. 5, 2012, 5,000 neo-Nazis marched on Devecser, a Hungarian village that's populated mostly by Roma, yelling, "You are going to die here." They threw water bottles and stones at houses where Roma lived. Most of the mob was bused in. The leaders of the groups marching included Gabor Ferenczi of Jobbik, a far-right political party that won 16 per cent of the vote in the last Hungarian elections. Recently, Jobbik called for a list of "influential Jews" in Hungary. In 2009, a Roma father and son were murdered there. Google "Roma Hungary." There is much more.

Here's what Amnesty International says about the Roma today: "The Roma community suffers massive discrimination throughout Europe. Denied their rights to housing, employment, health care and education, Roma are often victims of forced evictions, racist attacks and police ill treatment. Roma are among the most deprived communities in Europe. Romani children are frequently unjustifiably placed in 'special' schools, where curtailed curricula limit their possibilities for fulfilling their potential."

In December, the Canadian government created a list of 27 "safe" countries. Refugee claims filed by people from these countries are mostly considered to be bogus. These refugee claimants will be fast-tracked, with no right of appeal for a negative decision. Hungary is on that list.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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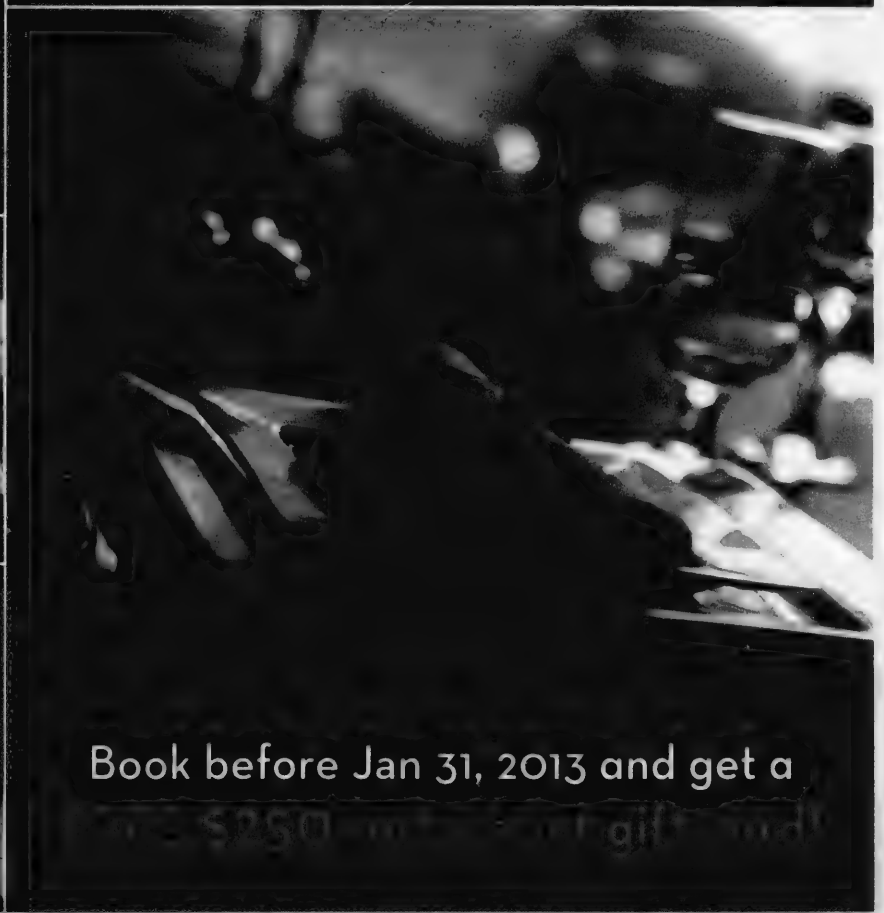

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This Week

National

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United Church in Winnipeg rejects boycott proposal. *Page 16*

Spice of Life

Coach steps up to the plate. *Page 24*

Sports & Leisure

Jacob Micflikier helps Canada win gold at Spengler Cup. *Page 35*

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Toronto couple killed in Florida

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Funeral services were held Monday for a Toronto couple found dead last week in their Hallandale Beach, Fla., condominium townhouse. Local police are investigating their deaths as a double homicide.

David (Donny) Pichosky, 71, and his wife Rochelle Wise, 66, had been married about four years and were active members of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in Toronto.

A concerned neighbour found them Jan. 10 after they didn't show up for lunch the previous day and failed to answer repeated phone calls.

On Monday, Capt. Sonia Quinones, a spokesperson for the Hallandale Beach Police, said that police "are continuing the investigation into the homicide. We are awaiting the medical examiner's report for determination of the cause of death. Motive is still unknown at this time."

David (Donny) Pichosky and Rochelle Wise *[Facebook photo]*

Pichosky, a volunteer helping seniors at Baycrest in Toronto, had retired after selling his office-carpet business and had spent at least 20 years wintering in Florida.

Wise was a former preschool administrator at Toronto's Bialik Hebrew Day School and a founding director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp in the city.

In Florida, she volunteered at a Hebrew day school in Hallandale, helping children with learning problems. She also was an active member of Na'amat, the Jewish women's organization.

In Toronto, Bialik issued a statement Jan. 11 saying that the "entire Bialik family is distraught by the tragic loss of Rochelle Wise and her beloved husband Donny Pichosky. Rochelle was an adored member of the community and respected as an outstanding educator and woman of great character and kind spirit."

Bobby Freeman, a co-director of Crestwood, wrote in an online condolence message that he came to know Wise as "a unique woman, with strength of character, foresight, and the ability to lead with love."

Continued on page 21

Snow in Israel

Israelis play in the snow in the Golan Heights. For more on the storm that hit Israel last week, see pages 4 and 33.
[Flash90 photo]

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Netanyahu retains lead in polls – please see page 32

CANADA

Loewy Exits Alliance

TORONTO — Ex-Montrealer Victor Loewy resigned as CEO of Alliance Films last week as rival film distributor Entertainment One completed its $225-million acquisition of the Montreal-based company. Loewy, a dominant figure in Canadian film distribution for 40 years, co-founded Alliance with Robert Lantos in 1985. Its parent firm was acquired by CanWest Global and Goldman Sachs in 2007, but it became a stand-alone company when Shaw bought CanWest's broadcasting assets after CanWest's bankruptcy.

WORLD

FIFA Fine Appealed

BUDAPEST — The Hungarian Football Federation says it will appeal sanctions imposed on it by the world soccer body for its fans' antisemitic behaviour. FIFA fined the Hungarian federation $43,000 Jan. 8 for chants of "stinking Jews" and "Heil Benito Mussolini" by its fans during a friendly match in Budapest in August against the Israeli national team. The Hungarian fans also turned their backs as *Hatikvah* was played and waved Palestinian and Iranian flags throughout the game. FIFA also ruled Hungary will have to play its next match, in March against Romania, in an empty stadium. Hungary's far-right Jobbik party said it would hold a protest outside the venue during the game to show support.

Lew Nominated

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Barack Obama nominated Jack Lew, his chief of staff, to be secretary of the treasury. If the Senate confirms him, he'll succeed Timothy Geithner. Lew, a chief of the Office of Management and Budget under both Obama and president Bill Clinton, is the highest-ranking Orthodox Jew in U.S. government history and has spoken on balancing observance with the demands of his jobs.

WWII Witness Found

BUDAPEST — Slovak police say they've found a witness to corroborate charges against Laszlo Csatary, 97, a Hungarian war criminal and former Montrealer. Csatary served as a Hungarian police commander in World War II in the Jewish ghetto of Kosice, then a part of Hungary and now in Slovakia. The Kosice investigation focuses on Csatary's alleged involvement in the deportation of 15,000 Jews from the city. The witness, whose identity hasn't been revealed, survived the expulsion and reportedly has "accurate" information about Csatary's actions as police commander of the local ghetto. The Budapest Public Prosecutor asked Slovak authorities to question the witness. After the war, Csatary fled Hungary for Canada, where he was granted citizenship in 1955. He was sentenced to death in absentia by Czechoslovakia in 1948. In 1997, he left Canada to avoid expulsion after it turned out his citizenship application contained false data. Csatary, who was put under house arrest in Budapest last July, denies the charge. In August, he was cleared in Hungary of other charges pertaining to the deportation of 300 Jews from Kosice to their deaths at a camp in Ukraine in 1941.

OT Goal Leads Princeton Past Harvard

NEW YORK — Andrew Calof, a member of the Canadian Maccabiah hockey team, netted his first collegiate hat trick – including the game winner in overtime – to send Princeton past Harvard 3-2 earlier this month.

Andrew Calof

Calof's third goal came 58 seconds into overtime as the Tigers fended off an upset bid by their Ivy League rival Crimson, who rallied from a 2-0 deficit in the Jan. 4 game.

Calof, 21, a junior chemical and biological engineering major, leads the Tigers with eight goals and 12 assists through 16 games. In November, the Ottawa native was named to Maccabi's Team Canada roster for the 2013 Maccabiah Games in Israel.

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Beth Tikvah leaves Conservative body

Cost, not philosophical differences led to decision to leave USCJ

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Beth Tikvah Synagogue has left the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) – almost five years after voting to stay in the umbrella organization for Judaism's Conservative movement – because it felt it wasn't using the group's services.

In 2008, Beth Tikvah's reasons for reconsidering its affiliation with the USCJ were philosophical differences regarding ritual observance and lack of responsiveness to the congregation's needs.

But philosophical differences "don't enter into it" any more, shul president Bob Weill told *The CJN*. The synagogue became Torah egalitarian last year. "At this point, we don't need [the USCJ]. It became more of, 'We weren't taking advantage of anything they offered.'"

However, Weill said, "We are a Conservative shul and will remain a Conservative shul."

Rabbi Howard Markose, interim senior rabbi of the 1,100-family shul, said in a phone interview that being a Conservative synagogue means "continuing to be committed to Halachah – Jewish law – with the flexibility in interpretation that is part of our Conservative theology and philosophy."

Bob Weill

Rabbi Markose and his colleague Rabbi Jarrod Grover chose not to be involved in the decision regarding the USCJ. "We neither encouraged the departure nor discouraged it," Rabbi Markose said in a phone interview from Israel.

"We decided as a team of rabbis to give the synagogue membership the opportunity to go through the process and make the decision without rabbinic input. It's not really a halachic issue, which is what our major decision-making and guidance is about – trying to promote observance and halachic adherence. We determined this is more a political issue than a halachic or religious issue."

Rabbi Grover, in his column in Beth Tikvah's most recent shul bulletin, encouraged members to continue to support other Conservative institutions, including the Jewish Theological Seminary, Mercaz Canada (the movement's Zionist arm), and Camp Ramah.

Continued on page 17

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Scapegoaters' perfidy

From ancient times until today, some rulers – usually, but not always, demagogues and despots – have scapegoated an "other" to explain away the misery of the masses over whom they rule. Pointing to a scapegoat, they perpetuate a sense of injustice, thus tethering their people even tighter to manipulation and false nostrums. They stoke fires of anger and shame, thus enfeebling their people even more. In short, these rulers eternalize their people's affliction, even as they try to eternalize their own grip on power.

Since medieval times in Europe, and more recently in the Middle East as well, Jews (read Israel) have been the favourite scapegoat of oppressive and scheming rulers.

The treatment of former Palestinians living in Syria fleeing the slaughter there offers up merely the latest example of the use of this particularly despicable but reliable tactic.

Last week, Jordanian Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour told the world that his country will no longer allow Palestinian refugees to find sanctuary in his country.

This was an abrupt change of policy for the Hashemite Kingdom, for, since the Syrian civil war erupted some 22 months ago, Jordan had indeed taken in Palestinians among the more than 125,000 men, women and children who have fled Syria for Jordan. The Palestinians, however, most from the Yarmuk refugee camp south of Damascus, have been segregated in a separate refugee camp.

According to the *Times of Israel*, they are banned from entering Jordanian cities.

Now, however, the Jordanian government is turning them away.

The reason is obvious.

More than half of the people who live in Jordan are former Palestinians. The government fears adding to their numbers, especially ahead of the emotion and foment of general elections that are scheduled for Jan. 23.

In addition, of course, it is expensive to receive, shelter, protect and provide sustenance to thousands of individuals. The harsh, raw weather last week has made the task even more difficult. But, rather than speak the truth, Ensour scapegoated the Jews as the reason his government shut the door on the Palestinians.

"There are those who want to absolve Israel once again of its responsibility for banishing Palestinians from their homes," Ensour told the London-based Arab daily *al-Hayat*. "Jordan is not the place to solve Israel's problems. Jordan has taken a sovereign and explicit decision not to allow Palestinians carrying Syrian [travel] documents to enter Jordan. Receiving these brethren is a red line for us, because it will be a prelude for another wave of deportation, which is what the Israeli government wants."

In pointing his accusing finger at the State of Israel, Ensour dismissively contradicted and covered over the more truthful tracks of a Jordanian government spokesperson, Samih Maaytah, who had offered a different explanation merely one day earlier for his government's policy.

"Jordan is not obligated to pay a political price for the Syrian crisis," Maaytah told Al-Jazeera. "Jordan does not prevent the return of its citizens... but the transfer of Palestinian refugees from Syria to Jordan is a matter of tens of thousands, something Jordan cannot bear."

Ensour's polemical prevarication harkened back to a recent, equally objectionable example by Jordanian authorities of pointing at the Jewish "other" to explain the victimization of the Palestinians.

Last autumn, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) floated a trial balloon that it was considering adding some teaching segments about the Holocaust in an upgraded curriculum on conflict resolution for Palestinian children in its schools in refugee camps.

The executive committee of UNRWA teachers in Jordan reacted with revulsion. "We condemn this decision, which equates the butcher and the victim," the committee wrote in a statement.

In quickly rejecting the possibility last fall, the teachers echoed a similarly worded rejection by their colleagues a year earlier.

"Teaching UNRWA students about the so-called 'Holocaust' as part of human rights harms the Palestinian cause... and changes the students' views regarding their main enemy, namely the Israeli occupation."

Ensour and these teachers scapegoated Israel. The Palestinians' predicament is the fault of the Jews, they say. Many Palestinians believe them. And many others do, too.

Thus, shackled so entirely and so debilitatingly to the destructive forces of hatred and vengefulness by longstanding falsehoods about the Jews, the Palestinians are unable to break through and build their own country. *–MBD*

SeeJN

PRESIDENTIAL INSPECTION

Israeli President Shimon Peres examines a snowman in the garden of his residence on a snowy day in Jerusalem last week. Israel experienced an unusually severe winter storm last week, with high winds and snow across the country, including as far south as the Negev desert. ***(Flash90 photo)***

Vatican denounces radical bishop's comments

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Vatican has denounced comments by the leader of a traditionalist Catholic organization who told an Ontario school audience that Jews are "enemies of the Church."

At the same time, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) stated that the "outrageous" comments were not representative of the larger Roman Catholic Church.

The remarks that drew international attention were delivered by Bishop Bernard Fellay, superior general of the Society of St. Piux X (SSPX), a group that was founded in 1970 in reaction to the church's efforts to modernize.

In a Dec. 28 address to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy in New Hamburg, Ont., the Swiss-born cleric

Bishop Bernard Fellay

listed Jews, along with "Masons and modernists" as enemies of the church who opposed Vatican recognition of the SSPX. He also said support by Jewish leaders for the Second Vatican Council "shows that Vatican II is their thing, not the church's."

A recording of his nearly two-hour address, which largely focused on relations with the Vatican, was posted on YouTube.

The church quickly rejected the bishop's assertions. According to a report by the *Catholic News Service*, Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi said, "It is absolutely unacceptable, impossible, to define the Jews as enemies of the church." The church, he added, remains committed to deepening relations with the Jewish People.

In the United States, the SSPX's U.S. district published a news release attempting to explain the bishop's anti-Jewish comments.

"The word 'enemies' used here by Bishop Fellay is of course a religious concept and refers to any group or religious sect which opposed the mission of the Catholic Church and her efforts to fulfil it: salvation of souls," it said. "By referring to the Jews, Bishop Fellay's comment was aimed at the leaders of Jewish organizations, and not the Jewish People, as is being implied by journalists.

"Accordingly, the Society of St. Pius X denounces the repeated false accusations of antisemitism or hate speech made in an attempt to silence its message."

In Toronto, CIJA chair David Koschitzky downplayed the significance of the bishop's statements.

"As outrageous as they are, Bishop Fellay's antisemitic comments reflect no more than a very small group within the church that has been pushed to the margins by the vast majority of Catholics. In fact, recent decades have seen unprecedented Jewish-Catholic co-operation and understanding, particularly as Catholic leaders have increasingly appreciated the Jewish roots of Christianity. That Bishop Fellay's disgusting remarks come at a time of such goodwill between our communities is a slap in the face to Jews and Catholics alike."

Father Raymond de Souza, a member of CIJA's board, pointed to the "very good relations between Catholics and Jews" as exemplified by the two visits to Israel by Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict.

"These comments come from a splinter group that is not in full communion with the Holy See and reflect one of the reasons why there is tension between them and the Holy See. While the speech was given in Canada, the SSPX is very marginal in the life of the Catholic community in Canada. Neither Catholics nor Jews should be concerned that their views will have any resonance."

Bishop Fellay's remarks were not the first by SSPX spokespeople that have stirred controversy. The group's founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, wrote to Pope John Paul II in 1985 saying, "Jews, Communists and Freemasons" were the church's contemporary enemies, while Bishop Richard Williamson has denied the Nazis used gas chambers and claimed no more than 300,000 Jews were killed during World War II.

Late last week, CIJA sent a letter to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, asking the group to repudiate Bishop Fellay's remarks. The conference had not responded by *The CJN*'s deadline.

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Arrest made in subway fraud scheme

Israeli alleged to have targeted Jews in Toronto

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Police have arrested an Israeli man who allegedly defrauded Jewish subway commuters of sums ranging from $40 to $1,000.

Israel Aharonovitz, 63, was arrested Jan. 9 at the Glencairn subway station after police witnessed him approaching three women asking for money to help him out of a financial dilemma.

Police allege he targeted Jewish women and men by appealing to their religious convictions and telling them they would be performing "a mitzvah," or fulfilling a religious duty, by giving him the money.

"The premise he uses is the mitzvah. He preys on the religious aspect of people. He guilts them," said Det. James Turnbull of Toronto Police Service.

Turnbull said Aharonovitz would approach passengers between the Lawrence West and Eglinton West stations, start a conversation and tell them a story about a sick wife who was in need of medication. He would ask for directions to the hospital and tell them he couldn't convert his shekels or that his bank card wouldn't work in Toronto.

He told them he owned a restaurant in Israel and would treat them to a meal when they visited, and he told them any money they gave him would be a loan and would be repaid.

He would then accompany his victims to an ATM machine at their stop, where they withdrew the money, Turnbull alleged.

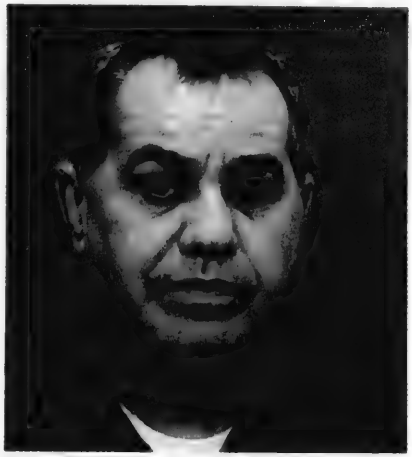
Aharanovitz allegedly focused on women aged 20 to 30. Toronto Police Service issued a news release last week asking for information about the alleged perpetrator. That led to "good results," Turnbull said, including four men who came forward saying they, too, had been approached by him.

Police learned the frauds generally took place between 9 a.m. and noon. "I went out at 10 to see what we can see," Turnbull said.

He soon spotted Aharanovitz and trailed him for a time on subways, seeing him approach three women, who all rebuffed him. Shortly afterward, he made the arrest.

Immigration authorities were informed. Police allege Aharonovitz was in Canada illegally, Turnbull said.

He was charged with four counts of fraud under $5,000. Police believe there may be more victims. Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-1300, or to call Crimestoppers at 416-222-TIPS (8477), go online at www.222tips.com, or text TOR and leave a message to CRIMES (274637).



Israel Aharonovitz is charged with four counts of fraud.

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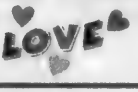
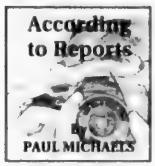


Israelis favour peace, but think it can't happen

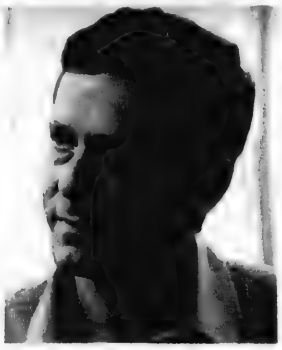
Last month, in a *Globe and Mail* column titled "Netanyahu's in – his drama's on the right," Shira Herzog provided readers with solid insights into the Jan. 22 Israeli election.

Numerous polls indicate that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose Likud party has formed an alliance with Yisrael Beiteinu to form Likud-Beiteinu, is heavily favoured to win. The question is what sort of coalition arrangement would result, given the strong rise, to Netanyahu's right, of Naftali Bennett's religious-nationalist "Jewish Home" party.



Herzog referred to "the pervasive swing to the right in the country's political discourse, which mirrors public attitudes that have deepened over the past decade." But she immediately added the essential context for this shift: "Scarred by the bloody Palestinian intifadah of 2000, wars in Lebanon and Hamas-dominated Gaza and ongoing rocket attacks, Israelis have little appetite for an agreement with the Palestinians, even though, in principle, they support the notion of two states."

Israelis have indeed reacted to the hostility and rejectionism they have encountered for many years and continue to see on virtually every front. Still, it's important to note that Israelis have not moved to the right. Rather, some of the key conservative parties have shifted further right.


Isaac Herzog

Although Herzog stated that Israelis have "little appetite" for an agreement with the Palestinians, it's perhaps more apt to say that Israelis have "little faith" that such an agreement is even possible at this time. In an interview with Gil Hoffman (in the Dec. 31 *Jerusalem Report*), Isaac Herzog, second on the Labor party list, discussed the necessity of trying to reach an agreement with the Palestinians. However, Herzog added: "A lot depends on the issue of trust, and currently there isn't any. The Palestinians earned their lack of trust. Abbas is a tough partner. Israel should expose him."

That observation is key, since much reporting and commentary on this subject simply assumes that if only Israel makes the expected gestures, the Palestinians would readily say yes to a deal. Sadly, the facts show otherwise.

Despite their pessimism about the feasibility of a peace agreement, Israelis still support in principle the idea of a two-state solution, as Herzog noted.

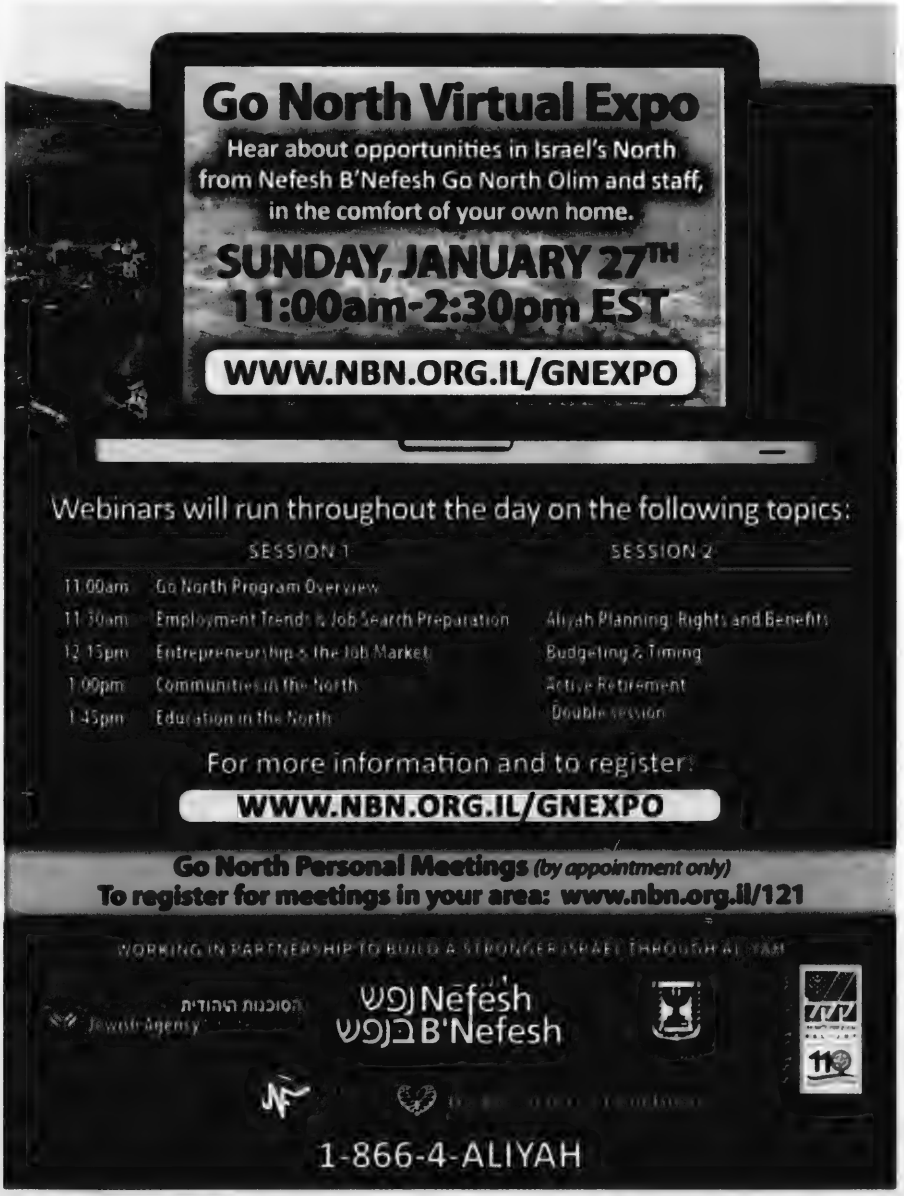
Opinion surveys confirm this trend. For instance, as reported in the *Jerusalem Post* in December, a Smith Research poll showed that "58 per cent of Israelis would prefer to see Israel remain as a Jewish, democratic state through fixed state borders along the route of the West Bank security barrier, seeing Israel preserve its character alongside a demilitarized Palestinian state." Significantly, 78 per cent are concerned that Israel could become a binational state, putting its Jewish and democratic character at risk. The *Post* also reported a finding by the Israel Democracy Institute that 58 per cent of Israelis don't believe that a two-state solution will end the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

A poll conducted by New Wave Research this month for *Israel Hayom*, a paper that backs Netanyahu, matches the above-cited results quite closely: 54 per cent favour a two-state solution while 38 per cent oppose the idea. However, 54 per cent say the two-state solution isn't feasible. According to New Wave, Israelis are evenly divided (43 per cent pro to 43 per cent con) on the question of whether, for the sake of engendering talks with the Palestinians, Israel should halt building homes in the West Bank.

In a nutshell, this captures Israel's predicament. A clear majority supports a two-state solution, while at the same time (and by the same margin) Israelis fear it cannot be achieved due to the absence of a committed Palestinian partner.

Polling firms often report that a majority of Palestinians also support a two-state solution, despite some erosion in favour of one state. Still, unless the pollsters ask the Palestinians who say they support "two states" whether they're willing to confine a "right of return" *only* to a Palestinian state, this finding is misleading. Unfortunately, pollsters rarely, if ever, ask these two questions together – and thus overlook the core rejectionism that plagues Palestinian nationalism.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.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Perpetual dilemma

Next week, on Jan. 22, Israelis go to the polls to elect the members of the next Knesset from among whom their next government will be formed.

As ever, they have a wide-ranging, left-to-right, secular-to-observant, narrowly ethnic to widely inclusive, single-issue to multi-issue, new-faces and old-faces constellation of competing parties from which to choose.

And as ever, the key issue facing Israelis is their security: physical and economic.

The economic security choices they face fall very much along lines familiar to voters in Canada, and indeed in the entire western world. More or less, we make those decisions according to our personal understanding of the appropriate role of government in a free market.

However, the physical security choices Israeli voters face are unlike any Canadians, Americans or other westerners confront: how to find a way to live in peace with all of its neighbours?

Unfortunately, it has been thus for Israeli voters since their very first election after the state was founded in 1948. No other country in the United Nations must still diplomatically and militarily defend its very right to exist against the malevolent efforts of some fellow UN members to "wipe it off the face of the earth."

From our vantage point, in the comfort and safety of our Canadian homes, we can only hope that Israelis will elect a parliament and choose a government that will make every reasonable effort to reach a treaty of peace with the Palestinians. And we would even hope that the definition of reasonable efforts would include new, bold, imaginative, fresh-thinking, daring steps to find common ground with the Palestinians. It is our view, and most recent polls in Israel confirm, that the majority of Israelis share this hope.

But it is also our view, and most recent polls in Israel confirm, that reasonable efforts do not include patently reckless and self-destructive steps.

In the current circumstances, however, it would be difficult to convince most Israelis that the Palestinian leadership truly wishes to make peace with the Jewish state.

The rulers of Gaza are ideologically, theocratically and politically sworn to annihilate Israel. And the rulers of the West Bank prevaricate at every opportunity, suggesting at the United Nations and to visiting western leaders a willingness to negotiate with Israel, but exhorting their people to the "fulfilment of the dream of return" and "ending the occupation" when western microphones are turned off (Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Jan. 4, on the anniversary of Fatah's founding).

As Paul Michaels astutely summarizes in his column this week, "A clear majority [of Israelis] supports a two-state solution while at the same time Israelis fear it cannot be achieved due to the absence of a committed Palestinian partner."

It is the perpetual dilemma for the Israeli electorate.

We hope and pray they choose wisely.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Toronto-area Liberal MP Roland de Corneille urged Ottawa to call for moderation by all sides in the ongoing violence in the West Bank and Gaza. The Eglinton-Lawrence MP said the conflict was the result of both sides being unable to take needed steps to start peaceful negotiations.

Dry Bones

THE DANGER OF SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN ASSAD'S HANDS
. . . HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A NEW AND BIGGER THREAT!
. . . THE DANGER OF THE SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS
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Skeptical of church's support for Israel

Ever since Rev. Alfred C. Forrest was moderator of the United Church more than 60 years ago, that church has assumed blatantly anti-Israeli policies ("United Church not against Israel, says official," Dec. 13). Back then, it claimed that the Jews had stolen Arab land on which to create their state. Today that position continues based on the so-called illegal Israeli settlements in the traditional heartland of the Jewish people – Judea and Samaria – that was liberated from Jordanian control in 1967. Both charges are patently false, as any objective analysis proves.

Yet Rev. Bruce Gregersen disingenuously maintains that the United Church is the only mainstream church that has affirmed Israel as a Jewish state and that "supports the existence, safety and thriving of Israel." Unfortunately, such United Church policies as support for east Jerusalem as the future capital of yet another Arab state and the relocation in Israel of millions of voluntary Arab refugees and their descendants of 1947-49 seriously question the United Church's sincerity in affirming Israel as a Jewish state. As well, one has to view with extreme skepticism the church's support for the existence, safety and thriving of Israel when it turns a blind eye both to persistent Islamic hatred, vilification and terrorism directed against Jews and Israel and the international divestment boycott and sanctions movement against Israel.

Sid Soban
Toronto

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Building Jewish homes

What is *The CJN*'s policy regarding letters of the editor? Can incorrect information be printed with nary a note from the editor? Smadar Meiri, in her letter "Settlement construction" (Jan. 3), incorrectly states that Israel is committed to freeze all building of Jewish homes in Judea and Samaria, including for natural growth, while having negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. This is absolutely incorrect. I hope that in the future, *The CJN* does not allow its letters section to be used as a vehicle for anti-Israel propaganda.

Yehudit Shler Weisberg
Canadian Legal Forum for Israel
Toronto

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Rockets threaten peace talks

Letter writer Smadar Meiri is critical of Israel's policies with regard to settlement construction ("Settlement construction" Jan. 3). She believes these policies are in contravention of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 1515. She has, apparently, not read the part of Resolution 242 that calls for "every state in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized borders free from threats and acts of violence." As well, she may have overlooked the part of Resolution 1515 that calls for "the cessation of all acts of violence, all acts of terrorism and the dismantling of the terrorist infrastructures."

Rockets raining onto Israel from the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas are a much graver threat to peace talks – which the Palestinians refuse to attend, despite the pleadings to do so of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and others – than a democratic Jewish state planning to build a few dozen dwellings in disputed territories, the ownership of which is to be resolved in direct negotiation between the two parties.

Sam Mitnick
Cote St.Luc, Que.

• • •

West Bank construction

Settlements do impede peace, contrary to what Steven Scheffer says in his letter to the editor, "Settlements don't impede peace" (Dec. 20). Punishing Palestinians for going to the United Nations for non-member observer status is not in peace's best interest. The Israeli government's announcing intentions to build more Israeli housing in the West Bank was clearly punishment.

Unfortunately, the Hamas leadership improved its credibility within the Palestinian community when it resisted Israel military might recently and forced at least indirect negotiations with western powers and a partial easing of the naval blockade of Gaza.

Yes, antisemitism exists in the Middle East, and most Palestinians would prefer to control all of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, but antisemitism will not be eradicated by "crushing it at its source," as Scheffer says. The Israeli government needs to demonstrate through its actions that a Jewish homeland in the Middle East can be a "win-win" situation for the region. There are many Israelis and progressive Zionists who are working toward a secure, democratic and prosperous Israel and Palestine.

Israel Lyon, Chair
JSpaceCanada Co-ordinating Committee

• • •

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Protecting Roma refugees: a unique perspective

Gina Csanyi-Robah

On Sept. 25, 2006, seven days after arriving as an intern at the European Roma Rights Centre in Budapest, Hungary, I was given an opportunity to attend a roundtable discussion at the Central European University hosted by the Canadian government and the former Canadian ambassador to Hungary, Robert Hage. The purpose was to assess the social situation for Roma in Hungary. Prior to attending the meeting, I was informed that it was in fact an inquiry into whether Canada could again remove its travel visa restriction for Hungarians. Within an hour of being in the university in downtown Budapest, surrounded by Canadian government representatives, Hungarian academics, representatives of various human rights and social justice NGOs, and a scattering of Roma intellectuals and activists, I realized that I was in a very unique position. I was the sole Canadian-born, Hungarian Roma in the room.

In the day of presentations and discussions that followed, it became abundantly clear to Hage that the majority of Hungary's Roma live in dreadful conditions and have genuine reasons for seeking a more hopeful existence in Canada, as thousands had done between 1997 and 2001, when a visa was not required to travel to Canada. The Canadians heard details of the deeply embedded systemic discrimination in Hungary that section 51-53 of the Geneva Convention Handbook of refugee determination describes as equivalent to persecution. Hungarian lawyer Lila Farkas, founder of the Chance for Children Foundation, described the serious problem of endemic racism, poverty, segregated and substandard schooling, and systematic placement in special-needs schools that has resulted in 50 per cent of Roma children in Hungary not achieving more than a primary education.

It would take three years and mounting pressure from the European Union for Canada to finally remove the visa requirement in 2009. In the meantime, things continued to worsen in Hungary, with a deteriorating economy and the rapid rise of the far-right nationalist movement. The Fidesz political party took power in the 2007, and a steady move toward fascism and centralization of power in the government began.

Even more menacing was the birth of Jobbik, Hungary's third-most-powerful political party, which proclaims that Hungary is for true Hungarians, while confidently declaring itself to be anti-Roma and antisemitic. Jobbik maintains a stronghold in northeastern Hungary, where the majority of Hungarian Roma live and where Jobbik's 47 members of Parliament and four members of European Parliament come from. This is where Miskolcs, Hungary's second-largest city, is located and where the vast majority of Roma refugee claims originate.

It's widely acknowledged that Jobbik and its paramilitary wing, the Hungarian Guards, have modelled themselves on Hitler's Nazi Party. Jobbik's power and organization make Greece's Golden Dawn party look amateurish. But the systemic discrimination that Roma face in Hungary pales in comparison to the direct threat posed by the Jobbik party. Its entire political platform is based on the vilification, demonization and dehumanization of Hungary's Roma population.

On Oct. 30, 2011, one year after I became executive director of Canada's sole Roma organization, Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney visited the Roma Community Centre in Toronto. Once again, I realized that I was in a very unique position. I was the sole Canadian-born Hungarian Roma in the room. In addition to preparing a complete information package with reports from Amnesty International, I arranged for Kenney to meet a roomful of people that included some notable human rights and social justice activists, as well as settlement workers who have helped countless Roma families and Roma refugee claimants.

Roma Canadians observe a vigil in Toronto against human rights abuses and racism in Hungary.

I carefully explained the situation in Hungary and included details of the serial murder spree between 2008 and 2009 that left eight Roma dead and 48 injured for life, which became a huge catalyst for Roma to flee to Canada in 2009. Unfortunately, the Canadian public has never heard of the small yet significant number of Roma refugees from Hungary who are politicians, engineers, journalists, teachers, and police officers. Talk of bogus refugees, organized crime, taking advantage of social benefits, and safe democratic European countries has drowned out the truth that people ought to know.

In the past decade, at least 1,000 Roma families have been acknowledged and accepted as genuine refugees in Canada by the Immigration and Refugee Board. Kenney also heard first-hand accounts of human rights abuses, terror and racially motivated violence that these Roma families had been subjected to from every sector of Hungarian society, including police and the Jobbik party.

Last May, refugee lawyer Maureen Silcoff and I testified together in Ottawa before a parliamentary committee on immigration and citizenship regarding Bill C-31, now called Protecting Canada's Immigration and Refugee System Act. Once again, I found myself in a unique position as being the first Romani person in Canadian history to testify to the federal government. On June 18, I returned to Ottawa to present to a Senate committee. On both occasions, I also submitted a brief to explain in more detail some of the factors leading to Roma seeking asylum in Canada, as well as the contributing factors as to why there have been a significant number of withdrawn refugee claims. Lack of first-language support, few skills to navigate the complex refugee-determination system, fear and mistrust of institutions, feeling unwelcomed by the government, and negligent legal advice and representation by immigration consultants and a small number of lawyers were the main reasons for withdrawn refugee claims.

Despite our best efforts, Kenney did not reconsider the creation of a safe countries list, nor did he make an amendment to the legislation to include an independent panel of experts that would designate countries as either safe or unsafe. Kenney centralized all discretionary power in his office to designate countries as being either being safe or unsafe.

On July 1, Bill C-31 became law. More recently, on Dec. 14, Kenney announced the "designated countries of origin list"(DCO), which includes 27 countries, of which 25 are member states of the European Union. In addition to all refugee claimants from DCO countries being denied access to basic health care, they are now being discouraged from coming to Canada to seek asylum by the threat of detainment and being subjected to a system where they're set up to fail because of drastically reduced timelines that do not provide an opportunity to secure counsel and submit a strong, well-substantiated refugee claim. In addition, failed claimants are sent back faster with no opportunity to appeal or to access a judicial review of their case or a pre-removal risk assessment for at least 12 months after being rejected.

Gina Csanyi-Robah

In preparations for the struggle to help Roma refugee claimants at the Roma Community Centre, we are working with our community partners and multifaith religious institutions to help secure sanctuary for families with extremely compelling refugee claims who have been rejected. We're also applying for funding to run our in-house legal clinic for one full day, as well as seeking sources of medical care and engaging in ongoing advocacy and public education to raise awareness about the conditions that compel Roma to seek refuge here.

Who are our allies in this battle to access justice for Roma refugees? Some are community workers, social justice advocates, students, teachers, academics, lawyers, doctors, politicians, and concerned citizens. Many of those working closest with us are Jewish. Many of us feel strongly that Jews and Roma have an intimate connection from being Europe's undesirables for centuries leading up to the shared experience of extermination during the Holocaust. Countless members of the Roma Community Centre, as well as Roma refugee claimants, lost relatives or entire families prior to and during World War II. My great aunt was a survivor. I have interviewed a survivor and attended her funeral. I have cried with those who were orphaned. There is a mutual feeling of comfort, safety and understanding that we Roma and Jews feel for each other. We have come to each other's aid in our times of need in the past, and, thankfully, I have learned that our hands and hearts are still there now.

Gina Csanyi-Robah is the Canadian Roma community's chief spokesperson and executive director of the Toronto Roma Community Centre.

Les Misérables and the Jewish problem

I know what you're thinking. You saw *Les Misérables*. You loved the play, adored the movie. You don't remember any Jewish characters and you're thinking, "Please don't ruin it for me by saying it's antisemitic."

Of course, you're right. There are no Jewish characters – none of the unsavoury stock figures of European literature, such as Shakespeare's Shylock or Charles Dickens' Fagin. But as I left the movie theatre, I turned to my husband and said, "This is about the Jews."

I immediately thought about the joke recounted by author Hugh Nissenson to explain the title of his collection of short stories, *The Elephant and My Jewish Problem*. Nissenson wrote:

"The zoology class is assigned a paper on the elephant. The Englishman writes 'Hunting the Elephant.' The Frenchman, 'The Love Life of the Elephant.' The Jewish student turns in a paper, 'The Elephant and the Jewish Problem.'" Her husband, Nissenson's wife noted, was "like the Jewish zoology student."

With a nod toward Nissenson as a kindred spirit and an apology to those of you who don't want *Les Mis* mucked up with discussions of theology, history and literature, I'm going to elaborate on how the Jewish problem for Christiandom shapes this work.

Even without Jewish characters, *Les Misérables* – both the contemporary musical and the 19th-century novel by Victor Hugo on which it is based – speak to the place of the Jew in European Christian thought.

As most of you know, the story revolves around the struggle between Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert. Valjean, a rough ex-convict, undergoes a conversion experience after he steals silver goods from a kindly bishop who has given him food and shelter. Although he is apprehended, Valjean is set free when the bishop lies on his behalf, claiming the silver was a gift.

Experiencing unmerited mercy, Valjean feels the force of God in the world and commits himself to acts of goodness. Successful in business, he gives alms generously, has compassion for the oppressed and even adopts the orphaned daughter of an unwed mother turned prostitute. But because Valjean has broken parole, he is pursued by Javert, who wants to enforce the law and return Valjean to prison. As the action progresses, Valjean comes to be associated with the principle of "mercy" and Javert with "law."

At a pivotal moment, Valjean has the opportunity to kill his nemesis. Instead, he helps him escape from the revolutionaries. Confounded by this unexpected act of mercy, Javert later finds himself unable to capture Valjean. His faith in law has been shaken by an act of unexpected kindness, just as Valjean's had been years earlier. But while Valjean opened his heart to God, Javert is torn between what he views as two incompatible principles: mercy and law. To espouse mercy, he must reject law. To maintain law, he must reject mercy. Deeply shaken, he kills himself.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Although Javert cannot bring them together, in the Jewish tradition, law and mercy coexist – both as attributes of the Jewish concept of God, and as human ideals. But Christian theology claims for itself the governing principle of mercy, assigning to Judaism unbending law. In supplanting Judaism, according to this view, Christianity replaced the harsh rule of law with mercy. In the philosophical underpinnings of *Les Misérables*, Valjean represents Christianity – spreading goodness through acts of kindness, whether merited or not. This association is heightened, as my husband pointed out to me, by Valjean conforming to the Christian ideal: he remains celibate.

Javert represents a Christian idea of Judaism – a system of principles that, while not evil (as Valjean acknowledges of Javert), is limited and cannot address human suffering. Javert has no way out of his conflict, then, because he cannot be both "Jewish" and "Christian" at the same time. Or, to put it differently, once the "Jew" discovers mercy, he becomes "Christian."

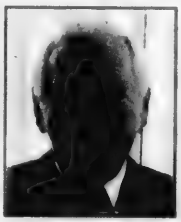
I'm not suggesting that Victor Hugo was antisemitic. To the contrary, a republican and a deist, he favored religious equality. He saw Jews as unjustly oppressed, and criticized the pogroms in Russia. At the same time, he absorbed the religious teachings of his Catholic childhood, and they form the scaffolding of his worldview.

The Jewish connection struck me because the film's promise of afterlife joy contradicts its this-worldly revolutionary politics. And because that's what Jewish Studies professors do.

Israel after the election

It's still generally assumed, though increasingly uncertain, that Benjamin Netanyahu will continue as the prime minister of Israel after next Tuesday's election, but the composition of his government may change drastically. It's even possible that, contrary to what has become the norm, he or a rival could form a viable coalition without the participation of haredi political parties.

This is because in the course of the current election campaign, contending parties, some of them new, have hinted, albeit ambiguously and erratically, at the possibility of serving under Netanyahu. They could replace traditional haredi partners who in the past have tended to support the prime minister in matters of foreign and domestic policy in lieu of special concessions for their institutions and adherents.



Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Hiddush (renewal) describes itself as a trans-denominational non-profit organization outside party politics that seeks to act as a bridge between Israel and the Diaspora. It aims to promote religious freedom and equality in the Jewish state. Those who've endorsed Hiddush include Charles Bronfman, the Canadian businessman and philanthropist; Prof. Alan Dershowitz, one of the best-known and most articulate advocates of Israel in the United States, and the distinguished Israeli writer Amos Oz.

The latest Hiddush-sponsored opinion poll, published at the end of last year in anticipation of the election, indicates that tensions between secular and haredi Jews in Israel are seen by the public as greatly surpassing other domestic issues.

Some 71 per cent of Israelis view it as the most or the second-most acute problem the country is facing, compared to 41 per cent who put the strife between the political right and left high up on their list, 33 per cent who see the rift between rich and poor as critical and 16 per cent who view the traditional divide between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews as the most troublesome aspect of Israeli internal politics.

Stanley Gold, the Los Angeles-based American businessman and Jewish leader who chairs the board of Hiddush, and its president, Rabbi Uri Regev, the well-known Israeli human rights advocate and former president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, write: "Even though the Iranian threat seems to shadow the elections, the issue most prevalent in Israeli society, adversely impacting Israel's economy, security, gender equality, religious freedom and human dignity, is the worsening conflict between religion and state and between the secular and the ultra-Orthodox."

Many in the Diaspora may find this uncomfortable, because they believe themselves to be defending Israel's international standing by uncritically supporting all the policies of its government. The situation described by Hiddush challenges the acquiescence that likes to heed statements by Israeli politicians in power who argue that although the widening religious gap may be serious, in view of Israel's other problems, it's not urgent.

But things may be changing. A growing number of Israelis have come to realize that the existence of a large and economically unproductive population that depends on state handouts for its survival can no longer be tolerated. Nor can discrimination against women by haredim be accepted. Not to have access to government resources via the ballot box may force them to rethink their position.

Virtually all Jews outside Israel live in countries where religious freedom and gender equality prevail, and they're the beneficiaries. It's therefore reasonable to assume that ultimately they won't support such discrimination in the Jewish state. Jews in the Diaspora, irrespective of religious affiliation, work for a living without massive dependence on the state. They may expect something similar in Israel. The involvement of prominent Diaspora leaders in Hiddush points in that direction.

And there're reasons to believe that the non-Orthodox majority in Israel won't wish to live indefinitely with the status quo. This, in turn, may enable the next prime minister to form a government without the support of the entrenched Orthodox establishment.

Such a move would greatly stimulate economic growth. At present, some 900,000 Israeli children live below the poverty line. Many of them come from large haredi families where fathers spend time allegedly studying Torah and living off welfare while mothers are too burdened by childbirth and childcare to work outside the home.

In the Diaspora, on the other hand, even haredi Jews have to a very large extent accommodated themselves to the economic realities of the countries in which they reside. Most earn a living that provides for their families. They may serve as role models for their Israeli counterparts.

Election campaign emphasized security issues

With Israel's Jan. 22 general election less than a week away, the stars seem aligned in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's favour. Nearly four years after cobbling together a right-wing government, he seems poised to regain the premiership. Polls suggest that the right-wing bloc, spearheaded by Netanyahu and his partner, Avigdor Lieberman of the Yisrael Beiteinu party, will most likely defeat the forces of the centre-left.

In the 2009 election, Netanyahu's Likud party won 27 Knesset seats, one less than the centrist Kadima party, then led by Tzipi Livni, the former foreign minister. But after she failed to form a government, Netanyahu stepped in and assembled a workable coalition in league with secular and religious allies.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

The center-left bloc – consisting of Shelly Yachimovich's Labor party, Livni's Hatnua party, Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid party and Shaul Mofaz's Kadima party – will probably not win enough seats to topple Netanyahu and company. Still, Yachimovich and Livni have both called for a united centrist front to counter the right. It probably will not come to pass. Personal rivalries, as well as Lapid's announcement that he may yet serve in a government led by Netanyahu, have diminished the chances of a centrist union.

Judging by surveys, the centre-left will at best amass 54 seats, leaving the balance of power in the hands of Yisrael Beiteinu and another rightist party, Shas, which are in Netanyahu's camp.

Last October, pundits predicted that the newly formed Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu list would win 47 parliamentary seats. But since Lieberman was indicted on corruption charges and forced to step down as foreign minister, the list has lost some of its lustre. Pollsters now claim the pair will pick up as few as 32 seats.

There is a wild card in this equation. Thirty-one per cent of voters appear to be undecided. A significant number of them are centrists, a constituency that could affect the outcome of the election.

Nevertheless, Netanyahu is best positioned to win a second consecutive term, notwithstanding his recent warning that the centre-left bloc may somehow overtake him.

Despite his ideological predispositions, Netanyahu may yet decide to establish a pragmatic, politically broader government, in which case he will look to the centre. It would not be an unprecedented occurrence. Last spring, Netanyahu formed a short-lived alliance with Mofaz, Livni's successor as leader of the Kadima party, which was established by Ariel Sharon after he left the Likud in 2005.

Within two months, the Netanyahu-Mofaz partnership unravelled over a disagreement regarding the enrolment of haredi yeshiva students in the armed forces.

Realistically, in light of recent developments in the Likud, Netanyahu is not likely to try to create a centre-right government. Last November, Likud unveiled a strong right-wing slate of candidates for the 19th Knesset, dropping moderates and elevating hardliners in preparation for the election.

Likud moderates such as Dan Meridor and Michael Eitan were assigned slots that do not guarantee them seats in the Knesset. By contrast, far rightists like Danny Danon, Yisrael Katz and Moshe Feiglin won "realistic" slots.

Likud's further drift to the right – a development that mirrors Israel's rightward lurch since the Six Day War, the Oslo peace process and the second Palestinian uprising – was also embodied in a recommendation made by Public Diplomacy Minister Yuli Edelstein. He urged the government to annex Area C, the site of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Further evidence of Israel's movement toward the right will manifest itself should a victorious Netanyahu invite Naftali Bennett's ultra-nationalist Jewish Home party into his coalition. As of this week, Bennett's party was expected to win upward of 18 seats.

Although many Israelis are focused on socioeconomic matters, this election campaign has turned mainly on security and diplomatic issues, as in in the past.

Netanyahu has taken credit for maintaining a robust economy during a global recession, but he has largely dwelled on conflict management problems.

First and foremost, he has spoken of his role in convincing the international community to curb Iran's budding nuclear program. Beyond Iran, he has talked about preserving Israel's peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, deterring Hamas in an eight-day border war, expanding the coverage of the Iron Dome anti-missile system and building a security fence along the Egyptian border.

He claims he supports the establishment of a demilitarized Palestinian state, provided the Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state and agree to end the conflict. By the same token, he has promised to strengthen Jewish settlements in the West Bank and cautioned against rushing into an agreement with the Palestinian Authority.

Netanyahu's commitment to Palestinian statehood has been sharply questioned by two important Likud stalwarts. Gideon Saar, the education minister, has declared that Netanyahu's formula of "two states for two peoples," enunciated in a Bar-Ilan University speech in June 2009, was never part of Likud's election platform. Meanwhile, backbencher Tzipi Hotovely has described Netanyahu's speech as merely a tactical manoeuvre to placate the United States.

Hotovely's revealing comment has been seconded by Yuval Diskin, the former director of the Shin Bet, and by Livni. Diskin has accused Netanyahu of insincerity in endorsing Palestinian statehood, while Livni has observed, "Today, the whole world knows that this speech was just lip service, a mask for moderation on an extremist face."

Shaul Mofaz

Mofaz, the former defence minister, has been just as critical. Claiming that Netanyahu is far too focused on Iran, at the expense of reaching an agreement with the Palestinians, he has warned that Israel may well morph into a binational state unless the Palestinian issue is settled. In a reference to the demographic threat facing Israel, he observed, "In a few years, we will no longer have a Jewish majority, and we will become South Africa of the previous century."

Yachimovitch has concentrated on socioeconomic issues, but she has called for an immediate renewal of talks with the Palestinians on the basis of the Clinton parameters, which were accepted with reservations by Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 2000. These guidelines, drawn up by the Clinton administration, envision a Palestinian state in about 95 per cent of the West Bank and in all of the Gaza Strip.

Tzipi Livni

The Clinton parameters surfaced when Ehud Barak, the then Labor party leader, was Israel's prime minister. Defeated in the 2001 election, Barak eventually joined Netanyahu's government as defence minister. In 2011, he left the Labor party and formed the Independence party. Although he still holds his job, Barak recently disclosed he would not run for re-election. Whether he stays on as defence minister in a Netanyahu cabinet remains to be seen.

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Exhibit highlights Wallenberg's humanitarianism

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

When Swedish businessman and diplomat Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest on July 9, 1944, more than 435,000 Jews had already been deported to the Auschwitz extermination camp in Poland by Adolf Eichmann, the architect of the Holocaust in Hungary.

With the Nazis dead set on murdering the 230,000 Jews still left in the Hungarian capital, Wallenberg, the scion of a distinguished mercantile family, was equally determined to save them.

Dispatched to German-occupied Hungary by the War Refugee Board, an agency created by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt to help civilian victims of Nazi oppression, Wallenberg set out to protect Hungary's Jews last remaining Jews as World War II wound down.

Through a combination of cunning, resourcefulness and courage, Wallenberg was able to achieve his objective. He printed protective passports and purchased safe houses, thereby plucking tens of thousands of Jews from the jaws of death.

In January 1945, he was arrested by the invading Red Army, never to be seen again. Later, the Soviet Union claimed he had died in a prison in 1947.

Had he lived, Wallenberg, a hero and an icon, would have turned 100 in 2012.

Wallenberg's life and humanitarian achievements are being marked by the Toronto Reference Library (789 Yonge St.) in an 11-day exhibition open to the public that began Jan. 12.

The exhibition, titled *To me there's no other choice – Raoul Wallenberg 1912-2012*, was created by the Swedish Institute in partnership with the Living History Forum.

The Swedish Institute, a government organization, is dedicated to promoting Swedish interests abroad, while the Living History Forum, a Swedish public institution, promotes tolerance, democracy and human rights.

The exhibition comes to Toronto after stops in New York City, Washington, D.C., Berlin, Geneva and Ottawa, and is divided into three distinct parts: his childhood, his efforts to assist imperiled Hungarian Jews and his interactions with Jews in Budapest.

Commenting on the exhibition, Teppo Tauriainen, Sweden's ambassador to Canada, said, "I hope it will inspire a discussion on the wider implications of Raoul Wallenberg's legacy in today's world, including what we as individuals can learn from his actions. Wallenberg showed us that it is possible to make a difference through personal courage and by taking a stand."

Raoul Wallenberg

As Tauriainen suggested, Wallenberg, six decades after his imprisonment, is universally recognized as one of the heroes of the Holocaust and a role model of decency. Schools, streets and parks have been named after him and 32 monuments around the world have been erected in his honour.

In 1985, Canada conferred honorary citizenship on Wallenberg, and on Jan. 17, Canada Post will officially issue a postage stamp to commemorate him.

On Jan. 16, under the auspices of the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre in Toronto, a Canadian documentary film, *The Angel of Budapest*, was screened at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Centre to mark Wallenberg's accomplishments.

But as Canadian commentator Andrew Cohen reminds us, Canada's celebratory embrace of Wallenberg is historically ironic.

Writing in the *Ottawa Citizen* last month, Cohen – a journalist and Carleton University professor of journalism and international affairs – observed, "The truth is that no country did as much to question, even demean, his humanitarianism than Canada in 1944."

He adds, "While Wallenberg was fighting in Budapest to save as many Jews as he could, in Ottawa the dominion government of Mackenzie King was resisting the suggestion that it take in any Jews at all. The cabinet decided, in fact, that no Jews would be admitted to Canada, though it did agree to maintain 500 to 1,000 refugees in Turkey or Switzerland, if they could get there."

Cohen goes on to say that Vincent Massey, Canada's high commissioner in Britain, characterized the campaign to save Hungarian Jews as "an American ploy" cynically designed to help re-elect Roosevelt in an election year.

According to historians Irving Abella and Harold Troper, the co-authors of *None is Too Many, Canada and the Jews of Europe 1933-1948*, the Canadian government admitted only about 5,000 Jewish refugees during that period.

Bogoroch & Associates LLP is very proud to announce that
Heidi R. Brown has been admitted to the Partnership
effective January 1, 2013.

Heidi Brown was called to the Ontario Bar in 1993 and spent the first seven years of her career as counsel with The Office of the Children's Lawyer.

She joined Bogoroch & Associates in November 1999 and has since specialized in personal injury and medical malpractice litigation. She has achieved excellent results for her clients, who admire and respect the dedication, hard work and compassion she brings to their case. She is a board member of the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association and has been invited to present at many continuing legal educational conferences and seminars organized by the Advocates' Society, Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, Osgoode Law School Professional Development and others.

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Program looks at Orthodox who leave the fold

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Torah in Motion will examine the "off the derech" issue – the question of observant Jews leaving Orthodox practice – as part of a program this weekend on "Educating our Children in a Complex World."

The program at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation will begin Saturday night (Jan. 19) with a screening of *The Rabbi's Daughter*, a documentary about three women who have all gone "off the derech" and whose fathers are prominent rabbis in Israel.

A panel discussion on "Leaving Judaism: The Return to Questioning" will follow. Participants will include Rabbi Yakov Horowitz, dean of Yeshiva Darchei Noam of Monsey, N.Y., who will speak the following morning about "Keeping our children safe;" Rabbi Daniel Korobkin of the BAYT; Leah Malamet, who is completing her PhD in clinical psychology, and Arie Margolies, a student from Dallas, Texas, who will also speak Sunday on "Why I went 'Off the Derech,' and why you are all wrong about it." TIM co-founder Elliott Malamet will moderate the panel.

Rabbi Jay Kelman, director of Torah in Motion (TIM), said that children's education and the possibility of going "off the derech" – whether that means giving up kashrut and Shabbat observance, or in some cases endangering physical welfare by, for example, turning to drugs – is an ongoing issue.

"The problem is increasing," said Rabbi Kelman. "It's painful for the family, and in certain circles, there are other implications," he added, citing the possible impact on marriage prospects.

At the same time, he noted, "our generation is probably more 'on the derech' than any other generation since the Emancipation... Orthodoxy is much stronger than it was. More people are committed to it."

Rabbi Michael Skobac of Jews for Judaism, who will speak Sunday morning about "Making Judaism compelling for our students," said that today's world is "saturated with competing voices."

He said he has often encountered Orthodox Jews whose spiritual life may be "non-existent or dry." It's an issue that often isn't talked about, he said. "I think it's certainly a phenomenon in the community."

HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER: Zachary Winkler, 11, and his sister Maya, 8, recently hosted their sixth annual event to raise money for the Hospital for Sick Children. More than 300 people turned out for face painting, balloon animals, inflatable games, a City of Vaughan fire truck and a silent auction. The pair raised $8,600, including donations made on Zachary's website, zachary'sdosomethingsweet.com. In the picture, Zachary and Maya present the cheque to Loni Griffin of SickKids Foundation.

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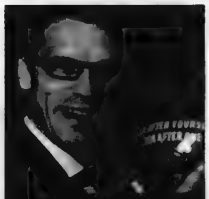

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Event to focus on teens and social media

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

It's a major challenge to raise teenagers in an age when they know more about technology than their parents, said Larry Borins, a social worker and a psychotherapist.

Borins said this is the first generation that has more expertise than their parents in an area that is such a major part of their lives, which leads to several concerns. For instance, parents might try to create barriers for their children by setting passwords to limit their children's access to the Internet, but might not be able to outsmart their kids.

"Children seem to know how to rewire the whole house, and often they're two steps ahead of the parents when it comes to technology," he said.

Borins and Rabbi Jarrod Grover of Beth Tikvah Synagogue will host a Jan. 19 discussion at the shul that will consider the problems that come with raising a teenager with social media.

Rabbi Grover said the idea for the program came about after 15-year-old Amanda Todd's cyberbullying story came to light. On the Shabbat after Todd committed suicide, Rabbi Grover spoke to his congregation about her story, and he realized some families showed a real interest in the issue, he said.

"Not that there's mention of cyberbullying in the Torah," Rabbi Grover said, "but there's a heck of a lot of concern in Judaism with lashon hara, speaking evil, treating others the way we want to be treated."

He said he hopes children of all ages, including high school students, will attend to hear about the Jewish perspective on bullying and self-confidence.

"You are greater and infinitely more important and special than anyone can ever make you out to seem," Rabbi Grover said. "It's about celebrating our kids and making sure they feel this is a place where they feel loved."

Borins will approach the topic from a psychological angle, discussing how social media affects children and families, and how parents regulate their children's online lives.

"Parenting always involves setting appropriate limits for kids and trying to create the right boundaries," he said, explaining that may sometimes involve setting time or content limits on their technology.

Natalie Kaplan, a committee member of the synagogue, said she thinks the discussion is especially important for any parent with preteens or teenagers. She is the mother of a 10-year-old girl and recognizes she will need to set rules about social technology.

Social worker and psychotherapist Larry Borins

"I can see now, she and her friends are very excited about getting new technology," Kaplan said. "They're all asking for iPods and those kinds of things for birthday presents."

She agreed with Borins that, as a parent, it's hard setting boundaries when children know more about the technology than they do, she said.

It all comes down to communication between parents and their children, said Borins, who has a two-year-old child.

"I think it's in some ways [technology] allowing us to connect in good ways," he said. "On the other hand, it's preventing us from having real-time connections. We're so busy hiding behind the screen that we're not really having the connections that matter."

This "authentic communication" is the key to working with children and ensuring they understand the parents' concerns.

"I think they should be having discussions with young people and collaborating – trying to solve problems together and to also spend time online together," Borins said.

He said the American Academy of Pediatrics warned parents to limit their kids' screen time to two hours per day, but most children spend much longer than that.

"What kind of impact does it have on their brain and their social skills and their ability to have face time?" he asked. Additionally, he said the same pediatric association said children under the age of two should not have any screen time at all.

Ultimately, the Jan. 19 discussion won't solve the problems, but it will highlight some of the biggest concerns and give various perspectives on solutions, he said.

"Hopefully this group, for me, will be an opportunity for me to have an open dialogue and to create a space for shared learning," Borins said.

To find out more or to register for the discussion, call 416-221-3433, ext. 302, or email sigal@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

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KosherTube encourages Jewish online learning

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

KosherTube, an interactive video website, is YouTube's younger Jewish cousin.

As the official website of the Electronic Torah Educational Foundation and the Riverdale Jewish Community Centre, KosherTube was established in 2007 by Rabbi David Ostriker and Michael Kigel. It officially went online in November 2008 and has content from contributors around the globe.

Rabbi Ostriker said he and Kigel created the site to encourage the understanding of Judaism through the use of participatory video. "It gave people the opportunity to learn and have insights into a world that they were curious about, but had little or no knowledge of."

Kigel is dean of the Jewish Leadership Program at the Lauder Business School in Vienna, Austria, and is the producer and host of 10 seasons of *Passages* and *Messages* on CTS. Rabbi Ostriker has served on the executive committee of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, is a past chair of the Canadian Independent Film Caucus, and brings more than 40 years of media experience to KosherTube.

In its first three years of operation, KosherTube had more than 12 million video-hit screenings. Currently, the site has more than 400,000 video-hits per month. With more than 7,000 videos to browse, which means more than 5,000 hours of content, viewers are always up to date on Jewish topics of interest.

"We provide the technology for you to become a registered member and upload video," Rabbi Ostriker said. "The 'kosher' part of our name is our promise to you that everything on this site will be kosher. Anything that fits into the observant lifestyle is appropriate. Unlike on YouTube, uploaded videos will not be viewable to the public until they are watched and vetted by our team."

Rabbi Ostriker said the goal is to make KosherTube "a vast and wonderful source of video on all things kosher: the spiritual and the practical, and fun stuff, too. We have an archive of hundreds of hours of materials that we developed over many years."

For Jews who are not very familiar with Judaism and its customs, KosherTube is a great stepping stone, he said. "It teaches the basics – how to make a seder or put on tfillin – and gets your feet wet. Hopefully you will get comfortable with the water. No one wants to be embarrassed with their lack of knowledge. KosherTube plays a big role in making people comfortable with learning about Judaism."

Rabbi David Ostriker

He said the website's target audience is "anyone interested in Yiddishkeit or anyone who wants to enjoy a kosher lifestyle – through travel, entertainment or recreation." While the site can even appeal to non-Jews, he said two-thirds of the regular viewers are observant Jews.

Rabbis and scholars from Canada, the United States, Israel and other countries are recorded weekly and uploaded to KosherTube. The team also searches the Internet for new and unique videos to embed on their site – "kosher videos that shed light on our world."

Users of KosherTube benefit from the site's content, Rabbi Ostriker said. From bringing naches to family members by sending video greetings to organizing chesed projects with other users around the world, the value is endless.

Those who sign up can attend any of the online video classes available at KosherTube, including Judaism 101. "As long as it's kosher, the only limit to the content on KosherTube is our users' imagination and ambition. Users can post weekly *vorts* [words] on the *parshah*; host video *shiurim* [lessons], which other users can subscribe to, and post questions, receive responses and participate in any number of discussions on any number of topics."

Rabbi Ostriker said users can even share "life's joys and passages: announce births, engagements, weddings and bereavement; send video 'mazal tovs' and prayers for a refuah shleimah [recovery from illness]; pay video tribute to loved ones who have passed on, but whose influence continues to be felt, and create a group to offer Shabbos hospitality."

As KosherTube grows and moves beyond a website "to a place in cyberspace that fosters genuine community, users will control much of the content," Rabbi Ostriker said. "There is no limit to what KosherTube users can do."

Visit www.koshertube.com to browse videos and register for free.

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PARTY: At the Hockey Hall of Fame 7:30pm with Darryl Sittler and friends
On the Slopes for Candy
Thursday, January 31, 2013
SKI: Alpine Ski Club, Collingwood

Winnipeg United Church rejects boycott proposal

'Life is not just about politics, it's about friendship'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

A Winnipeg United Church congregation is attempting to undo the "damage" caused by the church's national General Council by publicly opposing the council's call for an economic boycott of products from Israeli settlements.

In a letter sent to the church's national office and released publicly, the Westminster United Church criticized the General Council's call for a boycott last summer. Such a step would be divisive, "with the potential to undermine interfaith conversations locally and nationally," the letter asserts.

"We do not support the economic boycott… The strategy recommended in the General Council statement has had and will continue to have a deleterious effect on the good relations established between the United Church and Jewish communities in Canada and in particular in Winnipeg," the letter states.

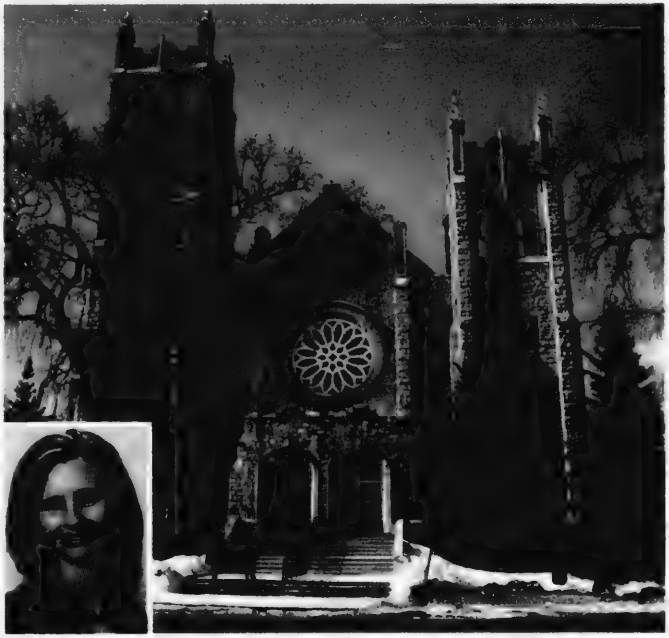
Last August, the United Church adopted several resolutions at its General Council in Ottawa that outraged supporters of Israel. Based on findings of a working group, the resolutions singled out the settlements as a principal obstacle to peace, called on Israel to suspend settlement expansion, and expressed regret for previously asking Palestinians to acknowledge Israel as a Jewish state as a precondition to peace.

The Jewish community reacted angrily, with some rabbis and other leaders saying it could spell the end of interfaith dialogue with the church.

Sherrie Steiner, vice-chair of the board of the Westminster United Church, said she "heard from Jewish people in a personal and a professional capacity… Some Jewish friends said [the resolution] had an antisemitic tone."

"It was like the Mideast position was taking over the relationship," she said. It threatened to poison relations between the two communities.

At the same time, lay members of her own congregation were raising similar concerns that the local inter-community relationship was being defined by Mideast politics and resolutions adopted at the national council level.



Westminster United Church in Winnipeg. Inset: Sherrie Steiner, vice-chair of the church's board

Members of the Westminster church did not accept that it had "to be the defining statement between us. There's a complex relationship here that goes way back. Life is not just politics and economics, it's about friendship, culture and appreciating one's history," Steiner said.

The national church's statements, she continued, "didn't consider the entire region and the huge network of nations trying to eliminate one group."

Lay church members approached the board with their concerns, and the board reached out to its Jewish interlocutors. A meeting was set up in mid-November.

It was quite clear that "our Jewish colleagues were quite upset by the General Council statements. It was pretty tense around the table," Steiner said.

Afterward, church officials discussed the possibility of the relationship deteriorating. The board decided to issue its public letter, and send another one to the church's national office. Steiner wouldn't make the second letter available, but she did say it raised concerns about the process that led to adoption of the resolutions.

"History would lend itself to the interpretation that when there's a complete vetting, it's been voted down," she said.

For his part, Zane Tessler is gratified at the Westminster Church's stand. The national church's position has the potential for creating "a great divide in the relationship that's been going in the proper direction," said Tessler, chair of community relations for the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg.

"There were some tensions locally, but they've been smoothed over."

The community understood the church decision was taken at the national level and did not necessarily represent the views of local churches, he continued. The federation "did not consider ending the dialogue. We took the approach to press forward with joint dialogue… to mend the harms that could have been caused."

In addition to participating in interfaith dialogue, the Winnipeg church, which has 450 members and another 300 to 350 supporting families, hosted Names Not Numbers, a travelling educational display that told the story of people interned at Dachau. Church representatives have also participated in Holocaust memorial events and in an interfaith concert that featured choirs from the church and Congregation Shaarey Zedek that raised money for the Canadian Museum For Human Rights, currently under construction in Winnipeg, said Rev. Robert Campbell, the church's spiritual leader.

As well, the church supports projects in Neve Shalom (Oasis of Peace), a co-operative village between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem that brings together Christians, Muslims and Jews.

The General Council's resolution "seemed to take sides, and I would like us to take everybody's side, to show we're concerned for the well-being of Palestinians and Israelis both," Rev. Campbell said.

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USCJ CEO optimistic despite budget challenges

Conservative body runs cumulative deficit of over $5M

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Steven Wernick, CEO of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, says he feels "very enthusiastic and confident" about the organization's future, despite a budget deficit reported by *JTA* last week.

According to the Jan. 8 article, the USCJ, the congregational arm of the Conservative movement, ran a cumulative budget deficit of more than $5 million over the past two years, including losses of $3 million in 2012 and $2.7 million the previous year.

Rabbi Steven Wernick

Rabbi Wernick attributed the losses to three one-time expenditures: the settlement of a longstanding lawsuit related to ownership of the movement's Fuchsberg Center in Jerusalem that cost $887,000; structural reorganization resulting in a large number of severance packages, and the cost of implementing a new strategic plan.

"I was hired [in 2009] to be a change agent and develop a strategic plan, and to completely retool United Synagogue to provide value to its member congregations and to the Jewish world. That costs money," Rabbi Wernick told *The CJN*.

The reason for his confidence, he said, is that the "United Synagogue, over the last 20 years, was smart enough to create a significant reserve fund, and at this moment, we've been using it for what those funds are reserved for: a strategic turnaround and difficult times. The cash drawdown that has been used over the last two and three years has been tied directly to our strategic plan and to one extraordinary expense, a litigation judgment."

The USCJ, which has an annual operational budget of approximately $11 million, is preparing a fact sheet for congregants and will post its most recent audit online after its next board meeting Jan. 17, the rabbi said. "We want people to know the truth, and every person I've spoken to who's been involved in business knows that it costs money to do a turnaround... That's a capital investment in the future."

Rabbi Wernick told *JTA* that the organization hopes to reduce the deficit to $600,000 next year, and to balance the budget the following year.

Dues revenues from member congregations have been declining because USCJ hasn't increased dues in the past five years, Rabbi Wernick said. In July, there will be an increase of $1 per household, and there is a new fundraising arm as well.

In Toronto, three Conservative synagogues left USCJ in 2008, and Beth Tikvah Synagogue followed suit two months ago.

The organization has more than 600 member congregations (with 20 in Canada), representing a 14 per cent drop over the past decade, according to *JTA*.

"Over the last several decades, it's no secret that Conservative Judaism, numerically, has been in decline," Rabbi Wernick said.

"Most of the decline over the last decade has been fuelled by synagogues that have closed, merged, or for financial reasons can no longer afford to stay affiliated." He added that of those congregations that have left USCJ, Beth Tikvah is in the minority for leaving because they "weren't finding value in their affiliation."

Rabbi Philip Scheim

Rabbi Philip Scheim, spiritual leader of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue said his sense is that the USCJ is one of many national Jewish organizations that are struggling, along with synagogues that are facing similar challenges.

"Society is moving away from the concept of membership," he said.

"I believe that belonging to an organization like United Synagogue is reflective of individuals belonging to a shul... You're doing this because you believe in what you're supporting. You believe in the values an institution represents."

Rabbi Scheim noted the value of the USCJ's youth programs in particular. For USY members to meet with their peers from across North America at annual conventions is "very powerful," he said.

"The truth is a major congregation is not necessarily going to need the services that a small congregation in a struggling community would need," he said. "But I think it's meaningful to be part of something greater than ourselves."

Rabbi Scheim – who in 2009 was part of Hayom, a group of "rabbis who basically formed a protest group" seeking change within the USCJ – said that, more recently, "good efforts have been made," including synagogue leadership development programs.

As well, Rabbi Scheim said he's "thrilled" to be part of a large community of congregations that help each other at times of crisis and welcome each other's members when they visit.

Irving Siegel, a past president of Thornhill's Beit Rayim Synagogue and USCJ's kehilla strengthening chair for eastern Canada, said that "United Synagogue remains the voice of Conservative Judaism here in the GTA and in North America... It still has the infrastructure for the Conservative movement. There's nothing really like it within North America that represents Conservative Judaism."

"The investments we've made are working," Rabbi Wernick said. "More and more synagogues are now acting to be able to take advantage of the resources we have."

In Canada, the USCJ is "working to provide more value," including an attempt to reconnect with congregations that are former members or potential members, Rabbi Wernick said.

At a recent USCJ event in Toronto, approximately 10 synagogues were represented by more than 30 people, Siegel said. As well, a Toronto conference on "Sacred Strategies, The Journey from Functional to Visionary" is scheduled for April.

With files from JTA

Three shuls left USCJ in 2008

Continued from page 3

In 2008, Beth Tikvah – which was then paying $41,000 annually in USCJ membership dues – voted to remain part of the organization, despite a recommendation at the time by its board of governors to terminate membership.

Around the same time, three other Toronto congregations – Adath Israel Congregation, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, and Beth Tzedec Congregation – left USCJ and formed a new organization, the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues (CCCS). Beth Sholom Synagogue, which had not been affiliated with the USCJ, was the fourth co-founder.

Beth Tzedec left the CCCS in 2010, citing budgetary reasons.

The group also lost a Montreal-based congregation, but president Eric Gossin said the CCCS is still "very active," with seven congregations, and now has "quite modest" dues that are "significantly less" than what they were. Its flagship program is its Hebrew high school, he added.

Weill said that USCJ membership is "very expensive, but it [would be] worth it if we were taking advantage of everything they have to offer."

He said Beth Tikvah has not joined the CCCS, but he'd like, personally, to promote the idea among the shul's membership. "I think there's a lot of synergy that can be created."

Rabbi Howard Markose

In 2008, Beth Tikvah's constitution made it difficult for the shul to leave the USCJ, as its constitution mandated membership in the organization. The relevant clause could be changed only if 75 percent of members voted in favour of the change at two consecutive meetings, *The CJN* reported at the time.

But the constitution was amended in 2011 so that "we would only need two-thirds of 100 members voting," Weill said.

The shul held information meetings in November before putting USCJ membership to a vote. It sent the organization a letter of resignation later that month.

One hundred forty four members voted, but Weill declined to be more specific about the percentage by which the vote passed.

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in next week's
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Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Radio-Canada ombudsman has upheld two complaints of anti-Israel bias in its reporting from a Jewish advocacy group.

Pierre Tourangeau ruled that a Nov.16 *Radio-Canada.ca* report attributing the escalation of the recent Israel-Gaza conflict to the killing of Hamas' military chief did not conform to the broadcaster's standards.

HonestReporting Canada (HRC) felt the report was an unfair portrayal of Israel as the aggressor and ignored the fact the Netanyahu government was warning of a military action in response to the more than 120 rockets fired into Israel against its civilian population by Hamas from Gaza.

HRC, a pro-Israel media watchdog, filed a series of complaints with Radio-Canada related to its coverage of the most recent conflict between Israel and Gaza militants.

Tourangeau also upheld its objection to a Nov. 11 report on the broadcaster's website that was headlined "Israel Threatens the Palestinians."

Tourangeau commented: "The headline suggests that the threat proffered by the Israeli leaders was aimed not only at Hamas and the other armed groups in Gaza, as indicated in the article, but at Palestinians… The headline, being imprecise, does not respect [Radio-Canada's] norms and practices regarding accuracy."

After the complaint, the headline was changed to "Israel Threatens Hamas."

The Nov. 16 report that HRC objected to attributed Israel's targeted killing of Hamas military chief Ahmed Jabari as the event that "set off" the escalation.

"This version of events inverted the cause of the escalation, which started with the escalation of Hamas rocket fire and the targeting of an Israeli army Jeep patrol," said HRC Quebec director Michelle Whiteman.

Ahmed Jabari

Tourangeau wrote: "On the face of it, one cannot affirm, as does the Nov. 16 article, that the 'assassination of the military chief, Jabari, set things off' since he was killed in retaliation for Hamas' shelling campaign of Israel."

HRC said it's disappointed that the ombudsman didn't rule in favour of its other complaints.

These included a Nov. 23 report by Radio-Canada's Jean-François Bélanger on clashes between the Israeli army and Palestinians on the Israel-Gaza border after the ceasefire came into effect.

Bélanger reported that Palestinian farmers who wanted to return to their land were fired upon by soldiers, and "it is impossible for [the farmers] to [return], since these lands are now in a buffer zone declared by Israel."

HRC noted that IDF spokespeople and the *Associated Press* reported that the people who were shot at were among hundreds trying to storm the border with the intent of breaching it.

In his decision, Tourangeau cited a *New York Times* article by Jerusalem bureau chief Judy Rudoren who described confusion among Palestinians as to who could enter the buffer zone.

He stated that HRC wanted Radio-Canada to put more weight on the Israeli army's position that the Palestinians were attempting to enter Israel.

HRC denies this. "In reporting that these were 'farmers trying to get to their land,' Mr. Bélanger did not give a full picture of events that day, which included the fact that many were not farmers, as reported by the Associated Press and the Israeli spokesperson, but provocateurs attempting to infiltrate the border," said Whiteman.

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גידי קורן וחברים

מה יהיה

נראה שחודש לפני קיומן, הבחירות בישראל כבר הוכרעו, כי למפלגות הימין יש רוב מכריע- כמובן לא לבדן אלא בסיוע המפלגות הדתיות-חרדיות שהולכות עם כל אחד, בתנאי שידאג שהמגזר שלהן ימשיך לא לעבוד ולא לשרת בצבא. במדינות מתוקנות קוראים לזה בשמו: שוחד. הבחירות הוכרזו טרם זמנן בגלל שאי אפשר היה להסכים על תקציב המדינה, והינה הפלא ופלא- הנושא הכלכלי בכלל איננו נידון.

האסטרטגיה של הכרזה על בנייה בשטחים דוחה ומגעילה בשקיפותה- לקרוץ לתומכי הימין שנתניהו הוא "איש חזק" שלא שם על האמריקאים ובני בריתם. הוא כמובן שם עליהם הרבה כשהוא מבקש את כספם, אבל זה לא נושא לבחירות.

וכמו בכל בחירות, פוסלת ועדת הבחירות שהיא ימנית ברובה, את המפלגות הערביות, רק כדי שוב לראות את בג"ץ פוסל את הפסילה, וכיאות למדינה דמוקרטית מאפשר לערבים לבחור. לימור לבנת, שרה בממשלת ישראל מטעם הליכוד אמרה זאת בפה מלא וללא בושה במכללת תל חי: ישראל היא מדינה של היהודים שבה, ואיננה יכולה להיות מדינה של כל תושביה. כדאי שלבנת תקשיב שוב לנאום הכרזת המדינה של בן גוריון, אם כי אין לי ספק שהיא מכירה אותו בעל פה. הרבה ציניות יש כאן, ואת המילה שלום כבר לא מזכירים. היא הפכה למילת גנאי. אבל שישאר בינינו.

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Winnipeg CJA drive nears its $5.56M goal

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — With less than three months to go in its 2012-2013 campaign, Winnipeg Combined Jewish Appeal has just about equalled its 2011-2012 total of $5.4 million and is just a little more than $200,000 short of its target of $5.56 million for this year.

"We've had 300 new donors this year [an increase of 55 from last year], from whom we raised about $100,000," said Elaine Goldstine, the CJA's executive director. "And we still have about 200 donors we haven't contacted yet. I am confident that we will reach our goal and possibly surpass it."

Goldstine added that the CJA's Women's Campaign has raised a record $1.3 million so far.

"We had four additional donors in the Lion of Judah category [minimum gift $5,000], which brings our total Lion of Judah donors to 80," she said.

The ongoing yearly increases for the Winnipeg CJA campaign over the past 10 years or more reflect the growing size of the Jewish community here. It's now estimated to be more than 17,000 people – a number that should be confirmed shortly after the 2011 census figures become available – compared to the 14,765 recorded in the 2001 census.

In the early part of the decade, several hundred Jewish immigrants from Argentina and other South American countries came to Winnipeg. In recent years, most of the continuing increase has come from Israeli families relocating here.

"Many of our newcomers have become involved in the community," Goldstine said. "We have a very well-rounded campaign involving people from all walks of life."

This is the first campaign since Winnipeg abandoned the two–line card. The city's Jewish community had been the last in North America to allow CJA donors to choose how much money they wished to allocate to local needs and how much to Israel.

Goldstine said the transition has gone smoothly.

"The [Jewish] Federation [of Winnipeg's] budget and allocations committee, when it meets in the spring, will determine how much to allocate to Israel," she said.

This year's campaign is being led by one of Canada's best-known and most successful fundraisers. Gail Asper was originally supposed to chair the annual campaign last year, but the need to raise more private funding for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights intervened.

The museum was the last major project launched by her father, the late broadcasting mogul Israel Asper, who died in October 2003. Asper has continued to fundraise for the museum, which is under construction, while leading the CJA campaign.

Gail Asper

"I have always been good at multitasking," she said.

"I felt that chairing the CJA campaign would be a good way to reconnect with the community. Considering that the Asper Foundation is the largest donor and I am the foundation's president, as chair of the campaign, I can get to know better the personnel involved in the community's governance and fundraising and well as the beneficiary agencies."

Asper praised the work of the CJA.

"I am very impressed by the level of transparency and scrutiny at every level," she said. "The CJA has a crack team and is an incredibly efficient operation. It is rare to find a fundraising operation where expenses are less than 10 per cent of the funds raised."

One of her priorities as chair, Asper said, will be growing the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's Leave More Than Memories Endowment Fund, which her father helped initiate in 1989. The fund, which is administered by the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, currently has a capital base of $3 million.

"I am a huge believer in the importance of endowment funds," Asper said. "An endowment fund is a permanent source of funding that can serve as a buffer for regular donors who leave our community or pass away.

"And the best time to build on an endowment fund is when the parent organization is financially stable. This is a perfect time in our community to work on increasing the size of our endowment fund."

Harper named 'person of the year'

Compiled by CJN Staff

Representatives of the Russian-Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Russian Jewish community bestowed the corporation's 2012 "Person of the Year" Award on Prime Minister Stephen Harper earlier this month.

The small ceremony took place Jan. 7 in the prime minister's office in Ottawa.

In his presentation to Harper, Rabbi Yoseph Zaltzman, chief rabbi of Toronto's Jewish Russian Community Centre called him the "truest champion" of human rights.

"Your unwavering and principled support to our brothers and sisters in Israel – 1.3 million of whom are Russian-speaking – is a testament to both your morality and your courage. You are a shining beacon of light and clarity in this often dark and confused world," Rabbi Zaltzman said.

Others in attendance at the event included York Centre MP Mark Adler; Etobicoke Centre MP Ted Opitz; Igor Toutchinski, CEO of the Russian Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; Garry Kukuy, the company's president, and Tatiana Stepanova, president and artistic director of the Stepanova Ballet Academy and the Toronto International Ballet Theatre.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, left, and Rabbi Yoseph Zaltzman

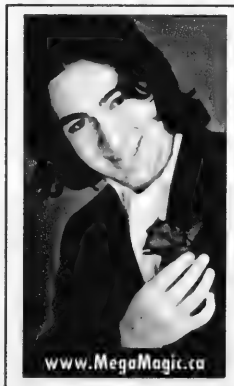
Wise 'took a genuine interest in lives of everyone she came across'

Continued from page 1

A statement from the camp said that Wise "was a selfless individual who took a genuine interest in the lives of everyone she came across. As the director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp from 1990 until her retirement in 2005, Rochelle dedicated herself to the personal growth and development of every child and staff member in her care, and to creating summer memories that would last a lifetime. With limitless energy, unwavering courage and a passion for children she was an inspiration to a generation of kids, an example to day camp directors across Toronto, and an amazing friend to those of us at Crestwood Valley."

A bereavement notice sent to Shaarei Shomayim members said that the couple "were important longtime members of our community along with their children and grandchildren. They were both selfless individuals who took a genuine interest in the lives of everyone they came across."

Please go to cjnews.com for updates
With files from JTA



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Gefilte fish, Part 2

Haymishe versus store-bought. Sweet versus pepper. How could a food like gefilte fish engender such passion? Well, considering we *are* talking about Jews and food, how could it not!

One of the most heated debates in Jewish culinary is over how to best prepare gefilte fish: sweet or peppery. According to Michael Steinlauf, who teaches Jewish studies at Gratz College in Philadelphia, how you fancy your fish can actually tell a lot about your heritage. "The gefilte-fish line," as Steinlauf puts it, "ran though eastern Poland. Jews living to the west – most of Poland, as well as Germany and the rest of western Europe – ate the sweet gefilte fish. Those to the east – Lithuania, Latvia and Russia – ate the peppery treat." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte8]**

That gefilte-fish line is nothing new to Allan Evans. I chanced upon a fiery e-mail he sent to a kosher food message board, looking for advice on finding takeout gefilte fish without sugar in New York City. "Having been raised on the subtle tart Litvak style of preparing this dish, the sweetening of this delicacy is an abomination to the palate." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte10]**

Evans would be advised to stay away from the next recipe. "My mother-in-law's Sweet Style Gefilte Fish" calls for 2/3 cup sugar, 1/2 pound ground whitefish, 1/2 pound ground pike, 1 pound of ground perch, and yet another 1/3 cup sugar for the broth. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte9]**

If you don't have time for all that, a popular time saver is to spruce up a frozen loaf of fish, which will give you "the look and taste of homemade." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte12]** But let's just say that would be less than appealing to Joe Hartman. A few years ago, the owner of Hartman's Kosher Meats in Toronto, wrote that each Friday afternoon he sells roughly 30 loaves of gefilte fish, a delicacy lost on the younger generation. "These kids don't appreciate what goes into making gefilte fish... They don't put their heart and soul into it like their parents or grandparents did. It takes lots of work, but now you can just walk into any supermarket to buy it." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte13]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

Tammy from New York seems to straddle both sides of the homemade versus store-bought debate. Tammy is the winner of the Great Gefilte Fish-off and has generously supplied her late bubbie's delicious recipe. But Tammy adds, "Making gefilte fish is, quite frankly, a pain in the ass. Even my grandmother would agree. She and I both got lazy in our old age and doctored the store-bought stuff, which turned out surprisingly well and fooled everyone." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte14]**

So if you want to cheat, shhh, the folks at Torahbytes will also give you a hand. They advise you to buy "one large jar gefilte fish; good brand, even if not on sale." The secret is to add your own beets, carrots, onions and seasonings to the fish stew. Bring it all to a boil. Turn down and simmer for 45 minutes. "No one will ever know unless you tell." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte15]**

Next time, gefilte fish – trendy at last?

Highway@rogers.com

The song of prayer

The lion is in dire straits and needs advice to extricate himself from the situation. The unfortunate fox crosses the lion's path, with no way of escape. "Tell me, Mr. Fox," the lion says, "I hear you are very clever. I need your help to solve my problem." The fox is now really on the spot.

The fox tells the lion, "It is true that I am very smart and can help you, but my wisdom is in my heart, which I left in my cave this morning in my hurry to leave. If you will permit me to scamper back home, I will gladly get my heart and then help you." A clever fox indeed.

The Ben Ish Hai (1832-1909) told this parable to introduce a story of a pious woman who was hurrying to the synagogue one day, and she was stopped by one of the town mockers. "Where are you running to?" the man asked, laughing.

"To pray in the synagogue," she answered.

"But where is your siddur?" he replied. "Shouldn't you run back home and get it?"

"My siddur is deep within me, as I pray from my heart," replied the woman. "You, Sir, may have your siddur, but you should run back home to get your heart just like the fox!"

"Can you do me a favour and get my heart for me?" mocked the man.

"I'd be happy to," the woman said, "but I don't know where you put it. Is it at home with your wife, or is it at work? Is it perhaps at sea in a freight container?

Sephardi Window

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Or might it be in London or in Paris? Only you know where it is, so you must get it yourself!"

When going to the synagogue, says the Ben Ish Hai, one's heart is most essential – even indispensable.

As I get older, I realize how important it is to serve HaShem with one's heart, as we read every day in the *Shema*.

King David sings in Psalms (100:2), "Serve God joyfully," and joy, as we know, comes from the heart.

Prayer is more meaningful when we invest feeling and emotion through singing together. One doesn't even have to understand the words in order to join in; one just has to meditate by singing, humming, or even just listening. Participation through voice in prayer with our fellow congregants is extremely powerful on a personal, as well as a communal level. When I hear someone expressing authentic emotions through song, it gives me goose bumps. At times, I feel so connected that I have tears in my eyes

We Sephardi Jews are blessed with a powerful way of increasing our happiness because our heritage includes singing during our tfillah. After all, prayerful song originates in the heart.

My voice teacher once wrote that I should remember I'm God's vessel, and He relates His message through my voice. So much truth revolves around the vibrations of the voice.

Let us remember that we are all God's vessels and that we are utterly free to express our emotions through the heartfelt song of prayer.

It's my body

We received a gift for our 10-month-old daughter: a two-CD set titled *Kids' Greatest Hits*. Buried somewhere on the first disk is *Head and Shoulders*, a classic I remember from my own childhood. I remember, as a kid, giggling while trying to point to the right body part as the song's tempo increased: "Head and shoulders, knees and toes; eyes, ears, mouth and nose."

At the end of bath time with our daughter, we sing the song, point to the right body part, take her out of the bath, and pat her dry. The song is a good transition, indicating the end of the bath and the beginning of our bedtime ritual.

When we first played the CD, we noticed that the words on this newer version have changed. "Head and shoulders, knees and toes; it's my body." A change that we initially chalked up to a variant text.

In the last few weeks, since the *Jewish Daily Forward* reported allegations of abuse by staff at the Yeshiva University High School for Boys from the late '70s to the early '90s, the variant text has come into focus.

Abuse in religious institutions is too common. In my relatively short career in education, I have worked at three organizations shaken by abuse. After the shock, come investigations and apologies, genuinely honest. Then, committed and caring leaders have confronted the difficult question: how can we proactively stop the abuse of power that is only magnified by the power of religious authority?

Policy is a start, but it's not enough.

Class Act

Daniel Held

Years ago, when I began to work at a summer camp in the United States, I was required to complete a criminal background check. While these checks remain an important tool, the background check only attested that I had not been arrested in that state. But before arriving at camp, I had never set foot in that state.

Coupled with policy, institutions and families must begin a difficult culture change.

When I began running Shabbatonim, weekend retreats for high school students, my supervisor pulled me aside and reminded me that I was vulnerable. As a young, single teacher close in age to program participants, I needed to be extra vigilant. Throughout my work with the program, I was blessed with a male colleague who spent nights with me schmoozing with participants and checking the dorms. Partially out of fear and partially out of a sense of responsibility, I was never alone with the students. While some would argue that this distance dulls the impact of a holistic education, it drives home a moral value of safety and caring.

Similarly, a new culture of awareness and empowerment must be developed in our children. My daughter's CD is one small piece in changing the culture. From the youngest age, we – parents and educators – must teach our children what is inappropriate. We must instil in them a sense of confidence and security to raise questions, lodge complaints and report abuse.

As difficult as it will be, in my mind, I am already planning the conversation to explain to my daughter why the song's ending has changed from "eyes, ears, mouth and nose" to "it's my body."

Beni Abileah – a reminiscence

Donald Carr
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

The date 12/12/12, in addition to being regarded as "unusual," was a bad day.

My friend, Benjamin (Beni) Abileah died that day in Jerusalem, after fighting a stroke for some months.

Many Canadian Jews from Toronto to Vancouver will remember Beni as the popular and very active consul general of Israel from 1987 to 1991. He represented his country with passion and dedication. He made countless friends easily. He and his wife, Ruth, were popular hosts and guests in the community. He brought to bear, not merely his training in diplomacy, but the vast knowledge he had from the world of business, from his time in the economic division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from his roles as deputy director and then director of MASHAV, the ministry's Centre for International Co-operation.

Benjamin (Beni) Abileah

My wife, Judy, and I came to know him well, as he was a willing and important liaison between her and "the intelligence," in her work of rescuing Jews from Syria.

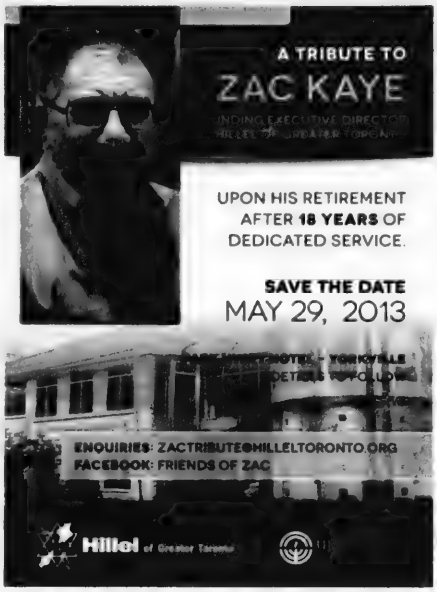
When he left Toronto, Beni took a leave of absence from the ministry, to become director general of the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem, from the time of its opening, until he saw it through its "running in" period.

There, too, was a strong connection with Toronto. The founder of that museum was the late Elie Borowski. Borowski had lived here for some time, and he had donated his magnificent collection of Near East artefacts to Bible Lands Museum of Toronto, which, in turn, placed that collection on permanent loan to the museum in Jerusalem.

After serving in the ministry for more than 34 years, in places such as Cyprus, the Philippines, Los Angeles, New York, Washington and the Republic of Georgia, Beni "retired" with the rank of ambassador in 1996.

Unlike many of his colleagues, Beni immediately went back to work as senior adviser on planning and evaluation of the same MASHAV and was also the national co-ordinator of its Regional Agricultural Program of Egypt-Israel-Jordan-Palestinian Authority. This little-known, but important initiative, inspired and supported by Denmark, established co-operation in areas such as dry land agriculture, saline water, post-harvest technology, marketing and women in agriculture. Despite predictable tensions and obstacles, substantial success has been achieved over more than a decade.

It was in his office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, working on these projects, that Beni was stricken.



Coach Susie Fishbein steps up to the plate

By Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Susie Fishbein delivers a winning game plan to inspire her readers and teach them how to become better cooks in *Kosher by Design Cooking Coach: Recipes, tips and techniques to make anyone a better cook*. The popular cookbook author offers up 120 delectable recipes from all over the world. There are 400 full-colour photos by food photographer John Uher. Fishbein generously shares the skills and secrets that have worked for her as an everyday cook with a super-busy life. This is her eighth cookbook, and her advice works for cooks of all levels, from novice to expert.

There are excellent tutorials on how to choose knives, sharpen and store them. Fishbein says, "I can make any recipe that I have ever written with a simple and basic set of 3 knives."

You'll find colour photos of different brands of food processors, blenders, mixers, immersion blenders, thermometers and Fishbein's recommendations for cutting boards and essential cookware. "When buying pots and pans, buy the best you can afford... they will last a lifetime. Don't be tempted to buy a set. I prefer open stock so I can get just the pieces I need."

Fishbein provides a detailed list of basic ingredients you should always have on hand for a well-stocked kosher kitchen, including fresh lemons, olive oil, sriracha sauce (a kind of hot sauce), rice vinegar, coconut milk, quinoa, panko and chicken bones, along with helpful tips on buying and storing spices.

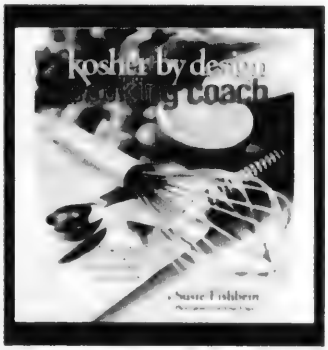
There are 10 comprehensive chapters, including appetizers, salads, soups, fish, poultry, meat, side dishes, pasta/eggs and desserts. Each chapter starts with a Game Plan to guide the reader about basic cooking techniques. You'll learn plating and garnishing techniques, how to clean and store lettuce for a salad, how to choose the best baking ingredients and much more.

I really love the Game Plan for the meat chapter, which includes a pictorial guide and demystifies the various cuts of kosher meats, explaining how to cook them properly for best results. Fishbein explains: "Different stores and butchers use different names for the same cuts of meat. This can make it very confusing. Many nice roasts come from the chuck and can be used interchangeably in recipes like pot roast or in those that sear and then braise the roasts in liquids and then cook them slowly and covered."

Fishbein's family is anti-leftovers so she created a "Playbook" to help you "reincarnate food" – cook once, eat twice! When making Helene's Turkey Taco Egg Rolls, make a double batch of filling and freeze some. Then mix the thawed turkey filling with marinara sauce and use it to stuff Portobello mushroom caps or serve over pasta. Tonight's Moroccan Chicken can be tomorrow's Moroccan Couscous, and Soy-Poached Salmon is transformed into an Asian Rice Bowl for tomorrow's lunch. Marvelous makeovers!

You'll find a wide variety of tempting recipes: among them, Roast Turkey with Maple Mustard Glaze (one of Fishbein's favourites), Yemenite Meat Soup (her husband's favourite), Sweet Potato Squash Kugel (for those on gluten-free or low-carb diets), Miso-Glazed Eggplant, Chocolate Babka Meltaway and Chocolate Peanut Butter Molten Cakes.

Cooking Coach is like going to cooking school, but in the comfort of your own kitchen! Here are some recipes to please your palate.



TURKEY SHEPHERD'S PIE WITH SWEET POTATO TOPPING

An old childhood favourite gets a makeover! The gorgeous sweet potato crust hides a healthy and delicious turkey filling, a nice change from the ground beef of its ancestors.

6 large sweet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
1/3 cup real maple syrup, NOT pancake syrup
1/2 tsp. fine sea salt
1/8 tsp. cayenne
1 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. canola oil, divided
2 lb. ground turkey
1 medium onion, peeled, cut into 1/4-inch dice
3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano

Continued on page 25

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New techniques

Continued from page 24

1/2 tsp. ground sage
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 1/2 cups chicken stock
1 1/2 tsp. cornstarch dissolved in 2 tsp. water
1 cup (6 oz.) frozen green peas
1 1/2 tbsp. dark brown sugar

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the sweet potatoes. Boil until fork-tender, about 15-20 minutes. Drain very well. Mash with the maple syrup, salt and cayenne. Set aside.

Heat 1 tbsp. canola oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the turkey in one piece, as it comes from the package. This allows for good caramelization and flavour. Once caramelized and brown, flip the turkey to sear the second side. Use a wooden spoon to break up the chunk and cook just until no longer pink in the centre, about 3 minutes – not longer, since turkey dries out easily. Transfer to a bowl, chopping more with the spoon. Set aside.

Add remaining 2 tsp. canola oil to the pan. Heat. Add the onion and garlic. Use a wooden spoon to stir up the fond from the drippings. Cook until the onion caramelizes, about 6-7 minutes. Add the oregano, sage and black pepper. Cook for 3 minutes longer until the spices are fragrant. Add the turkey to the pan. Add the stock and dissolved cornstarch. Stir well to distribute the onions. Bring to a simmer. Cook until slightly thickened. Add the peas and cook until they are shiny, 3 minutes. Transfer to a 9x13-inch oven-to-table casserole dish. Spread the sweet potato in an even layer over the turkey.

Preheat oven to broil. Sprinkle the top of the sweet potatoes with the brown sugar. Place the dish 3-4 inches from the heating element and broil for 5-6 minutes until the brown sugar starts to caramelize. Serve hot. Yield: 12 servings.

KALE CHIPS

Fishbein writes, "I remember from my pregnancy days that kale is one of the healthiest foods around. After a few misses with recipe ideas, this one was a pleasant surprise for my kids. If you start with bone-dry kale, you will end up with a crispy, potato chip-like result that is surprisingly addictive. My kids were snacking on them right off the cookie sheet – the first batch never even made it to the dinner table. If you have leftovers, which I doubt, you can re-crisp them, uncovered, the next day in the oven.

olive oil-flavoured cooking spray
1 large bunch curly kale, thick ribs removed and discarded, washed, dried very well
3 tbsp. olive oil
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/8 tsp. smoked paprika
1/8 tsp. ground white pepper
fine sea salt

Preheat oven to 375. Cover a jelly roll pan with aluminum foil and spray with nonstick cooking spray. Place the pan into the oven as it preheats.

Roughly cut the kale into large pieces. Place the dried kale into a large bowl. If the kale is wet, it will steam rather than crisp in the oven. Drizzle on the olive oil and, using your hands, toss to coat the leaves well. Sprinkle on the garlic powder, smoked paprika and white pepper. Toss well.

Carefully remove the hot pan from the oven once it is fully heated. Place the kale onto the pan. It is okay if some overlap slightly. Spray the tops with one more sweep of nonstick olive oil cooking spray.

Roast, uncovered, for about 10-12 minutes until the kale is deeper in colour, crisp, and a little brittle. Go by colour more than by time, so keep checking. Remove individual leaves as they are done. Don't overcook or the leaves will taste burnt. Immediately sprinkle with a batch of fine sea salt. Yield: 4 servings.

CAJUN QUINOA

I like the Ancient Harvest brand of quinoa because it is pre-washed. If you can't find that, just rinse the quinoa well in a fine-mesh strainer to remove the soapy coating. I have a small, 6-cup bundt pan that works nicely with this recipe. I spray it heavily with nonstick cooking spray and then pack in the quinoa once it has cooked. To unmould, I just hold a plate over the top and invert. You can also do this in individual bundt pans or silicone moulds.

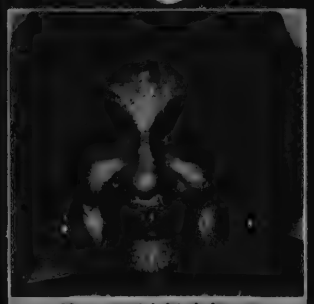
1 cup red quinoa
1 cup quinoa
4 cups chicken or vegetable stock
1 tbsp. canola oil
1 small red onion, cut into 1/2-inch dice
neck of 1 small butternut squash, peeled, cut lengthwise, cut into 1/4-inch dice (1-1/2 cups)
3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. dried thyme
1 tbsp. Cajun seasoning blend
1/4 tsp. fine sea salt
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
2 plum tomatoes, seeded, cut into 1/4-inch dice
2 scallions, roots trimmed, sliced thinly or diagonal

Place the red and plain quinoa into a medium pot. Add the stock. Bring to a boil over high heat. Turn the heat down and simmer for 15-18 minutes, until all the water is absorbed.

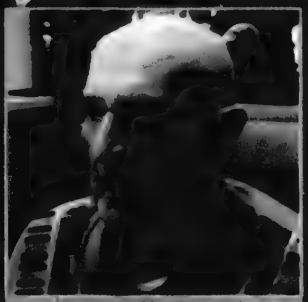
Heat the canola oil in a large (12-14-inch) skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, squash, garlic and thyme. Sauté until the vegetables are shiny and soft, about 6-8 minutes. Add the Cajun seasoning, salt, pepper, tomatoes and scallions. Sauté for 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir the quinoa into the vegetables. Toss to combine. Transfer to serving dish or mould as per headnote. Yield: 8 servings.

Norene Gilletz is an author of kosher cookbooks, a culinary consultant, cooking instructor and food editor.

Mazel Tov מזל טוב



Happy 100th birthday to Rose Wexler. With all our love, Marlene, Allan, Elyse, Melanie, Jason and Marlene, Ora and Adam and your great-grandchildren.



Happy and healthy 97th birthday to Ralph Etigson! You are our inspiration! Love, your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren!

Mazel tov to Adam & Ariela on your engagement. With much love, the Sweet and Shvartsman family.

I want to wish my wife, Dr. Sandra Zichermann-Haber, mazel tov on successfully defending her doctorate in sociology at the University of Toronto. We love you!

Michelle Kahn & Brian Klein are thrilled to announce the marriage of their son Greg to Olivia BenAvidan on Dec.4.

Welcome, Liam Shooter! Philip & Tracy share their joy with Mala, Molly, Paige, A.J., Gail, Allen, Frances, Michael, Bubbie Regina and the whole family.

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Deadline reminder: Jan. 21 is the deadline for Jan. 31 and Jan. 28 is the deadline for Feb. 7. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnew-cjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 17

VILLAGE OF IDIOTS

Holy Blossom Temple Stagecraft Company presents *Village of Idiots*, Jan. 17 and 19, 7:30 p.m. and Jan. 20, 2 p.m. at Holy Blossom, 1950 Bathurst St. For tickets, 416-789-3291, ext. 511.

Saturday, Jan. 19

TU B'SHVAT

Families from Beth David Synagogue and the Lodzer Centre prepare for Tu b'Shvat by making bird feeders, followed by services and a meal, 4:45 p.m. at Beth David. Pre-register at www.bethdavid.com or **Zack Portman**, 416-633-5500.

TORAH CLASS

Lionel Sharpe leads this week's Torah class at Beth Tikvah.

Sunday, Jan. 20

MOVIE MATINÉE SOCIAL

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom presents a movie matinée social, 2 p.m. 416-633-3838.

TU B'SHVAT

PJ Library celebrates Tu b'Shvat, 3:30-5 p.m., Shalom Centre, 361 Connie Cres., Thornhill. Free but pre-registration required at www.pjlibrary905.ca.

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Shaar Shalom Youth hold a Tu b'Shvat seder. Call 905-889-4975 to register.

GUARDING THE BORDER

Arne Kislenko discusses "Guarding the Border: The Dilemmas and Realities of Law Enforcement and Intelligence in Canada's Immigration System," 7:30 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue.

TRANSLATION CELEBRATION

A gala dinner and siyum will be held to celebrate the completion of an English translation of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov's *Likutey Moharan*, Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. For tickets, **Howard Oliver**, 905-709-8582 or holiver@whatifwhatnext.com.

Monday, Jan. 21

CHINA INFO NIGHT

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein discusses a China Jewish Adventure Tour, June 9-23. RSVP michelle@peerlesstravel.com or 416-485-9455, ext. 26.

WOMEN, MEN AND WISDOM

Women and Wisdom bat mitzvah class taught by **Goldie Plotkin** begins at 8 p.m. Talmud class for women, taught by **Rabbi Avraham Plotkin**, starts at 8 p.m. Men and Wisdom class starts **Jan. 22**, 8 p.m. To register, 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or www.chabadmarkham.org.

Tuesday, Jan. 22

ISRAEL ELECTION CAFÉ

Political pundits and **DJ Schneeweiss**, Israel's consul general, discuss the Israeli election results, 7 p.m., Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. RSVP lbrown@cija.ca or 416-634-3065.

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

Screening of *Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work*, Beth Tikvah, 2 p.m. $5 at the door.

Continued on page 27

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center Presents
Meryl Frank
"When Being Jewish Matters: Experiences in Afghanistan, Jordan, Cambodia and Kenya"

Join FSWC in welcoming Meryl Frank, cited by the Jerusalem Post as one of the 50 Most Influential Jews in the World in 2012, and named by President Obama as United States Ambassador to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

An internationally recognized women's advocate who has worked with hundred of women worldwide, from the Maasi and basket weavers in rural Kenya, to members of Parliament in Afghanistan, and the First Ladies of the African Union, Ambassador Frank is also President of the Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress.

Date and Time: Wednesday, February 6, 2012 | 7:30pm
Where: Beth Tzedec Congregation | 1700 Bathurst Street, Toronto
Cost: Free - All Welcome! Limited space - Please RSVP
RSVP: Elena Livertovsky at elivertovsky@fswc.ca or 416.864.9735 x29

FRIENDS OF SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES

Continued from page 26

Wednesday, Jan. 23

LONGBOARDING FOR PEACE

Michael Brook discusses his program with Beit Rayim Synagogue, 7:30 p.m., VIVA Presentation Centre, 9700 Bathurst St. 905-889-0276, ext. 31.

Thursday, Jan. 24

ADULT LEARNING

The Melton School of Adult Learning holds a class at Beth Emeth taught by **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**: The Book Of Jonah, 10-11 a.m., Jan. 24-Feb 28. toronto@meltonschool.org to register. Space limited.

DRAGON BOAT INFO NIGHT

One Family holds an info night about their dragon boat trip (May 6-11), 88 Yonge Blvd., 7:30 p.m. RSVP Jennifer@one familyfund.ca.

Other News

TU B'SHVAT/SHABBAT SHIRAH

Shaarei Shomayim hosts a gala concert with violinist **Moshe Hammer** Jan. 26 in honour of Shabbat Shirah. For tickets, call 416-789-3213.

City Shul holds an adult Tu b'Shvat seder Jan. 26. By preregistration only. www.cityshul.com or 647-799-3557.

Beth Emeth Sisterhood celebrates Shabbat Shirah with the Varsity Jews, brunch and performance Jan. 27. Call 416-633-3838.

Beth Tikvah, **Beth Emeth, Beth Radom** and **Beth Jacob Hamilton** synagogues host a Melava Malka Concert, Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tikvah. Havdalah, sing-along and folkdancing. Tickets $10 in advance, $15 at the door. 416-221-3433.

Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir and Band celebrates Shabbat Shirah Jan. 25, starting at 7: 15 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

A spousal bereavement group for ages 55+ runs Jan. 29 through March 5, 2-4 p.m., Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 418 or 462.

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Register for Chabad Markham's Torah Tots before Jan. 21 to receive a discount. Daycare starts September. **Goldie**, 905-886-0420, ext. 227.

Registration is now open for Temple Sinai's nursery school, 2013/2014. Call **Bibi Golberg**, 416-487-3281, or bibi@templesinai.net.

JOB READINESS PROGRAM

JVS and Kerry's Place Autism Services' Asperger's Job Readiness Program provides a workshop to develop job skills, one-on-one sessions and a placement for those between 18 and 30. Registration is open for Feb 11. 416-649-1619 or schong@jvstoronto.org.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Reena is looking for a volunteer to serve as a marketing and outreach co-ordinator. Strong marketing background and communication skills required. Health and fitness facilitators to connect with individuals with developmental disabilities also required. Call **Arlene Margolese**, 905-889-6484, ext. 2111, or amargolese@reena.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

Effective parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 10. Topics include: how to nurture self-esteem, encourage problem solving, increase communication and setting limits. Begins Jan. 21, 7-9 p.m.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. How and when to tell the children, as well, ideas and strategies to best meet your child's needs will be discussed. Jan. 24, Promenade Mall, Suite 313, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Barber, hairdresser, Jan. 31, 9:30 a.m. Tuesdays, seniors gentle fitness with personal trainer, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Membership registration now open for 2013.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Jan. 22, **Myriam Shechter** discusses "Love in Music and Other Kinds of Love," 10 a.m.; Jan. 23, comedy festival- market, entertainment and movie 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Jan. 24, **Judy Weiss** discusses "Friendships," 1:30 p.m.

Wagman Centre Entertainers are in rehearsal for their new production and looking for men who love to sing, dance and entertain. Call **J. Ross**, 416-733-0580.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Miles Nadal JCC, info/registration: 416-924-6211, ext 155, **Michael Mandel** discusses "Jewish Toronto as Reflected in the Yiddish Press 1935-1953," Jan. 31, 1:30 p.m. Register now for **Iain Scott's** Opera Appreciation series starting Jan. 22.

Association of Jewish Seniors is holding a general meeting and breakfast, Jan. 17, 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim. A consultant on aging will discuss "Financial Planning 101." RSVP to **Tammy**, 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Edithvale Seniors gentle fitness offers Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement classes on Mondays 10:30 a.m. $60. A group is forming for easy-to-learn Tai Chi Chih, Thursdays 10:30 a.m. $85 for 6 lessons. Beginner's special: 2 students $150. Call **Helen**, 416-665-9050.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trip, including *Mary Poppins*, on sale.

Health management with **Gabby Cogan**, Thursdays 1:30-2:30 p.m. starts Jan. 17. Jan. 17-Osteoporosis.

Casino Rama, Jan. 17.

Opera with **Iain Scott** runs Thursdays, Jan. 17-Feb. 21, 1-3 p.m.

The Frisco Kid is shown Jan. 21, 12:45 p.m.

Film lectures with **Kevin Courrier** start Jan.16, 1-3 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

Registration for daycare and nursery 2013-14 now open. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4351.

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Shabbat and the Holidays, with **Baruch Sienna**, Thursdays, Jan.17-March 7, 7:30-9 p.m. Co-presented with City Shul. Info: sharonis@mnjcc.org, or call ext. 154.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two documentaries for the opening of the 35th season: Jan. 20, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Al Green Theatre, *An Article of Hope* and *Cohen on the Bridge*. Guest Speaker **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Individual seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening. No advance ticket sales. Info: ext. 606. Email esthera@mnjcc.org.

Awakening the Voice, Sounding the Soul: Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Jan. 23-June 26, 7:30-9 p.m., twice monthly. $10 drop-in or $80 for the series. Info: music@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Woody Allen,** Mondays until Feb.11, 7-9 p.m.

Register now for the Shoresh Food Conference, Jan. 27. www.shoresh.ca.

Songwriting workshop with **Kobi Hass,** Thursday, Jan. 31-April 4, 7-9 p.m. Some musical knowledge and basic ability to play an instrument required. Call ext. 0 or music@mnjcc.org.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

The Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. www.srcentre.ca.

Family Israeli Folk Dance, free open house for the family, Jan. 20, 3.30-4:30 p.m. To register, call **Andrea**, ext. 3006.

Lecture on Judaism and addiction, Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. To register call ext. 3025.

Registration is now open for winter session. Visit Srcentre.ca, call 905-303-1821, ext. 3025.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

Israelis help African refugees

Viva Sarah Press
CJN Israel Bureau

A petition calling on the international community to share responsibility for resolving the African refugee crisis in Israel is currently circulating among academic, human rights and interfaith leaders across the globe.

Israeli artist Yigal Shtayim doesn't have time to dwell on whether the petition, which is endorsed by the Hebrew-University-Hadassah Genocide Prevention Program and the Israeli Association to Combat Genocide, will achieve its goal of finding "a world solution for a world problem" because he is busy organizing hot meals for migrants in Tel Aviv.

Shtayim is one of the leaders of the Soup for Levinsky group that organizes hot meals for migrants at the Tel Aviv Central Bus Station. The volunteers who make up this group recently handed out the 220,000th meal.

"We prevent starvation every day," Shtayim told *The CJN*. "Tikkun olam is more important than a peace plan. The tikkun has to come from a point of moral understanding, what is right."

The world has been quick to criticize Jerusalem's handling of the refugees, but away from the political arena, every day Israelis are proving that "repairing the world" is still possible.

Soup for Levinsky – named for Levinsky Park in south Tel Aviv where the migrants gather – is an example of what private citizens are doing to help the African refugees in Israel. Shtayim co-founded the group in January 2012. He said there are 30 regular volunteers, 250 semi-regular volunteers and thousands of one-time helpers.

Migrants sometimes eat their only meal of the day at Soup for Levinsky in Tel Aviv. *(Flash90 photo)*

"We don't just add up the people who come to the bus station at night. We also offer breakfast. We have families that are not connected to the park but to whom we drop off food. We also have a branch in Eilat," he said. "We help thousands of people every day."

Local churches in Tel Aviv – often in co-operation with the municipality – as well as other private groups also serve food to the park's residents on a regular basis.

In fact, there's an ever-growing list of non-profit organizations helping the asylum seekers with social services and humanitarian aid. There are also groups that represent their needs before the courts, including the African Refugee Development Center (ARDC), ASAF, Bnai Darfur, Hotline for Migrant Workers, Mesila, and Physicians for Human Rights.

And while Tel Aviv is a hub for the refugees, the African asylum seekers can be found throughout Israel. The young ones are being given free education and often full board as well.

There are 17 African refugee boys currently living and studying at the Dr. Israel Goldstein Youth Village. The youth village was set up to give new immigrant teens and socially disadvantaged Israeli-born youth, "a safe, nurturing educational community in which to live and learn – and to reach their potential."

Three years ago, director Pini Cohen heard about a group of 19 refugees needing a place to live and learn. That first group flourished at the village and opened the door for the current 17 Eritrean students.

"All of them start off at a detention camp. They need a chance to have a life," Judy Segal, director of development of the village, told *The CJN*. "Director Pini Cohen wants to teach our children the moral value of helping others. He said, 'I'm going to do everything I can for these children so our children will see how important it is to help.' The village really does save children, and I'm very proud we've undertaken this project."

Segal said the Eritreans are provided with housing, clothing and food. In addition to teaching them Hebrew, math and English, the African students are taught a vocation "so that they'll be able to work."

While none has served in the Israel Defence Forces yet, Segal said it is a goal of many of the graduates. "They say they want to give to Israel the way Israel has given to them," she noted.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Skazinetsky, Yevgenia	Dec. 27/12	3 Goldfinch Court
Pozner, Margaret	Dec. 29/12	62 Clarinda Dr.
Roth, Katalin	Dec. 30/12	Private
Robinson, Malcolm	Dec. 30/12	44 William St. E.
Taylor, Paul Lynden	Dec. 30/12	90 Francine Dr.
Wajstraub, Sabina Zlata	Dec. 31/12	15 Prince Charles Dr.
Glaser, Harry	Dec. 31/12	
Greenberg, Sam	Dec. 31/12	5035 Bathurst St.
Yanover, Khelya	Dec. 31/12	15 Elmbank Rd.
Cooper, Lillian	Dec. 31/12	Private
Weinstein, Goldie	Jan. 1/13	1131 Steeles Ave. W.
Federbusch, Cyla	Jan. 2/13	4415 Bathurst St.
Korman, Fred	Jan. 2/13	4 Daystrom Dr.
Salve, Rose	Jan. 3/13	718 Sheppard Ave. W.

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Lois Michaels	Dec12/12	31 Kentland Cresent
Matthew Shuster	Dec 28/12	36 Greenland Road
Mottle Feldman	Dec 29/12	97 Allingham Gardens
Sylvia Parker	Dec 31/12	3560 Bathurst Street
Rose Potter	Dec 30/12	25 Cynthia Crescent
Nathan Kornblum	Dec 31/12	7 Josephine Road
Samuel Orenstein	Dec 29/12	77 Avenue Road
Irwin Riven	Dec 31/12	55 Skymark Drive
Freda Nathanson	Dec 31/12	3560 Bathurst Street
Jack Culiner	Jan 2/13	1 Benvenuto Place
Ruth Mulstein	Jan 3/13	10 Torresdale Avenue
Lois Michaels	Dec 12/12	51 Kentland Crescent

Archaeological discovery sheds light on biblical mystery

Aryeh Savir
Tazpit News Agency

Recent archeological findings in the West Bank shed light on the incompletely recounted biblical story of the destruction of Shiloh, the ancient capital of Israel.

An uncovered broken clay pitcher lying in a layer of reddish ashes complete the story of the devastation of Shiloh where the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, was located during the period of the Judges, and essentially served as Israel's capital and in the 13th century BCE during the First Israelite commonwealth.

The findings were discovered during a massive dig of Tel Shiloh, the site of ancient Shiloh, in which some 1,000 youth volunteers from across Israel took part, site director Avital Selah told Tazpit News Agency.

Similar findings were discovered some 30 years ago, including leftovers of food, which were also dated to 1050 BCE, but the newly discovered layer of ashes completes the story regarding the story of the destruction of the ancient Israelite capital.

Shiloh served as the spiritual centre of Israel for 369 years until its destruction.

The Bible does not say how it was destroyed, but the book of Samuel tells of a battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, during which the Philistines prevailed, and during which the Holy Ark was captured. After hearing the news of the defeat from a messenger, Eli the High Priest, the leader of his time who lost his two sons in the battle, fell down and died. This is all the account in Samuel says. It's known that Shiloh was destroyed shortly thereafter. It's also known from the book of Jeremiah that Shiloh was destroyed by the Philistines, and these new findings help explain how it happened.

Tel Shiloh *(photo courtesy of Tel Shiloh archaeological site)*

After the battle, which took place at Even Haezel, near modern-day Rosh Ha'ayin, the Philistines moved on to destroy Shiloh, with the objective of obliterating the capital. The ashes found attest to a devastating fire the occurred on the site. The dating of the clay pitcher, 1050 BCE, correlates with the dating of the events depicted in book of Samuel.

Embassy rep explains Israel's electoral system

Sammy Hudes
Special to The CJN

OTTAWA — With Israel gearing up to elect its next Knesset on Jan. 22, it's important for young supporters of Israel to understand the country's democratic process, the Israeli embassy's deputy head of mission Eliaz Luf said at a Jan. 8 discussion at Carleton University.

Luf spoke to roughly 20 students, mostly political science or journalism majors, as part of an informal lecture co-organized by the embassy and Ottawa's citywide Israel Awareness Committee (IAC).

The lecture covered the basics of Israel's electoral system, as well as Israel's political history dating back to its first legislative election and a survey of the parties expected to win seats in the upcoming Knesset.

One key point of discussion was the vast differences between the electoral systems in Israel and Canada, which Luf said makes it difficult for many students to understand Israeli politics.

"The systems are very different, and if people are interested in Israel and want to understand [its politics] a little bit better, they should actually know about this system," Luf said.

He explained how, unlike Canada's first-past-the-post system, Israel uses proportional representation, in which citizens vote for a party rather than a candidate, and it also lacks individual districts known as ridings.

"Even Canadian MPs that I was talking to, people that are really into politics, find it very hard to understand how [the Israeli electoral system] works," Luf said. "They keep asking me if [Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu] is going to get a majority. I'm sure [Netanyahu] wouldn't mind to have a majority, but it's not going to happen for him or for anybody else."

The main reason majority governments are nearly impossible in Israel is due to the large number of smaller parties that are able to gain seats in Knesset, which forces larger parties to form coalitions in order to govern, Luf explained.

"Back in the 1980s, the major party, whether it was the Likud or the Ma'arach, had close to 50 seats [out of 120], so they didn't need so many partners," he said.

Currently however, Likud, the largest party in the governing coalition, has just 28 seats.

"They don't even have 50 per cent of their own coalition," Luf said. "It's very hard to rule that way and it gives the smaller parties a much stronger position."

Luf called instability "the sickness of our system," noting that the average Knesset seems to last just 2-1/2 to three years, although the current one nearly made it to the intended four years.

Numerous issues could have an impact on the make-up of the 19th Knesset, including international pressure to negotiate with the Palestinians, settlements and security concerns, and what Luf describes as the need to replace the former Tal law, which spells out clear rules as to whether or not haredi Jews can be drafted into the IDF.

The Israeli embassy's deputy head of mission, Eliaz Luf, teaches the basics of Israel's electoral system.
(Sammy Hudes photo)

The more knowledge advocates for Israel have about these issues, the easier it is to discuss Israel with others on campus, Luf said.

"I think it's important for [students] as the messengers to explain Israel as a solid democratic [state]," he said. "Democracy is very rooted in Israel, and it's not like other countries in our region. The democracy of Israel is alive."

Josh Ragosin, a second-year political science major, said Luf's talk helped bridge the gaps in his understanding of Israel's electoral system, a topic he said he enjoys studying.

"I like the fact that Israel has a very unique electoral system," Ragosin said.

"Personally I wouldn't choose it for a country. I think it creates more problems than it's good for, in terms of instability and confusion," he said. "I guess it really depends on what you grew up with."

Lorne Geller, vice-president of Carleton's IAC branch, said he was particularly captivated by Luf's characterization of the process that takes place following the election itself, in which one party is tasked by the country's president with forming the next coalition.

"Once the election is over, it's really just starting," Geller said.

"I very much liked how Mr. Luf came and put the Israeli flair into telling us how it all goes down," he said. "[Israel's] such a small country, but a major player on an international scale. This [election] is going to get huge coverage, and there are so many parties. It's so confusing, and it's just fascinating to observe."

ENVOY CASTS A BALLOT FOR ISRAEL
Israeli Ambassador to Canada, Miriam Zivi, cast her ballot in Ottawa last week. She was one of 4,000 Israeli envoys who cast their ballots in 80 missions around the world.
OTTAWA

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Study shows breastfeeding reduces obesity risk

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

It's no secret that breastfeeding is good for babies. But it may also reduce their risk of obesity later in life.

That's according to a recent study by researchers at Mount Sinai's Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute, published Nov. 15, 2012, in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*.

Dr. Stephen Lye and his team followed children in western Australia from birth to age 14 and discovered that the length of time a baby is breastfed positively impacts the effects of the fat mass and obesity gene (FTO) in young adults. Specifically, breastfeeding can help reverse the effects of that gene variant if a child is exclusively breastfed for a three-month minimum.

The research team noted that girls required a minimum of three months breastfeeding, but boys appeared to need a longer breastfeeding period to have the full effect. They concluded that three-to-six months of exclusive breastfeeding would be the best approximation to affect the FTO gene.

Childhood obesity is a serious problem that may lead to the development of chronic diseases, which will be reflected in increased health care costs.

"This study is one of the first examples of early intervention in the fight against obesity," says Lye, associate director of the Institute in Toronto. "Rather than trying to treat the symptoms later, we're better off trying to prevent them in the first place."

Dr. Stephen Lye

There has been a startling increase in the number of Canadian children with unhealthy weights since 1978, when, according to the Childhood Obesity Foundation of Canada, only 15 per cent of kids were overweight or obese. By 2007 that number had climbed to 29 per cent. Statistics Canada says that today almost one-third of Canadian kids, an estimated 1.6 million kids between the ages of five and 17, are overweight or obese. The foundation notes that most adolescents do not outgrow this problem and many continue to gain excess weight. If current trends continue, it predicts that by 2040 up to 70 per cent of adults age 40 will be overweight or obese.

The FTA gene comes in two flavours: good and bad, Lye explains. "We all have two copies of this gene, but 20 per cent of Caucasians have two copies of the bad variant. Under these circumstances, as an adult, on average you would have three kilos of fat mass more than you might otherwise."

An estimated 70 per cent of Canadian children have at least one copy of the specific variant of the FTO gene responsible for increased BMI and obesity, and that increase can be seen as early as age six.

The first 2,000 days of life – roughly from conception to school age – a child undergoes massive development. "We're understanding that while your genetic makeup controls the overall blueprint of how that development occurs, the environment interacts with it to put children on varying paths that impact their learning, health and social functioning," Lye says.

"Our interest is in how the environment interacts with our genetic makeup, and this study shows that we can modify our genetic blueprints through positive environmental interventions."

While there are other genes associated with massive obesity, they are very rare, Lye adds. "In genetic terms, this gene variant is actually a large contributor to obesity.

"This is one intervention and one gene, but it sets a proof of principal that if we understand more about how trajectories are settled during life, we can develop interventions that enhance how children optimize their full potential."

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Adoptees share their stories

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

For many generations, most discussion of adoption was avoided. Only in recent years have people talked about it openly.

Eighteen adoptees share their moving adoption stories in *Who Am I, Really?* (General Store Publishing Inc.), a new book by Diane Koven.

An Ottawa author, Koven is a frequent contributor to the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*, the Ottawa correspondent for *The CJN* and a certified financial planner.

The book's title is the question that most adopted children ask sooner or later, she says.

In her introduction, Koven, who has two adopted children, says, "I believe from what I've heard over and over again that no matter how warm and loving the adoptive family is, it can't completely take the place of a birth family in a person's heart and mind."

She adds that it was a great personal relief for her to discover that even in the stories that included happy and successful reunions, of both the biological and adopted families, "there seems to have been no damage to the adoptive family relationship."

Diane Koven is the mother of two adopted children.

The adoptees interviewed in Koven's book tell gripping stories. They are males and females from different religious backgrounds, from Canada and the United States, who have searched for their biological families or have been searched for by biological families with varying results.

Koven interviewed, among others, an Olympic champion, a nurse, a farmer, a musician, a "black market" baby and a rabbi who was brought up in a German Christian home. At the beginning of each interview, Koven tells how she came to the individual.

Koven, who has been published in two anthologies, recently appeared at a sneak preview reading of her book in Ottawa.

The Toronto launch of *Who Am I, Really?* takes place on Feb. 28 at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. at 8 p.m.

The launch is jointly sponsored by Canadian Young Judaea Alumni and Camp Kadimah. Proceeds from the event will go toward a scholarship to help a child attend Camp Kadimah in Nova Scotia.

Koven's son, Jeremy, an alumnus of Camp Kadimah, will join his mother at the launch in Toronto to share his story.

Koven told *The CJN*, "I had a tremendous response to my book in Ottawa, and I have already had to reorder more books. Even people without a direct connection to adoption find the stories compelling."

Most of the people Koven interviewed for her book and many others she spoke to told her that on hearing the circumstances under which they were adopted, they were grateful.

"Almost everyone who participated and shared their stories told me that by doing so, it was a rewarding and cathartic experience for them," she says.

Koven says she has always had an interest in the topic of nature versus nurture. "Adoption brings this topic to the forefront," she notes.

To register for the book launch in Toronto, contact josefa@judaea.ca. To buy the book, visit whoamireally.ca.

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Jordanian king tries to restart peace talks

The Times of Israel

Jordan's king warned Monday that the failure to revive peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians was adding to regional tensions.

A statement from the royal palace said King Abdullah II told a delegation from the Washington-based American Israel Public Affairs Committee that regional changes tied to the Arab Spring should "drive" the Israeli government to "embrace peace."

In his talks Monday with the pro-Israel group, the king also called on Israel to stop measures that he said hinder peace efforts, including West Bank settlement construction.

Abdullah urged Israel, the Palestinians and the United States to resume peacemaking efforts. He called for direct talks based on a two-state solution, which envisions the establishment of a Palestinian state.

He said it remained the "only formula" to end the 65-year old conflict.

On Sunday, Abdullah said he would host Israeli and Palestinian peace delegates next month in hopes of getting negotiations back on track, Israel Radio reported, quoting the London-based *Al-Hayat* newspaper.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with King Abdullah of Jordan during a peace summit in Washington, D.C., in 2010. ***(Israel Sun photo)***

In a separate interview with the French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the Jordanian monarch said that with U.S. President Barack Obama's inauguration coming up on Jan. 21, and the Israeli elections the following day, he saw a "new opportunity to reach an agreement that we cannot afford to miss."

He referred to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the "main cause of instability in the Middle East" and emphasized that its solution was a priority for Jordan.

Also on Sunday, the Israeli daily *Yediot Achronot* reported that the European Union was formulating a new Israeli-Palestinian peace plan to be presented in March.

According to the paper, the goal of the EU plan was to bring about the establishment of an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, with its capital in east Jerusalem. The report said the EU intended to set a clear timetable for negotiations between the two sides in 2013.

Israeli sources said the EU would like to use the plan as the basis for a regional discussion, which would include the participation of Egypt, Jordan and the Gulf states. Such a move would force Israel to join a pan-Middle East conference or risk being seen as an obstacle to peace, the report said.

"The Europeans cannot force an agreement on us, but they certainly have the ability to embarrass us," a senior Israeli diplomat was quoted as saying. "They are formulating a policy of parameters that will set forth the principles of a future peace agreement, and they will put it on the table."

TimesofIsrael.com

Hungarian Jews speak up for Roma

JTA

BUDAPEST — The umbrella organization representing Hungarian Jews condemned a leading politician's anti-Roma diatribe.

Zsolt Bayer, a founding member of Hungary's ruling Fidesz party, has drawn fire for a newspaper column in which he likened the country's Roma minority to animals.

"Most Gypsies are not suitable for cohabitation," Bayer wrote in the Jan. 5 edition of *Magyar Hirlap*. "They are not suitable for being among people. Most are animals, and behave like animals. They shouldn't be tolerated or understood, but stamped out. Animals should not exist. In no way."

Bayer in the past has referred to Jews "as stinking excrement called something like Cohen," according to the World Jewish Congress.

"Each and every statement that stigmatizes a group of people by their origin and ranks them as animals is against God's commandments and the norms of civilized societies," the Federation of Jewish Communities in Hungary (Mazsihisz) said in a statement that called on all Hungarians to speak out against such manifestations of racism.

Justice Minister Tibor Navracsics strongly condemned the article and said Fidesz had no room for anyone "who labels a group of people as animals."

Opposition parties urged Fidesz to expel Bayer.

Fidesz spokesperson Gabriella Selmeczi said at a news conference on Jan. 8 that the party would not take a position on the basis of an opinion piece.

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UJA Federation

Netanyahu said to be eyeing deal with centre-left

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu prefers to form a coalition with the centre-left parties rather than the haredi and hard-right parties, Likud sources said in a *Ma'ariv* report published on Monday.

Netanyahu's Likud-Beytenu list of candidates is expected to cruise to an easy victory in the Jan. 22 election, and most Israeli pundits have assumed the right-wing slate will seek to form a coalition with other right-leaning parties such as Jewish Home and Shas.

Benjamin Netanyahu

But an unnamed Likud source was quoted in *Ma'ariv* saying Netanyahu will actually turn to parties on the centre and left of the political spectrum to create a new government, assuming Likud-Beiteinu garners at least 38 seats.

The source said the move would be designed to help the new government pass a budget, a process that Likud fears could get bogged down if the coalition is beholden to religious parties.

"Netanyahu will prefer to give up the ultra-Orthodox parties, mostly because of the economic policies he will need to bring in, that will include extremely harsh cutbacks," a Likud source said. "With the ultra-Orthodox he would not be able to reach an agreement."

On Saturday, senior Likud minister Moshe Ya'alon said the new government would look to be as wide as possible, opening the door for Likud to partner with rivals from the other side of the aisle.

While Labor party chief Shelly Yachimovich has committed to not join Netanyahu, Tzipi Livni, head of the fledgling Hatnua party, has said she would be open to joining a Netanyahu-led government, provided the nationalist party Jewish Home was not given a hand to determine policy.

Yair Lapid, head of the new Yesh Atid party, has also not ruled out the possibility of joining Netanyahu.

Even the Kadima party, led by Shaul Mofaz, could be a coalition partner, if that party wins enough votes to cross the threshold, the sources said. Kadima, which briefly joined Netanyahu last year to create one of the largest national unity governments ever, stormed out of the government coalition with Likud in a dispute over universal national service.

"It is 99 per cent certain Yair, Tzipi, and Mofaz are [on Netanyahu's list]," the source said.

Only after exploring those options would Netanyahu approach either the haredi or the national religious Jewish Home party.

Current polls show Likud-Beiteinu taking anywhere from 35 to 38 seats, with Hatnua and Yesh Atid hovering around nine to 11 Knesset spots each. Jewish Home is expected to be the third-largest party, with 11 to 13 seats, behind Labor, which is polling at 16 to 18 seats.

The haredi Shas party, expected to get nine to 11 seats and considered by some a natural coalition partner for the Likud, has a keen interest in averting budget cuts that would sorely strain the haredi community, which is disproportionately dependent on state help.

Shas has publicly called on Netanyahu to hold coalition talks to close a deal before the nation goes to the ballot box. However, Likud has steadfastly refused to open negotiations before the elections.

TimesofIsrael.com

Likud-Beiteinu maintains lead in pre-election polls

JTA

Three Israeli election polls predicted victory by a comfortable margin for Israel's Likud-Beiteinu party in the country's general elections on Jan. 22.

A survey published in *Ma'ariv* has the party's list led by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu clinching 38 seats, followed by Shelly Yachimovich's Labor with 16 seats and Naftali Bennett's nationalist Jewish Home party with 13.

Shelly Yachimovich

Last month, Netanyahu joined his Likud party to Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman's Yisrael Beiteinu party to unite in a right-wing list for this election.

The Sephardi haredi Shas party received 12 seats in the poll; the secularist Yesh Atid party, led by Yair Lapid, garnered eight seats and Tzippi Livni's Hatnua party got seven. The poll was based on replies made last week by 1,000 voters.

In the poll, the centre-right bloc had 52 seats, not including Shas, which many view as a rightist movement though it has joined both left-wing and right-wing coalitions. The centre-left bloc had 39 seats including the party of Lapid, who, unlike Yachimovich and Livni, has not excluded the possibility of joining a Likud-led coalition.

The three Arab parties got a combined electoral strength of 10 seats. Arab parties, while not seen as part of the centre-left bloc, have supported centre-left governments from outside the government.

A poll published in *Yedioth Achronot* based on the replies of 1,000 respondents and conducted by the Dahaf polling company predicted 33 seats for Likud-Beiteinu; 18 seats for Labor; 14 seats for Jewish Home; 11 seats for Yesh Atid and 10 seats for Shas. In the Dahaf poll, the centre-right bloc has 49 seats compared to the centre-left's 45 seats.

A Smith Research poll published by the *Jerusalem Post* has Likud Beiteinu leading with 34 seats; Labor with 18 seats; Jewish home with 14; Yesh Atid and Shas with 10 seats each and Livni's party with eight.

The poll surveyed 870 people representing a statistical sample of the adult population and had an error margin of 3.3 percentage points, compared to 4.5 points in the two other polls.

Kadima clinched two seats in all three polls. It received 28 seats in the 2009 elections.

Israel Briefs

Shas leader suffers stroke

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, spiritual leader of the haredi Shas party, was discharged from the hospital a day after being admitted for a minor stroke. Yosef, 92, left Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Center in Jerusalem on Sunday morning. He was ordered to rest for several days. It had been reported that he would remain in the hospital for a few days for observation. Rabbi Yosef, a former chief Sephardi rabbi of Israel, reportedly felt numbness in his hand Saturday morning but wouldn't call a doctor or go to hospital on Shabbat. He became ill in shul and was ordered to the hospital by a worshipper who is a doctor. He has a heart condition and had his third angioplasty in 2006. The stroke came 10 days before a national election.

Tel Aviv mob hit fails

A car exploded in northern Tel Aviv in what police believe was an attempted killing of a mob boss. At least seven people were injured in the Jan. 10 blast. It's believed a motorcycle drove by the car belonging to mobster Nissim Alperon and placed the bomb on the car. Alperon and a passenger in the car reportedly escaped before it went up in flames. The windows of an empty bus driving beside the car shattered. It was reportedly the eighth attempt on Alperon's life in 12 years.

Election ad pulled

The haredi Shas party pulled an election ad that stereotypes immigrants from the former Soviet Union and the conversion process after requests for its ban. Shas shelved the ad on the urging of Elyakim Rubinstein, chairman of the Central Election Committee. He received requests to ban the ad from the Labor party and Jerusalem-based ITIM, which helps Israelis seek conversions, because of its racist overtones. In the ad, a couple is about to get married. The bride is a blonde, stereotypical Russian woman, and the groom is a meek, Sephardi-looking man. A fax machine is set up under the chupah, which the bride says is a gift from Beiteinu, a reference to the Yisrael Beiteinu party. The groom is surprised to realize the bride isn't Jewish, but then a conversion certificate is faxed to her under the chupah from a fictitious Yisrael Beiteinu dial-in service.

Files from JTA

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Not everyone dislikes the snow in Israel. Hundreds of Ethiopian immigrants living in Jewish Agency absorption centres in Safed experienced snow for the first time.
(Jewish Agency photo)

Sea of Galilee rises as rain, snow pound Israel

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

The relentless heavy rain that poured down on Israel last week added 69 centimetres to the level of the Sea of Galilee — including a rise of 14 centimetres in one 24-hour period alone, the Israel Water Authority said.

Amir Givati, director of surface water at the Water Authority's hydrological service, told *The Times of Israel* that the rainstorm has added an estimated 100 million cubic metres of water to the lake.

The Sea of Galilee, also known as the Kinneret, is Israel's largest source of fresh water.

Though the rains abate by late last week, Givati said the lake would continue to rise, as melting snow from the north fed into it.

Givati estimated Jan. 10 that the Sea of Galilee would take in millions more tons of water, raising it by dozens of centimetres over the next several days.

Parts of the Golan Heights and the Galilee received more than a metre of snow as Israel's heaviest winter storm in decades blew through.

On Jan. 9, the lake's level went up by 16 centimetres.

The enormous amount represents about one-third of the average for an entire year, Givati said, and added that annual winter rain adds about 320 million cubic metres of water to the lake, pushing up the level by around 1.5 metres.

Despite the bountiful rain so far this winter, the Sea of Galilee's level was still 2.4 metres below the high-water mark – 209 metres below sea level – the point when Degania Dam is opened to allow increased water flow into the Jordan River and prevent the lake from flooding the city of Tiberias and other towns along its coast.

Last month, the water level rose by its highest amount for the month of December since 1994.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem remained paralyzed last week as the largest snowfall in 20 years closed roads, trains and buses and schools.

At least 15 centimetres of snow reportedly fell in the centre of Jerusalem, and more fell in the surrounding areas.

Route 1, the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway, was closed for the second time last Thursday morning, after being closed the previous evening for several hours. Route 443 to Jerusalem was also closed for part of the morning on Jan. 11.

Power outages were reported in areas in Jerusalem, most due to trees falling on the power lines. Electric company workers said they were having trouble reaching the problem areas due to road closures.

Jerusalem schools were closed due to the bad driving conditions, as were the city's courts.

Schools also were closed in Dimona and other southern municipalities and in Safed and municipalities in northern Israel due to snow and flooding.

Timesofisrael.com, with files from JTA

Will U.S. Republicans let Orthodox Jew Jacob Lew become President Barack Obama's treasury secretary?
Read Ron Kampeas' analysis on our website, cjnews.com.

Who gets the house on separation; short leash for pet peeve

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 31 years

Question: My spouse is not Canadian. She still has no status in this country, but I bought a house anyway. Does it automatically become hers too? What happens if we separate? Who would stay in the house?

Answer: The fact that your spouse is not Canadian and has no status is completely irrelevant. She has the same rights under Ontario's Family Law Act as if she were born here.

Let's assume that this was your only asset and you had no debts. Let's also assume that she had no net worth of her own. Once the two of you are married, the equity in the house in which you both resided, even if solely registered in your name, could be divided between you on a 50/50 basis, so long as you both continued to reside in that home until the day you separated.

Then again, a Court may not grant a court order to divide the equity on a 50/50 basis if you lived together for less than five years, particularly if you lived together for a short time, like under one year. Moreover, if your spouse's net worth equalled the same or more than the value of your home combined with the net worth of your other property, then there would be no payment to her whatsoever.

Say, for instance, that when you separated the equity in your home in which you both resided equalled $500,000, but her own net worth totalled $540,000. Well, even though you both lived in the same home registered in your name, her net worth actually exceeded yours by $40,000. She therefore owes you $20,000 to equalize your respective net-worth positions.

The solution appears to be a marriage contract in which she agrees not to make any claims on your house if you separate. But how do you get her out of your house? The Family Law Act makes it clear that, in the absence of violent behaviour, a spouse has an absolute right of possession; i.e. the right to stay in the matrimonial home. A spouse cannot even waive that right in a marriage contract. And if you put the house into someone else's name, you face capital gains tax consequences since only the person living in the house can profit from its sale tax-free under the Income Tax Act.

The only possible solution is for both spouses to consent to a court order by which she must leave in the event of a separation. The Family Law Act appears to prohibit waiving rights to possession only in marriage contracts, not in court orders.

Short Leash for Pet Peeve

Pet lovers treat their pets much like their children. They love them, dote on them, feed them, in some instances bathe and clothe them, even educate them — though obedience classes are more common, and lest costly, than a Harvard education.

Most people who separate or divorce are able to amicably resolve who gets the pets. I once witnessed a case (true story) in which they were unable to do so.

The two parties sat on opposite sides of the courtroom. Each was represented by counsel sporting thick legal briefs worthy of any custody battle. The object of their dispute? A single, solitary — but clearly beloved — cat.

The Judge entered the courtroom in full robes and regalia. However, after the formalities had been dispensed with and he'd learned the exact nature of the case over which he was about to preside, his regal bearing and patience quickly evaporated. "Everybody out of my courtroom!" he barked. "Just get out!"

Obviously, he was either (a) not a cat lover, (b) not sympathetic to an already-overcrowded court system taking on another case of dubious merit, or (c) both of the foregoing.

The moral: better to agree on who gives Felix his kibble than to quibble over his custody.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzlegal.com*** *Visit www.freamychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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Canada, Israel discuss new tax treaty

Compiled by CJN Staff

JERUSALEM — Canada and Israel are considering a new treaty for the avoidance of double taxation between the two countries, Israel's Ministry of Finance stated recently.

During their visit to Canada late in 2012, Deputy Minister of Finance Rabbi Yitzhak Cohen and Director of the Israel Tax Authority Doron Arbeli promoted a new treaty. The two men met with senior staffers at the offices of Finance Canada with the goal of promoting economic relations between the two countries, along with co-operation between Finance Canada and Israel's Ministry of Finance, Israel's finance ministry stated in a news release.

The new treaty would set low tax withholding rates and encourage investments in Israel by Canadian residents and investments in Canada by Israeli residents. In addition, the treaty will solve problems of dual taxation that were not resolved in the existing treaty.

The existing tax treaty between the countries, which was signed in 1976, no longer meets the current needs, in light of economic changes and tax changes that have taken place in the countries over the years, the Israeli finance ministry said.

The deputy minister of finance and the director of the Israel Tax Authority's visit was preceded by a visit from a delegation headed by Talia Dolan-Gadish, legal adviser to the State Revenues Department, which discussed the clauses of the treaty with a delegation from Finance Canada.

In other bilateral matters, Yuval Steinitz, Israel's finance minister, suggested the country's next government, which will be installed following elections later this month, will probably consider Potash Corp. of Saskatchewan Inc.'s proposed acquisition of Israel Chemicals Ltd. (ICL).

Yuval Steinitz *(Flash90 photo)*

Potash Corp., a Canadian company, held talks in October 2012 with the Israeli government about raising its stake in Israel's second-largest company by market value from the current 14 per cent. The deal "is not yet under serious discussion" as Israel prepares for general elections on Jan. 22, Steinitz said in an interview with *Bloomberg News*.

"It will take a few months before we can really discuss it," Steinitz, 54, said in New York. "There are different opinions, but anyhow, I think the next government will have to consider it, if necessary."

Israel Chemicals employees declared a work dispute last month after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met in October with Potash CEO Bill Doyle about the proposed deal. The Israeli government can block takeover bids by using its so-called golden share, allowing the state to prevent a takeover to protect natural resources.

"Two things will be taken into account: the needs and interest of the Israeli company, and more particularly, the interests of the Negev, employment and economic development in the Negev," Steinitz said. The Negev region includes the Dead Sea, from which Israel Chemicals extracts minerals to make fertilizer and potash.

If Potash Corp. successfully acquires Israel Chemicals, it would become the largest producer of potash, a crop nutrient, with control of about 25 per cent of global production capacity.

• • •

In an economic forecast, Steinitz recently updated Israeli growth forecasts for 2013 and 2014, saying the economy is expected to expand by 3.5 per cent in 2013 and 3.9 per cent in 2014.

"Assuming the growth forecast materializes, and that it is a realistic forecast that was prepared by the Economics and State Revenues Department and the management of the Ministry of Finance, over the next two years Israel will continue to be the number 1 growth economy among all the countries of the developed western world. We must do our utmost to preserve a policy that continues to reinforce the economy's growth engines, to promote investment and to promote the creation of jobs," Steinitz said.

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Israeli exporters celebrated for economic contribution

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — In 2011, Israel's exports totalled $90 billion – a full 40 per cent of the country's GDP that year. That called for a celebration, and last week, President Shimon Peres threw one for some of Israel's most creative and successful exporters.

Eight companies were awarded the President's Export Award for 2011. "The companies you represent," said Peres as he distributed the awards, "reflect the wide range of creativity and imagination among Israeli companies. These awards are a lesson for the next generation as well, showing them the possibilities for their futures."

Awardees included some of Israel's most active exporters and best-known companies. Objet, the Rehovot-based maker of 3D printers, sold $121 million (all figures U.S.) worth of products and services in 2011, 98 per cent of it outside Israel. Israel's Kamada, a pharmaceuticals firm that developed an advanced medication for cystic fibrosis, sold more than $20 million in products in 2011, nearly all of it to the foreign market. And ColorChip, which sold nearly $5 million of optical components and subsystems almost all of it abroad, was also awarded for its high level of exports.

Other winners included a textiles firm from Kibbutz Masuot Yitzhak, a maker of polyethylene sheets for agricultural and industrial purposes from central Israel, and a processor of tehina, which exported $10 million of the sesame paste in 2011.

A special award was given to soft drink machine maker SodaStream. In 2007, Peres said, the company was on the verge of bankruptcy, but by 2011 it was exporting $584 million worth of machines and soda cartridges. And in a sign that the company has really made it, a commercial for SodaStream will be broadcast in this year's Super Bowl. With all that, Peres said, the company maintained its Israeli identity, presenting itself as a "blue and white" exporter in the 45 countries where it sells its products.

Also singled out for a special honour was the Israeli research and business facility, Broadcom, the international technology company. The award was accepted by Broadcom corporate vice-president Shlomo Markel, an Israeli who has been with the company since 2001 and who has been responsible for much of the technology co-operation between Israel and the company. Over the past decade, Broadcom has acquired 10 Israeli companies, and those acquisitions, now R&D labs, have helped develop some of Broadcom's most advanced technologies.

It's companies like Broadcom, Peres said, that are the engine of Israel's economic advancement.

"Israel is today rated as the world's top country in the quality of its research and development," he told the companies' representatives. "You are all an important part of the country's economic success."

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Micflikier cracks Team Canada lineup loaded with stars

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

At 28, Jacob Micflikier still has lots of hockey ahead of him, but he doesn't think he's stepping out onto a limb to say his Spengler Cup experience is likely to to be the pinnacle of his career.

Not only did he get to wear the Canadian national team jersey, but he made a team that was loaded with NHL stars in a lockout year. And they won a gold medal.

Jacob Micflikier

Not bad for someone who's toiled doggedly in the minor leagues, hoping for a shot at "The Show."

After six years in the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL) and the American Hockey League (AHL), Micflikier has taken his act on the road, signing with EHC Biel of the Swiss A league. While playing on a line with Boston Bruins' young star, Tyler Seguin, he was asked to play for Canada at the Spengler Cup.

An annual mid-winter tournament first held in 1923, the Spengler Cup brings together top European club teams and a collection of Canadians playing in Europe. This year's collection of Canucks featured many NHL stars.

Micflikier, who has 15 goals and 24 assists for Biel, was part of a Canadian roster that included Seguin, Bruins stalwart Patrice Bergeron, Ottawa Senator Jason Spezza, New York Islander John Tavares, Colorado Avalanche Matt Duchene, Edmonton Oiler Ryan Smyth and San Jose Sharks defenceman Jason Demers, who is also Jewish.

Playing on a line with Duchene and Jason Williams, another ex-NHLer, the trio added speed and energy to an already stacked lineup. Although he didn't get any points, Micflikier generated several quality scoring chances and helped Team Canada to the cup win.

"It was definitely a cool experience," he said on the phone from Switzerland. "These were NHL superstars, not just bump and grind guys."

Generally known for his goal-scoring and puck-dishing abilities, on a team loaded with offensive players, Micflikier was asked "to bring a different element" to the tournament. He and his linemates used their speed and skill to negate the opposition's chances.

"We played well together," he said.

The games were broadcast in Canada, and Micflikier, at 5-8 and 180 pounds, stood out because of his stature and because he generated scoring chances on a regular basis.

"To play with those guys was kind of cool for me… It was kind of a feather in my cap," he said.

With the tournament and the NHL lockout both over, Micflikier is settling back into a regular routine with Biel. So far in his pro career, he's been something of a hockey nomad, playing in Springfield, Stockton, Florida, Albany, Charlotte and Hershey over the past six years.

Life in Switzerland is something else entirely. It's his first trip to Europe, and having his girlfriend and dog with him helps keep him grounded. Language is a barrier, and simple tasks such as shopping are no longer activities you can take for granted.

Still, he's being paid to play hockey, which in of itself isn't half bad. The team provides him with an apartment and car, both free of charge. And his salary is tax-free in Switzerland.

A person could get used to that sort of lifestyle, but it's not the NHL, which has been his dream destination.

Last season it looked for a moment like he was finally getting his shot. After all those years in the minors, the Washington Capitals signed him to a one-year contract. He attended the Caps' training camp, but couldn't crack the lineup. Instead it was back to the AHL, this time with Hershey. In 57 games, Micflikier scored 56 points.

Returning to the AHL this season was always an option, "but in terms of career longevity… staying in Europe is probably in the cards for me," he said.

Micflikier has always put up good numbers wherever he's played. At the University of New Hampshire, he scored 150 points in 154 games, was named assistant captain in his senior year and helped the team win the 2006-07 Hockey East regular season title. Last season, playing for the Bears, he scored 21 goals and added 35 assists in 57 games. The year before, he recorded 61 points (29 goals, 32 assists) in 78 games with the Charlotte Checkers, finishing second on the team in goals and third in points.

Altogether, in 254 career AHL games, Micflikier has registered 182 points (76 goals, 106 assists) and 184 penalty minutes.

At only 180 pounds, Micflikier is certainly on the smaller side of current NHL – or even AHL – forwards. But that doesn't mean he gets pushed around, as his penalty totals suggest. "I've had no problems with physicality in the AHL," he said.

Like other players of smaller stature, he's had to show he can take the rough going, altering his game when needed to be more physical. "I've showed I can handle it," he said.

European hockey has proven to be a bit different from the North American brand of hockey he's used to. Not only is it "easier on the body," but the pace is different. Swiss league players are very good skaters, but things happen more quickly on the smaller North American ice surfaces.

"There are not as many scoring opportunities, and the pace is not as fast as back home," Micflikier said.

The differences haven't hurt his stats: when he played with Seguin, the two were tied for the team lead in points. Micflikier was the playmaker, Seguin the big-bodied guy who had an NHL-calibre shot.

"I found him for lots of opportunities," he said. "When you play with better players, it brings your game up."

Just ask the guys on the Spengler Cup team.

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Thorough telling of Rushdie's years in hiding

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

London-based writer Salman Rushdie was happy to sell his novel *The Satanic Verses* to Viking Penguin in February 1988. But six months after the novel appeared, the Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa against him for his blasphemous insult "against Islam, the Prophet and the Qur'an." Instantly, he became a hunted fugitive – just the sort of nightmarish turn one might expect from a good film noir.

As in a film noir, many of Rushdie's friends deserted him and multitudes of people blamed him for being too free with his artistic expression. Having "vanished onto the front page," as writer Martin Amis put it, he withstood 13 years in hiding, and eventually discovered how to reclaim his liberty. *Joseph Anton, A Memoir* (Knopf Canada), a record of his life "on the lam," takes its title from the pseudonym he used during that time in homage to writers Joseph Conrad and Anton Chekhov.

An article in the Indian newspaper *India Today* "was the match that lit the fire," Rushdie recalls. After riots in the streets left dozens dead, *The Satanic Verses* was banned in India; then the great mullah issued the fatwa. Soon afterward, his wife called and said: "Don't come back here. There are 200 journalists on the sidewalk waiting for you." Thus began his life on the run.

There were real and tangible threats against Rushdie even in Great Britain. Muslim citizens in London and Bradford held mass demonstrations, burned his novel and openly called for his death. Fortunately, Scotland Yard offered him and his family a series of safe houses as well as safe cars with drivers. Deeply offended that the Brits would dare protect the apostate, Iran severed diplomatic relations; Britain retaliated in kind.

Islamic rage and menace seemed uncontainable. One day Rushdie and his driver were stuck in traffic outside the Regent's Park Mosque as the faithful were pouring out of Friday afternoon prayers. "I assume the doors are locked?" he asked, hiding behind his newspaper. There was a click. "They are now," the driver replied. Some British Muslims actually tried to sue Rushdie for blasphemy, and the judge received some threatening letters before duly throwing the case out of court.

In America, the blind sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman (later jailed for the first World Trade Center attack) complained that if Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz had been properly punished for his book *Children of Gebelawi*, then Rushdie would not have dared to publish *The Satanic Verses*. Soon afterward, the elderly Mahfouz, a Nobel prize winner, was stabbed in the neck; he survived.

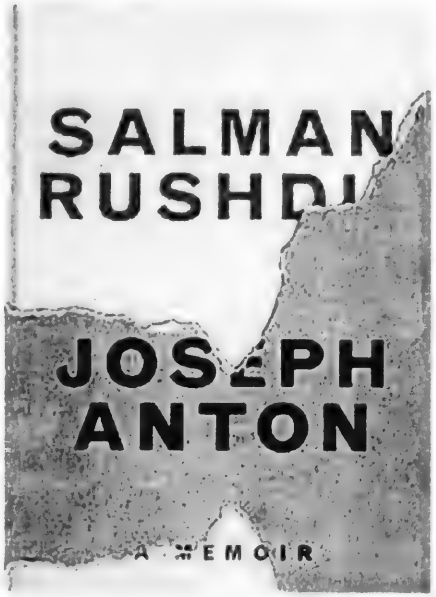
Even while safe in hiding, Rushdie still felt the sting of many knives in his back. The British Foreign Secretary characterized him as a great defamer and writer Roald Dahl called him "a dangerous opportunist." *The Daily Mail* called him "bad-mannered, sullen, graceless, silly, curmudgeonly, unattractive, small-minded, arrogant and egocentric."

In a pithy exchange of letters with Rushdie in the *Guardian*, writer John le Carré faulted him and made it seem he deserved everything he was getting and more. "There is no law in life or nature that says great religions may be insulted with impunity," le Carré wrote.

In reply, Rushdie defended his book and refuted the notion "that anyone who displeases philistine, reductionist, radical Islamist folk loses his right to live in safety." After le Carré expressed concern for the safety of the publishing and bookshop staff handling *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie replied that "these were the people... who have most passionately supported and defended my right to publish. It is ignoble of le Carré to use them as an argument for censorship when they have so courageously stood up for freedom."

Seeming to bend over backward for the sake of reconciliation, the Pope, the archbishop of Canterbury, the cardinal of New York, the British chief rabbi and many others expressed understanding for the ayatollah's feelings. For a time Rushdie also tried a conciliatory approach, saying he was seeking "common ground" with those whom his book had offended – but it felt false. Later he reverted to standing up for freedom of expression, realizing he could not abandon his own cherished values.

While many people were cowed into silence by the vociferous threats of the Islamists, some defended Rushdie nobly and acted toward him with astonishing generosity, selflessness and courage, he writes.



Bloodthirsty Islamists ultimately murdered the Japanese translator of *The Satanic Verses*; they also stabbed the Italian translator and shot the Norwegian publisher but both recovered. Although Rushdie was never physically harmed, the added stress broke up his marriage and dramatically curtailed his freedom to live freely, travel, attend public events and see his son.

An important turning point occurred when Scotland Yard seemed to deny him permission to attend an important literary event where he was to receive an award. "You are endangering the citizenry of London by reason of your desire for self-aggrandizement," an agent told him.

For Rushdie, it was a moment of truth: he knew he had to act assertively to regain his life. He calmly explained that he knew where the Dorchester Hotel was and had money for a taxi. "So the question is not whether or not I'm going to the awards. I am going to the awards. The only question you have to answer is, are you coming with me?" Thenceforth Scotland Yard assigned a new senior officer to his case, and he was allowed much more latitude to make occasional surprise appearances in public. Although the fatwa is permanent and may not be lifted, moderates in Iran eventually acted to neutralize it as best they could.

A thorough telling of Rushdie's years in hiding – which he relates in the second person, referring to himself as "he" – *Joseph Anton* is a great book despite being overlong and overly detailed. At its heart is a clear and essential moral that reflects one of the most important themes of our time: liberty and freedom of expression are universal human rights, not western cultural values alien to the cultures of the East. Another important message: bad things happen when good people stand by and do nothing.

Cultural relativists, apologists for Islamic extremism and anyone who has ever used the deceitful neologism "Islamophobia" – a word that Rushdie defines as a means "to help the blind remain blind" – won't like this book. The rest of us should cheer.

Message to CJN Snowbirds

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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes.

They should not exceed 2,000 words. Selected submissions will appear in the Passover Supplement of The CJN on March 28 2013, in either our Montreal or our Toronto edition, or both. If you have a preference, please state it on your submission. Not all submissions can be published. We look for originality.

E-mail submissions to:
cjnliterarysupplement@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is February 28, 2013.
We can only accept e-mail submissions.

A *VILLAGE OF IDIOTS* AT HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

The Holy Blossom Temple Stagecraft Company presents *Village of Idiots*, **John Lazarus**' comedy about a Russian army deserter finding his way to the well-known village of Chelm. This is the legendary village of fools of Yiddish folklore and letters, who yet manage to teach the protagonist Yosef a thing or two.

Maya Rabinovitch directs a cast that includes **Susanne Egier**, **David Fournier**, **Anna Grosman**, **Judy Kent**, **Erich Kirsh**, **Ellen Karabanow**, **Neil Naft**, **Jack Newman**, **Gerry Rabinovitch** and **Ivana Stojanovic**.

Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St. Jan. 17 and 19, 7:30 p.m., and Jan. 20, 2 p.m. $18, $13. 416-789-3291, ext. 511.

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Toronto Jewish Film Society: The latest TJFS screening features *An Article of Hope*, a documentary about the 2002 Columbia space shuttle mission in which Israeli astronaut **Ilan Ramon** perished. Also *Cohen on the Bridge*, a shorter animated film about Israel's dramatic 1976 Entebbe rescue. With guest critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg.** Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre, Sunday, Jan. 20, 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15, $10. Individual seats on sale 15 minutes before each screening. 416-924-6211, ext. 606. For a season subscription (eight films, $100), email film@mnjcc.org.

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Opera Appreciation: Active Seniors and Boomers of the Miles Nadal JCC presents a new opera appreciation series featuring opera educator **Iain Scott**. This is a rare opportunity to learn about four upcoming Metropolitan Opera productions to be broadcast live in Toronto cinema theatres in 2013. The program takes place Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. on Jan. 22 and 29, Feb. 5 and 12. $50 for the series or $16 per session on the day of the program (if not sold out). Phyllis, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

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Strictly Broadway: Encore Entertainment presents **Mark Cassius & Friends** in *Strictly Broadway*. Cassius, a stage veteran and former member of **The Nylons**, performs an intimate evening of funny and touching songs and stories with some talented friends. Toronto Centre for the Arts (Studio Theatre), 5040 Yonge St. Saturday, Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m. $25, $30. 1-855-985-2787, www.encoreshows.com

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Arts in Brief

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series Woody Allen Past and Present with a look at **Woody Allen**'s beginnings and such works as *Oedipus Wrecks*, *My Favorite Year*, TV standup (**Ed Sullivan**, **Dick Cavett**, etc.) and *What's New Pussycat*. Monday, Jan. 21, 7 to 9 p.m. $12. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Pianist-singer **Fern Lindzon** performs Jazz at Oscar's with two horn players at the Arbor Room, Hart House, Jan. 18, 8 p.m. She also performs with a guitarist and bass and guests at the Old Mill Inn, Thursday, Jan. 24, 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. $20 minimum. 416-236-2641.

• Encore Entertainment presents *Love Letters*, a Pulitzer-nominated play by **A. R. Gurney** that examines the relationship between a lawyer and artist as revealed through their letters over many years. With **Jerrold Karch** and producer **Merle Garbe** in her first onstage role in 10 years. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Jan. 25 to Feb. 3. $29.50, $28. 1-855-985-2787. www.encoreshows.com

• Soundstreams presents *The Three Faces of Jerusalem*, an exploration through music and poetry by numerous artists of the cultures and traditions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. Sunday, Jan. 27, 3 p.m. $65 to $20. 416-408-0208, www.soundstreams.ca

• **Sheldon Glass** speaks on "Jewish Artists and Moguls from Broadway to Hollywood" at the next Yiddish Vinkl. $18 includes buffet lunch. Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. Thursday, Feb. 7, 12 noon. RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

• The Stratford Festival's upcoming season includes a production of the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, starring **Kate Hennig** and **Scott Wentworth**; also *The Merchant of Venice* with **Brian Bedford** as Shylock. Other productions include **Noel Coward**'s *Blithe Spirit*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Three Musketeers* and **The Who**'s *Tommy*.

Two Israeli films get best doc nominations

***5 Broken Cameras* is one of two Israeli films nominated.**

JTA

LOS ANGELES — Two Israeli films are among the five nominated for best documentary for the Academy Awards.

5 Broken Cameras, directed by Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi, and *The Gatekeepers*, directed by Dror Moreh, were among the films chosen from 15 finalists of the 126 films that entered in the category when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced the Oscar nominees last Thursday.

5 Broken Cameras documents the first years of life for Burnat's baby against the backdrop of the West Bank village of Bil'in's battle against the Israeli security fence. Burnat said five of his cameras were smashed by the Israeli army as he documented friends and family members being shot and injured by Israeli troops. The film won the documentary director's award this year at the Sundance Film Festival.

The Gatekeepers consists of lengthy, and surprisingly frank, interviews with six former heads of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security agency, discussing the past, present and likely future of the tumultuous regional conflicts. Earlier this week it was named the best nonfiction film of 2012 by the National Society of Film Critics in the United States.

Lincoln led the nominations with 12, including for best film and best director. Nominated in their respective categories were Steven Spielberg as director, as well as co-producer (with Kathleen Kennedy), playwright Tony Kushner for best adapted screenplay and Daniel Day-Lewis for best actor.

Mark Boal is up for his original screenplay *Zero Dark Thirty* on the hunt for Osama bin Laden, while Benh Zeitlin, whose father is Jewish, is in competition as director of *Beasts of the Southern Wild*.

Israel, whose entries made the top five shortlists of best foreign-language films in four of the last five years, struck out this time with *Fill the Void*, an insider's view of haredi life in Tel Aviv.

Among the films submitted by 71 countries, five dealt with the Jewish fate during the Nazi era and its aftermath. Though none made the final five, their themes indicate that the Holocaust theme still fascinates international filmmakers.

Quebec director Kim Nguyen's *Rebelle* is Canada's nomination for best foreign film.

Family Guy creator Seth MacFarlane will host the 85th Academy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles on Feb. 24.

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New play examines Canada's role in Afghanistan

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Hannah Moscovitch's play about Canada's involvement in the war in Afghanistan runs at Tarragon Theatre's Extra Space until Feb. 3, 2013.

This is War, directed by artistic director Richard Rose, takes place in 2008, when Canadian Forces are holding Panjwaii, the most volatile region in Kandahar, the birthplace of the Taliban.

The play takes place over 24 hours, and offers four perspectives – from three soldiers and a medic, who are interviewed by an unseen journalist about a critical event.

"Obviously it is very hard to write when you haven't actually been to Afghanistan or to war yourself, and you really can't know what it's like to be in combat," Moscovitch says. "I had good people around me who were those people, I could respectfully ask those questions of."

She says there were a number of events that led to writing this play, which is loosely inspired by two controversial incidents that happened during Canada's highest point of engagement in the Afghanistan conflict.

"I read an editorial in the *Globe and Mail* by J. Kelly Nestruck, the theatre critic," she explains. "He was ranting that our Canadian playwrights were not writing about Afghanistan and the fact we were at war there in 2008. We were heavily involved and our mission was being extended.

"Then, the theatre department at the Banff Centre in Alberta put out a call for submission for their 75th anniversary for commissions for plays, and I thought I should submit, on the off-chance that one of the superstars of Canadian theatre wasn't planning to submit. In the end of course, they did. Daniel McIvor and Colleen Murphy were both commissioned along with me."

All this happened while she was working on the CBC hit radio drama *Afghanada*, which put her in the privileged position of having a lot of resources, with war journalists and returning troops coming home from tours in the region, including her high school sweetheart, a military man, who served in Panjwaii and is currently in Kabul.

Although the play is going to the United States, Moscovitch says she wrote it with a Canadian audience in mind and her desire to show us what this Canadian experience was like.

She says she hopes the play will evoke both empathy for our soldiers and an understanding of the complexity of the situation.

Members of the military, including a sergeant who acted as a consultant to the production, have been invited to the play. Moscovitch says she's terrified because they are the most critical audience.

Moscovitch often writes explicitly about Jewish culture and Jewish events, as is evident in her Governor General's Award-nominated play *East of Berlin* and another work, *The Children's Republic*.

"Being Jewish, I like plays that ask complex questions and situations, where no right or wrong are clear, where good and evil are both possible, and in the same action. I am a grandchild of the Holocaust and all the moral uncertainty of the Holocaust. I tend to like to write about characters that are extremely traumatized and fight moral complexity."

The Ottawa-born writer, who's lived in Toronto since 2001, is a multi-award-winner, and Canada's most produced young playwright. *This is War* will be produced in both Chicago and Winnipeg after the Toronto run.

Hannah Moscovitch

The Tarragon playwright-in-residence also has a film project in development with Rhombus Film and House of Film and is writing plays for theatre companies including the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Volcano Theatre, 2b theatre, Studio 180 Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club in New York, as well four plays this year for the Tarragon Theatre – *In This World, This is War, Little One* and *Other People's Children* – as part of a mini-festival celebrating her work. She's also working on an adaptation of Ann-Marie MacDonald's internationally acclaimed award-winning Oprah Book Club novel, *Fall On Your Knees*, for the stage.

On a personal note, she recently became engaged to 2b theatre's artistic director, Christian Barry, and plans to marry during the summer of 2014. It's no wonder this prolific playwright has no time for hobbies.

For tickets to *This is War*, call 416-531-1827 or go online to www.tarragontheatre.com

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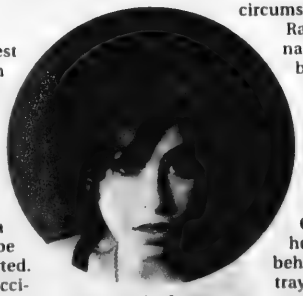
Employees and family members of The CJN and Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre Festival are not eligible to enter.

Singer died of alcohol poisoning

JTA

NEW YORK — A second inquest into the death of Jewish musician Amy Winehouse confirmed that the 27-year-old English star died of accidental alcohol poisoning.

Coroner Shirley Radcliffe said the celebrity's tragic end occurred from "alcohol toxicity" and was a "death by misadventure," confirming initial reports from October 2011 of a first coroner who was later found to be unreliable, The *Associated Press* reported. Radcliffe confirmed the death was accidental and that there were no suspicious circumstances.



Amy Winehouse

Radcliffe said a post-mortem examination on Winehouse found her blood alcohol level to be five times the amount permitted to legally drive — a level that proved to be fatal because a person could "fall asleep and not wake up."

Winehouse attracted global recognition for her 2006 album *Back to Black*, which won five Grammy Awards. But frequent health problems and unpredictable behavior led the gossip world to portray her as a train wreck rather than a musical talent.

Documentaries recount two very different missions

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

On Feb.1, 2003, the sky over western Texas resounded to two loud bangs as the space shuttle Columbia sped back to earth after a mission in outer space. The highly sophisticated craft never landed, breaking up in pieces in a ghastly vapour trail and claiming the lives of its crew.

Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, was among the seven astronauts killed that day. A payload specialist and a former pilot, he died a hero, carrying a Jewish artifact salvaged from a Nazi concentration camp in Germany.

Ramon's exemplary life and tragic death are the subject of Daniel Cohen's uplifting 54-minute documentary, *An Article of Hope*, which will be screened by the Toronto Jewish Film Society on Sunday, Jan. 20, at 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the JCC's Al Green Theatre.

It will be followed by *Cohen on the Bridge*, a 21-minute animated documentary on Israel's rescue of hostages at Entebbe airport in Idi Amin's Uganda in 1976. Andrew Wainrib's short is both stirring and inspirational.

An Article of Hope, bookended by a fiery tragedy and a renewed space mission, focuses on Ramon, a self-effacing pilot who took part in the audacious 1981 bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor.

The son of a Holocaust survivor who passed through Auschwitz, Ramon considered himself a representative of Israel and the Jewish people, his wife says.

True to his beliefs, Ramon carried with him into space a miniature Torah scroll he received from Joachim Joseph, an Israeli physicist. As a boy in Holland, Joseph was sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where a Dutch rabbi bar-mitzvahed him in the presence of this Torah scroll.

Ilan Ramon

To Ramon, the scroll was "a payload of history," an item from the past signifying the resilience of the Jewish people through the ages.

The most poignant images in the film unfold in quick succession. The Columbia crew is transported to the launch site in an exultant mood. The astronauts, a mix of men and women, merrily float around in the craft. Ramon shows off the scroll.

The grim faces of the controllers in the Kennedy Space Center attest to the fate of the Columbia as it plummets toward planet earth in a disastrous trajectory, disgorging thousands of fragments, including pages in Hebrew script from Ramon's diary.

An Article of Hope ends on an upbeat note as Canadian astronaut Steve MacLean "finishes" Ramon's mission.

The accompanying movie, *Cohen on the Bridge*, recounts the Israeli commando raid that rescued more than 200 passengers whose Air France flight had been hijacked by Arab and German hijackers in an attempt to gain the release of 57 "freedom fighters" held in five countries.

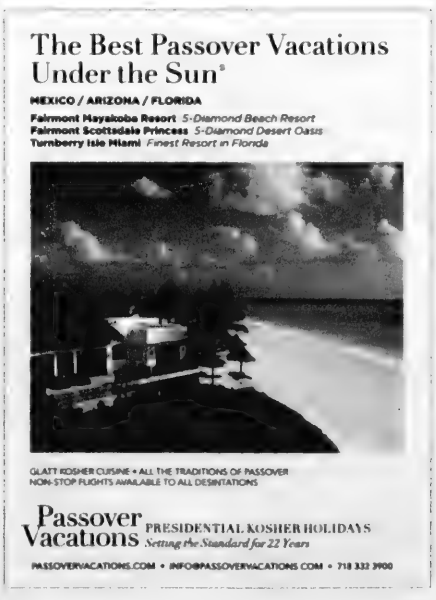
In general, except for an introductory episode of brutality set in Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia, the film is told in chronological order.

By using animation, the filmmaker is able to unleash his creative talents in untrammelled fashion. The kinetic black-and-white drawings spring from and light up the screen. But Wainrib also relies on stock file footage of the Entebbe affair to infuse his narrative with vigor and drama.

As he suggests, Israel's daring raid, based on surprise and speed and commanded by the older brother of Israel's current prime minister, seemed like an impossible undertaking.

Uganda was three hours away by air, and the Israeli planes carrying the commandos and their equipment could have been detected en route. And there was no guarantee that the rescue mission itself would be successful.

Ugandan soldiers tried to foil the Israelis and several of the hijackers put up resistance, but Israel prevailed and the raid became a legendary incident in the annals of the Israel Defence Force.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Filmmaker to tell story of Ghanaian Jews

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Gabrielle Zilkha is hoping to bring a group of Ghanaian Jews to Israel for the first time as part of a new documentary called *From the Four Corners of the Earth*.

It all started two years ago when she was volunteering for a women's rights organization in Ghana's capital, Accra. As the High Holidays drew near, she realized she probably wouldn't be able to celebrate them in a synagogue.

"The thought of finding a minyan of Jews to celebrate the High Holidays was quite unlikely," said the 29-year-old Toronto-based filmmaker. The majority of the population is made up of Christians and Muslims, she explained.

However, her mother did some research and found a group of Ghanaian people called the Sefwis, who thought of themselves as a lost tribe of Israel.

"I had my doubts," Zilkha said, explaining that she figured they were really Christian evangelicals or a group of "Jews for Jesus." When she phoned them to find out about Rosh Hashanah services, she expected to reach an expat or a Christian group. Instead, she reached a Ghanaian.

Gabrielle Zilkha and Sefwi child, Rahel, look at a video she recorded on a flipcam.

"I knew they were probably real when he corrected me on the date and time of services for Rosh Hashanah," she said, laughing. So she hopped on a "*tro-tro*" – a fixed-route shared minibus taxi that Zilkha described as a "Scooby-Doo bus" – and embarked on a nine-hour journey to Sefwi-Wiawso.

"As with most Jews, I was quite neurotic about travelling, and what to expect, and [about] the directions given to me," she said, explaining that she relied heavily on directions from locals. "I'm used to Google Maps, so this was a real leap of faith."

Sefwi community leader Alex Armah leads a Havdalah service.
(Gabrielle Zilkha photo)

When she arrived, she was overwhelmed but touched at the warmth she felt in the group.

"I went from being nervous and stunned to supremely touched by the community's hospitality," she said.

There, she learned that the Sefwi had been practising Jewish traditions for centuries before learning that it was part of a bigger religion.

She met with a young community leader, Alex Armah, who said that although people have come into the town and written about them, no one who was actually part of the community ever took part in documenting their culture and history.

Zilkha, who has a background in filmmaking, decided this was something that needed to be fixed, and two years later, she's working on that film with the Sefwi community.

She left for Ghana with field producer and director of photography John Canning to shoot the first part of the film, about the Sefwis' history and culture.

The biggest challenge so far has been the funding, Zilkha said. So far, she has raised just enough to fund the first part of the film through creating a Kickstarter page. Kickstarter, a website that helps creative projects find funding through the public, worked well for this filmmaker. In just under a month, she raised almost $16,000 from 190 "backers," or supporters.

Despite this accomplishment, they still have a long way to go. The second part of the film is likely going to be much more expensive. Zilkha hopes to bring a group of Sefwi community members to Israel for the first time.

"So many of them had mentioned this was a dream of theirs," Zilkha said, explaining in her movie trailer that she wanted to see if they felt the deep connection she felt when visiting Israel for the first time.

The number of travellers would depend on the budget, but Zilkha said she hopes it will be an equal number of men and women from a wide age range. As of now, the community has selected eight people, with the youngest being 14 and the oldest around 60 years old.

She said the Sefwi's isolation from other Jews might explain why they seem so incredibly dedicated to increasing their knowledge of the religion. Armah, who is working as the associate producer and production co-ordinator in Ghana, takes time every Shabbat to teach some of the community how to speak Hebrew. He learned the language in Uganda, where he studied at a yeshiva, Zilkha said.

In the future, he hopes to go to rabbinical school, though it would likely take a scholarship to make that dream feasible, she said.

Zilkha said she hopes the film will answer the questions Jews from around the world might have about these people, she said.

"There's a lot of interesting things that I wish I was able to capture when I was there," she said. For example, she spent one Shabbat in their synagogue, where she spent 45 minutes helping to teach the proper pronunciation for the guttural "ch" sound, which many community members found challenging.

"It's those special moments that show this community as so unique, and also this magic that arrives from the commonality," she said.

Apart from the funding, there is one other major challenge: shooting a film when you don't know the whole story.

"Right now, we know there's a history, a present day, and the future is the visit to Israel," she said. "We're trying to organize the story to make way for this unknown so that you can eventually tell a coherent and beautiful story out of it."

Zilkha said she hopes production will be done by the end of the year, and the film will be released sometime in 2014.

In the meantime, she's working to draw interest and more funding through the Internet. She plans to have the Ghanaian travellers keep video diaries that will be published online so people can keep up-to-date about the journey while still in production.

"We like to share every little step with our supporters, to join us on this exciting journey," Zilkha said.

For more information, visit the website fourcornersthefilm.com.

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Sustainable water solutions

"Matchmaker, Matchmaker, make me a match" – famous words from the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. Tevye, Golda and their daughters could articulate their needs for a scholar, a rich man or a handsome man, but they would take whatever Yente the Matchmaker would bring them. Right? Of course right! Today, they could turn to successful websites such as JDate and Jewish Friend Finder to find a matchless match.

So, how do you meet a sustainable solution that's a perfect and cost effective match for your business, community or organization's wants and needs? Who plays the role of matchmaker in the cleantech world? Can the process of need articulation and capability matching be improved? Is the "matchmaker" a real person, a virtual community or an automated process? Does the "matchmaker" get paid for his efforts?

Sustainable Jew

Fred Winegust

The videos I described in my last column (Dec. 13) are a way of attracting attention to what's going on in Israel in the area of water. They tell you in general terms what innovative companies in Israel are capable of doing, what they've done for others and the quantified benefits they've achieved.

There are LinkedIn social media "groups" that have a focus on water, such as the ones run by Israel NewTech and Cleantech Israel. Such groups expose people who have joined, or who were allowed to join based on specific criteria, to a lot of advertising, promotion and success stories about various Israeli developed Cleantech solutions. Matchmaking here depends on the off-chance that the people looking for the solution can find or see what they need through the inundation of communications.

There are water-focused trade show efforts such as Watec in Israel and the Canadian Water Summit. These national conferences physically bring together buyers and sellers. They need to generate an audience, both from in the country and out of the country, by creating a program of relevant speakers and the ability to show technology in action. The value of these conferences is that they provide opportunities to set up meetings or to enable ad-hoc meetings to occur as needed.

Cleantech trade missions and symposia such as the ones run by the Province of Ontario in 2010, or those sponsored by the Jewish National Fund that brought Manitoba and Israeli water experts together, physically connected Canadians with water-related needs with various water solutions in Israel.

The recent Water Export Technology Revolution competition gave Israeli companies focused on water an opportunity to highlight their various capabilities. The New England-Israel Business Council, Combined Jewish Philanthropies and five co-chairs from their business communities were then able to put together a productive set of focused meetings in Israel with a selected group of these companies.

David Goodtree, co-chair of the mission and co-organizer of the competition saw the combined information solicitation, competition and trade mission effort as "a way to develop partnerships to advance water innovation globally using Israeli technology and to learn from Israel's enormous success in enhancing its self-sufficiency in the water space."

Ways to match water needs to solutions continue to evolve. Newer and sustainable matchmaking models are emerging. Tevye would be proud.

winegust@gmail.com

NEW YEAR'S SOUP

- 1 tbl olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled, sliced
- 3 leaves collard greens, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 c quinoa
- 1 14.5 oz. can vegetable broth
- 1 15 oz. can black-eyed peas rinsed, drained
- 1 c water
- 1 tbl cider vinegar
- salt and ground black pepper to taste

Heat olive oil in soup pot over medium heat; stir in garlic; cook until it begins to brown. Add onion and carrots. Cook until carrots begin to brown and onion becomes translucent, 7-8 min. Cook and stir collard greens into onion mixture until wilted. Pour vegetable broth and black-eyed peas into pot; bring to boil; reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer soup 20-25 min. While soup is simmering, mix quinoa and water in separate saucepan, bring to boil, reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until quinoa has absorbed water. Stir cooked quinoa into soup; simmer until collard greens are tender, about 10 more min. Stir cider vinegar into soup to taste; season with salt and black pepper.

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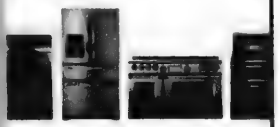

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Israeli journalists Peggy Cidor, right, and Marius Schattner, left, who talk about the issues in the upcoming election in Israel.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa notes that even from Canada, Israel's weather (and politics) is interesting.

Jewish National Fund (JNF) in Montreal will hold its 25th annual Tree-a-thon, coinciding with Tu b'Shvat, the Jewish new year of the trees, on Feb. 3.

Sri Lanka is a country that has had its fair share of turmoil and battles. But all that is in the past. There are brighter days in the future. The present and future look like the star sapphires for which Sri Lanka, known as Gem Island, is renown.

They never fail to remind us!

The Torah says over and over that we must embrace the stranger because he is the most vulnerable among us. Within our own ranks, Ashkenazi Jews in Israel and the Diaspora treated Sephardi Jews like second-class citizens when they first arrived because they were easy to kick around and to blame, as they were unaware of their rights and not connected to the land and the culture.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

We create a despicable mythology about the stranger or "the other," as Christians did with us throughout the centuries. We were penny pinchers, kikes and liars. We murdered their saviour, planned a world takeover and had ample time to steal Christian babies and use their blood to make matzah. These lies were rolled down a hill of ignorance by the cracked and soiled hands of psychopathic religionists and politicians. Much work went into reminding "the other" about his insignificance.

But then we established Eretz Yisrael and rooted ourselves in the land. We stopped wandering and reclaimed authorship over our narrative, over our lives. While Egyptian leaders today still say that "Jews are born of pigs, underserving of Israel," we are anchored and able to defend ourselves from the slings and arrows of bogus folklore and fibs meant to deny us our rights and perhaps our lives.

Let them talk.

That is not the fortune, however, of the Roma, the Gypsies. They continue to roam the earth, unable to slough off the mendacities invented about them and the despicable actions that result from such falsehoods.

Medieval Christians accused the Roma of creating the nails used to crucify Jesus, and of stealing Christian babies and eating them. The Gypsy population of Moldavia and Wallachia (now Romania) was enslaved for 500 years, until abolition in 1864. In the 1600s, laws in Germany, Finland and England made "Gypsy hunts" legal. Hundreds of Gypsies were brought to trial in Hungary in the 18th century for cannibalism. Some 200 were executed and then the alleged victims were found alive.

Today, the Roma are the European Union's biggest minority group. There are 12 million Roma scattered across a dozen countries. Their men are labelled "child traffickers." The women are called prostitutes, and their young are considered pickpockets. Gypsies are harassed by neo-Nazi groups. They, just as we were, are dying for safety and security. They, as we were, are begging for the truth.

With all of this, Canadian Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney has said most Roma travel to Canada to exploit social programs, including welfare, subsidized public housing and health care, and then return to their place of origin. He calls their claims bogus. Recently, a "safe country list" was released by Kenney. Hungary is on that list. Roma and Jews applying for refugee status from that country have 30 days to prepare for a hearing instead of the several months they once had. The mythology machine continues to grind and we clutch our wallets, convinced we'll be pickpocketed by these desperate people.

In early January, we sadly discovered in parshat Shmot that the Jewish People were enslaved in Egypt. We were being beaten and humiliated by Egyptian taskmasters who look upon us as "the other." The good news is that Moses will arrive soon to liberate us.

Let us work toward the same for the Roma today. Contact the Roma Community Centre 416-546-2524 to donate and help. Speak to your shul's social action committee to become involved.

We were strangers too, and they never fail to remind us.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem invites you to

Nominate a Holocaust Survivor

to receive national recognition at the **2013 National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony** on Monday, April 8, 2013, in Ottawa.

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Prime Minister Harper
National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony

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The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem (www.yadvashem.ca)

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem is one of the largest and most prominent societies among Yad Vashem's 28 representative bodies worldwide. The Society supports Yad Vashem's initiatives and implements its important vision across Canada. Through its educational and commemorative activities, the Society carries out Yad Vashem's mission of ensuring that the Holocaust and its lessons are forever engraved in the memory of humankind.

Yad Vashem (www.yadvashem.org)

Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, in Jerusalem, is the universal guardian and imparter of the *Shoah's* (Holocaust's) legacy and the protector of human values. Visited by more than one million people annually, Yad Vashem is internationally recognized as being at the forefront of Holocaust commemoration, education, documentation, and research.

The National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony

With the enactment of the Holocaust Memorial Day Act S.C. 2003, C.24, and the establishment of a National Holocaust Remembrance Day by the Parliament of Canada, the Government of Canada signaled once more its longstanding commitment to ensuring that the lessons of the Holocaust are enshrined in the hearts and minds of Canadians.

Since that time, the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem has had the privilege of leading a *Zachor* (Remembrance) coalition, a group of organizations committed to Holocaust commemoration and education, in coordinating a National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony on behalf of the Government of Canada.

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Canada Post issues Wallenberg stamp

Canada Post issued a commemorative international stamp Jan. 17 in honour of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat credited with saving some 100,000 Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust. Wallenberg's picture, flanked by a yellow Star of David and a crowd of people he saved, are seen against the backdrop of the *Schutz-Pass* he created to excuse Hungarian Jews from deportation. Canada Post said it created the stamp to honour Wallenberg's efforts and to extol the "values Canadians share – respect, integrity and justice... His bravery is not forgotten in Canada." Wallenberg was made an honorary Canadian citizen in 1985.

[*Canada Post photo*]

Israeli Election

***The CJN* went to press the day before Israelis went to the polls. For election results and commentary please visit cjnews.com and read next week's edition of the paper.**

Mali incursion threatens French Jews

JTA

PARIS — France's military involvement in Mali "significantly increases" the threat facing French Jews, the country's Jewish communal security service said.

"The situation requires we raise the level of protection around our community and double the level of vigilance around synagogues, Jewish schools, community centres and gathering places," said a communiqué by SPCJ, which often determines its level of preparedness based on consultations with French authorities.

French ground forces deployed to Mali's capital, Bamako, last week and began advancing northward on Jan. 15 to engage Islamist rebels. French President François Hollande says the rebels are "terrorists."

The incursion caused "agitation" in Islamic circles in France, SPCJ said.

SPCJ also reported four antisemitic incidents that took place over the past four weeks.

On Jan. 11, a bearded man wearing military-style gear intimidated schoolchildren visiting Paris' main Holocaust memorial. Wielding a knife, he shouted at the children "to leave Palestine alone," the report said. Police patrols were called to the area but arrived after the man had left.

A similar incident occurred on Dec. 20, SPCJ reported, when a tall, bearded man in his 40s interrupted a memorial service for a deceased Jewish man and shouted at the 30 people present: "You are on my land and you are going to pay." The man, who also shouted "*Allah hu akbar*," was arrested and released shortly after questioning. He was identified as Traore Issa, SPCJ said.

On Jan. 5, "Child killers – Jews to the gas – long live Hitler" was spray-painted on a building in the French capital's 12th arrondissement.

Three days earlier, antisemitic slogans, death threats against Jews and a swastika were spray-painted on a building in Toulouse.

Beshalach
Candlelighting: 5:01
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Greater Toronto Area

Carmel forest being rejuvenated after 2010 fire – see page 40

CANADA

Oliver Has Surgery

TORONTO — Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver underwent heart bypass surgery Jan. 3. Oliver, 72, the MP for Eglinton-Lawrence in Toronto and the only Jewish member of the federal cabinet, had the operation after a routine checkup found a problem. He's expected to return to work full time in mid-February, his office said last week. He had no previous history of heart problems.

CTV Calls TA Capital

TORONTO — CTV acknowledged it incorrectly reported Tel Aviv as Israel's capital in Jan. 8 reports on winter storms in the region. In a release, CTV News president Wendy Freeman said last week: "Tel Aviv was incorrectly reported as the capital city of Israel earlier this month. CTV News immediately took measures to ensure the correct information was being reported as the story progressed."

WORLD

Survivor Dies

LOS ANGELES — Leon Leyson, the youngest person saved by Oskar Schindler, died of lymphoma Jan. 12 in Whittier, Calif., at 83. Leyson was 13 when he went to work in Schindler's factory in Krakow, Poland. Two of his brothers were killed in the Shoah. Schindler put Leyson's parents and two other siblings on the list of 1,100 Jews, making Leyson's one of the few families he protected. Leyson came to America in 1949 and was a high school educator for 40 years. The father of two and grandfather of four rarely spoke of his wartime experiences until the 1993 release of the film *Schindler's List*.

Air France Sued

PARIS — A French pro-Palestinian activist sued Air France for not allowing her to fly to Israel to visit the Palestinian Authority. Horia Ankour, 30, says she was taken off an April 15 flight from Nice as she tried to take part in the so-called "flytilla," an attempt by foreign activists to stage anti-Israel protests at Ben-Gurion Airport. A flight attendant asked her whether she was Israeli or Jewish. Ankour said she was neither and was taken off the plane, she said. Ankour said 29 activists were on the plane and 21 were detained at the airport "at the request of the Israeli authorities." The rest were arrested in Israel and deported. Air France said it was complying with a treaty that requires airlines to refuse to fly people "declared inadmissible in the country of destination."

Watchdog Raps Mideast Correspondent

MONTREAL — Radio-Canada's Middle East correspondent has been cited for inaccuracy in one of her reports by the broadcaster's ombudsman.

Acting on a complaint from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), Pierre Tourangeau agreed with the organization that Ginette Lamarche's coverage of Hamas leader Khaled Meshal's Dec. 8 speech in Gaza did not reflect the facts. He concluded that Lamarche contravened Radio-Canada journalistic standards and practices for her "lack of clarity."

Ginette Lamarche

CIJA objected to Lamarche reporting that Meshal said, "Hamas would not recognize Israel as long as the Hebrew state occupied Palestine." CIJA pointed out that he'd actually said Hamas would never recognize Israel and called for the destruction of Israel, declaring that "all of Palestine" should be freed by jihad.

CIJA noted that Radio-Canada's English-language counterpart, the CBC, recorded Meshal as saying, "We are not giving up any inch of Palestine. It will remain Islamic and Arab for us and nobody else. Jihad and armed resistance is the only way... We cannot recognize Israel's legitimacy."

The ombudsman has upheld nine other CIJA complaints against Lamarche since her posting in 2011.

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Bloodshed in Pakistan blamed on 'Zionist plot'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Organizers of a protest rally at the Pakistani consulate in Vaughan are being accused of a modern day "blood libel" for publishing a flyer that blames deadly terror attacks in Pakistan on a "Zionist plot."

A flyer publicizing the rally, which took place Jan. 14, states in bold red letters: "Massacre of Shia Muslims… Zionist plot – local and regional extremists hands." A group called Canadians Against Bloodshed appeared to be the sponsor of the flyer.

Jewish and Muslim groups condemned the flyer, while a former Pakistan-based journalist now involved in inter-community dialogue with Jews said Iran was likely responsible for the accusation.

Poster for Jan. 14 rally

"Iranian Shias are behind it," said Tariq Khan, who runs the *Weekly Press Pakistan* website. "Iran is against Jewish Israel, so they are trying to provoke in each and every occasion against Jews. But Ajmi (non-Arab) Muslims have nothing (to do) with anti-Jewish feeling… Iranians want to promote hate against the Jewish People."

Pakistan has been experiencing bloody terrorist attacks on a regular basis and two weeks ago, a series of attacks killed 116 Shiites and injured 150 in the Pakistani city of Quetta. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a banned Islamic group affiliated with the Taliban, claimed responsibility for the Quetta attacks, which took place months before a scheduled election.

The rally at the consulate was to "condemn the Pakistani government for not providing security to its citizens… Long live Shia-Sunni unity – Down with Zionist plots," according to the promotional flyer.

B'nai Brith Canada alerted police in York Region about the protest, warning "the inflammatory rhetoric of the promotional flyer… has the potential to incite hatred and spark violence against the Jewish community in Canada… The lurid nature of the flyer for tonight's event amount to a blood libel that crosses boundaries."

Len Rudner, director of community relations and outreach for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said, "We must always be concerned that there are individuals who still believe in the myth of a Jewish conspiracy. This is nothing new. It is deplorable that so little has changed."

Rudner said it was unclear who was behind the poster and rally. "Canadians Against Bloodshed" seemed to be the group distributing the flyer, but it "appears to have been created for the purpose of promoting the rally," Rudner stated.

CIJA asked police to monitor the event "for any actions or statements that would indicate a need for our community to increase its security preparedness or that could be in violation of the Criminal Code."

Law enforcement officials were believed to have attended, but a call to York Regional Police was not returned by *The CJN*'s deadline.

Continued on page 18

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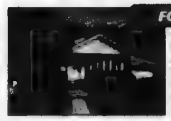
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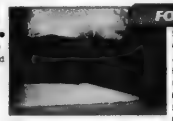
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Morsi's antisemitic comments sad, but unsurprising

A major controversy broke in the media last week involving Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi.

It was recently revealed that on Sept.23, 2010, while serving as a key leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, Morsi viciously demonized Jews on Lebanon's *Al-Quds TV*. "Either [you accept] the Zionists and everything they want, or else it is war. This is what these occupiers of the land of Palestine know – these bloodsuckers, who attack the Palestinians, these warmongers, the descendants of apes and pigs."

According to Reports

PAUL MICHAELS

Morsi's disgusting comments came to light when the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) translated and published them in English on Jan. 3. They were picked up by the *Jerusalem Post* the following day. In the days that followed, no major media outlets in the West reported on this development, leading Jewish American journalist Jeffrey Goldberg to ask the simple question: why the lack of attention?

In his Jan. 14 *Atlantic* blog, Goldberg drew attention to Richard Behar, a financial reporter at *Forbes* magazine who, along with a colleague, kept watch of the American media after MEMRI made Morsi's comments public. As Behar recounts: "We gave it seven days to see if any of the so-called 'mainstream media' – a pejorative phrase that too-often obscures more than it reveals – bestowed the hate speech even a few sentences of back-page ink. Nothing."

Behar speculated about this initial lack of interest: "[T]he demonization of Jews is commonplace and de rigueur in the Arab media (although most Americans wouldn't know that because they are not being made aware of it). But what makes this omission in Big Media especially egregious is that Morsi... went even further than genetically pairing Jews with lower beasts."

Calling Jews "descendants of apes and pigs" is, unfortunately, familiar language in broad reaches of the Arab and Muslim worlds. Moreover, extreme antisemitism has been a core element of the Muslim Brotherhood almost since its inception in 1928, with its adoption of anti-Jewish Nazi rhetoric in the 1930s and '40s.

Goldberg offered his own take on the silence: "One possibility is, to borrow a phrase, the soft bigotry of low expectations."

As it turns out, David Kirkpatrick filed a story about Morsi's "virulent" comments for the Jan. 14 online edition of the *New York Times* (which in turn was followed by coverage Jan. 16 in the *Globe and Mail*, *National Post* and *Ottawa Citizen*). Kirkpatrick pointed out that he had been waiting three days at that point for Morsi's representatives to respond to his inquiries (which they declined to do).

Though he was aware of MEMRI's Jan. 3 translations, what appears to have moved Kirkpatrick to write about Morsi's slurs is Egyptian "satirist" Bassem Youssef's Jan. 11 airing of Morsi's 2010 antisemitic remarks, which, in Kirkpatrick's words, "set up a contrast with [Morsi's] more recent collaborations with Washington and Israel, including the brokering of a ceasefire with Palestinian militants in Gaza." After all, given the perilous state of Egypt's economy, Morsi is desperate for American and western financial assistance.

One of the Morsi clips that Youssef used is particularly jarring: "We must never forget, brothers, to nurse our children and our grandchildren on hatred for them: for Zionists, for Jews." Egyptian children "must feed on hatred; hatred must continue."

As to the wider implications for the Egyptian president, Kirkpatrick said his antisemitic and anti-western attitudes raise questions about Morsi's posture abroad as a moderate and someone who will uphold the peace agreement with Israel. While Morsi's past comments "may be a liability" in the West, Kirkpatrick noted that the opposite reaction prevails in Egypt, where "he faces a political culture at home in which such defamation of Jews is almost standard stump discourse."

For many westerners, such anti-Jewish diatribes exist only in the pages of history. That they are openly broadcast today before an audience of tens of millions in the Middle East seems beyond comprehension, after the Holocaust. Unfortunately, Israelis are all too familiar with this sad reality.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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From the editor's desk...

WILL RETURN

SeeJN

MUSICAL VISIT:
Children's entertainer Fred Penner spent an afternoon jamming with young adults with special needs at Toronto's DANI (Developing and Nurturing Independence) on Jan. 15. A DANI mom extended an email invitation after seeing him on CBC the previous week, talking about his sister who had Down syndrome.
[Andrew Laszlo/ Twins Video and Photo]

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Shul official guilty of taking over $46,000

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The former president of the Adath Israel Congregation's brotherhood was sentenced to a 12-month non-custodial sentence for stealing more than $46,000 from the synagogue.

Neil Osak was sentenced to six months of house arrest followed by a six months of curfew for fraudulently taking synagogue funds to pay for personal expenses.

"This offence was a classic breach of trust," said Judge Neil Kozloff of the Ontario Court of Justice. "Community organizations are charitable organizations. Mr. Osak... stole from the do-gooders to address issues in his personal life."

Judge Kozloff largely accepted the recommendations of Crown attorney Rochelle Liberman, who had asked for a 12-month conditional sentence.

Osak "committed a huge fraud and a huge betrayal of trust and he used his position in the synagogue to do it," Liberman said.

Defence council Moshe Micha had asked for a conditional discharge, which would have left Osak without a criminal record. Micha pointed out that Osak had returned all the funds to the synagogue. He argued that Osak was remorseful, his marriage collapsed, he became depressed, and he lost his standing in the community. He also stated that Osak was not likely to be involved in future criminal activity.

At the time of the offence, between August 2008 and September 2010, Osak was struggling financially and took the easy way out. But when arrested, he never denied what he had done and has begun to put his life back on track, Micha said.

He is now working for a seafood processor in Montreal with a responsibility for marketing and business development. A criminal record would make it difficult for him to find work and could jeopardize his current job in Montreal, he said, adding Osak is unlikely to commit another crime.

"He's expressed from the very beginning how ashamed and remorseful he is for what he's done," Micha stated.

Speaking on his own behalf, Osak presented an emotional plea for clemency. He said he took the money when he became pressed by creditors and couldn't pay them. His business had taken a turn for the worse and he was facing expenses of more than $6,000 a month that he couldn't pay. Creditors were calling six or seven times a day. He was finding it hard to get work done.

"It came to the point where I just snapped," he said.

Using blank cheques the synagogue had available for times officials were away, Osak spent the money "for food and the sustenance of my family... I have records to prove where the money went, what it was spent on," he said.

When news of the charges became public, he was shunned by the community. It led to his divorce, as well.

"The whole ordeal cost me my family, my friends. My children don't trust me anymore," Osak said.

Referencing the presence of *The CJN* in court, Osak said "I'll be persecuted again" and the "stigma" of his actions would follow him.

"This whole thing has ruined me physically and emotionally... I'm in my own jail now. I live in constant fear of being found out for what I did."

"Everything I tried to protect and save, I lost."

Osak said he "took the easy way out" when he became desperate. He is putting his life back together in Montreal, but a criminal record would make it hard for him to get work or be bonded, he added.

"I beg for your mercy, that's all," Osak said.

Adath Israel Synagogue

The Canadian Jewish news

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Remember, and act

It seems somewhat quirky if not actually surreal that the United Nations has implemented a day to remember the Holocaust. For, more than any other international organization, the UN – through its various agencies, commissions and bodies – has been the single most voluble source and the highest profile bully pulpit of Holocaust denial among some of its members as well as calumny, invective, lies and vilification about the Jewish state and the Jewish People.

And yet, since 2006, at the initiative of the UN, Jan. 27 has been set aside as the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. The date Jan. 27 was selected because it was on that day in 1945 that Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau.

How cruelly, cynically ironic, therefore, that those very Soviets who threw open the iron gates of Auschwitz locked behind the iron gates of their infamous Gulag Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat in Hungary during World War II, whose goodness and courage saved some 100,000 Jews from death.

So exceptional and significant was Wallenberg's contribution to humanity that the Canadian government made him Canada's first honorary citizen in 1985. In 2001, Parliament declared January 17 Raoul Wallenberg Day.

In honour of Wallenberg Day last week, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney noted "As we pay tribute to this brave hero, we remember the unique horror of the Holocaust and rededicate ourselves to combating antisemitism, racism and all other forms of discrimination."

We commend Canada Post for having issued a commemorative stamp in Wallenberg's honour. The visual reminder of Wallenberg's heroism can perhaps be a marker, a reminder for our own commitment to help us become better individuals.

There were others, too, who risked their own lives to save the lives of others in World War II. We must always remember them as we do Wallenberg. To name but a few, they were: Giorgio Perlasca, Giovanni Palatucci, Gino Bartali, Jan Karski and Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara.

Sugihara, a Japanese envoy, saved more than 3,000 Lithuanian Jews during the Holocaust. He explained his actions –his bravery – quite simply and quite poignantly: "I cannot allow these people to die, people who have come to me for help with death staring them in the eyes. Whatever punishment may be imposed on me, I know I should follow my conscience."

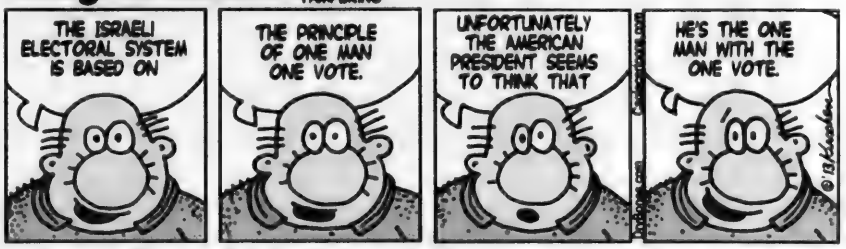
Conscience is the starting point. Action is the result.

As Liberal MP Irwin Cotler suggested in his address to the concluding forum of the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Year at the Swedish Parliament last month, "May Raoul Wallenberg Day be not only an act of remembrance – which it is – but a remembrance always to act."

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Imre Finta, the first person charged under Canada's new war crimes legislation, appeared in court in Toronto to set a date for his preliminary hearing. Meanwhile, neo-Nazi Ernst Zundel's retrial for Holocaust denial got underway, also in Toronto.

Dry Bones — ELECTION TAMPERING


THE ISRAELI ELECTORAL SYSTEM IS BASED ON
THE PRINCIPLE OF ONE MAN ONE VOTE.
UNFORTUNATELY THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT SEEMS TO THINK THAT
HE'S THE ONE MAN WITH THE ONE VOTE.

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Disagrees with NIF representative

I disagree with the headline "NIF working for Israel's future," (Jan. 3). The New Israel Fund (NIF) isn't working for Israel's future. This non-representative fringe radical leftist organization is seeking to impose its ideology on Israel. I also disagree with several statements made in the piece by its author, Orit Sarfaty, executive director of NIF Canada.

- Israel is not having trouble living up to its original ideals. Israeli society is actually functioning much better today than ever. Every country in the world today has room for improvement.
- The NIF subsidizes controversial fringe organizations that are hurting Israel. The fact that Sarfaty mentions what appear to be non-controversial groups that the NIF supports creates a false and misleading picture.
- North American Jews are not poorly served by the vision of a romanticized Israel. The fact is, Israel is not romanticized. If the NIF cannot take pride in the return and settlement of the Jews into our Land of Israel, that's their problem.
- Young North American Jews do not want their own "authentic connection to Israel." The reality is that for most of them, Israel is not a priority. The vast majority has no interest in "grappling" with a "real Israel."
- The NIF does not work hard to ensure that the next generations will take up Israel's cause. I have never heard of the NIF demonstrating or lobbying on Israel's behalf.

Young North American Jews will only take pride in Israel if they have a strong Jewish identity. If 80 per cent currently go to public school and don't know their religion or history, how does anyone expect them to make a connection to Israel?

Richie Cohen
Toronto

• • •

Moses wrote down the Torah: Rashi

In *Torah from Heaven: The Reconstruction of Faith*, the author, Rabbi Norman Solomon, a self-described "skeptical" Orthodox Jew, posits the decidedly unorthodox thesis that the classical doctrine of "Torah from heaven" is a myth and that Moses was not the author of Genesis to Deuteronomy (the Chumash), despite its English translation as the Five Books of Moses ("A book for the thoughtful, 'skeptical' Orthodox," Jan 10).

One of the "proofs" brought to buttress this sacrilegious claim is his interpretation of the word "Torah" in Deuteronomy 31:9. The verse begins, "Moses wrote this Torah…" Rabbi Solomon writes that "this Torah" is not a reference to the Five Books of Moses but to the recording of a specific teaching, or at most a set of teachings, as interpreted by Rabbi Ovadya Seforno. What Rabbi Solomon conveniently leaves out is Rashi's interpretation. Rashi, who all agree was the greatest biblical commentator of all time, says: "When all of it [the Torah] was completed, he [Moses] gave it to the members of his tribe." The commentary on Rashi, *Gur Aryeh*, explains that even though the entire Torah had not yet been written at this point, the verse is out of chronological order, and it refers to after the Torah was completed. Thus, according to Rashi, Moses wrote down the entire divine Torah we have today.

Rabbi Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

• • •

1,000 missionary groups target Jews

The article "Jews for Judaism goes digital in its fight," (Jan. 10), omitted any reference to Jews for Judaism's counter-missionary website, www.jewsforjudaism.ca, its YouTube channel, its Facebook page at "Jews for Judaism (Canada)" or its Twitter account at Twitter@RabbiSkobac.

Jews for Judaism is dedicated to countering the multimillion-dollar efforts of Christian missionary groups that target Jews for conversion. However, today much of that fight is being waged on the Internet. In order for Jews for Judaism to effectively achieve its goal, we offer free educational programs, materials and counselling services that connect Jewish people to the spiritual depth, beauty and wisdom of Judaism. Therefore, it is imperative that articles focused on the targeting of Jews by Christian missionary group publicize our Internet portals.

Also, your article stated that there are some 180 missionary groups targeting Jews operating in North America. That number is actually more than 1,000. The number of missionary groups targeting Jews in Canada is 180, with almost half of them evangelizing Jews in southern Ontario.

Julius Ciss, Executive Director
Jews for Judaism (Canada)

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Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

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Documentary examines Ilan Ramon's legacy

10th anniversary of ill-fated Columbia mission

Maxine Dovere
JNS.org

Dan Cohen describes Israeli Air Force (IAF) Col. Ilan Ramon, the first and only Israeli astronaut, as "a man used to rising to the occasion."

On Jan. 31 at 9 p.m., *Space Shuttle Columbia: Mission of Hope*, a documentary directed by Cohen, will air on PBS to coincide with the 10th anniversary of Ramon's death. [The Toronto Jewish Film Festival screened this film last week].

The film, produced by Christopher Cowen with executive producers Tom Hanks, Gary Goetzman and Mark Herzog for PBS, tells the story of the ill-fated Columbia space shuttle and of Ramon. It incorporates NASA archival footage and video shot by fellow crewmember Dave Brown. It was shot on location in Jerusalem, the Kennedy Space Center in Florida and Washington, D.C.

Israel sent one of its best on NASA's fatal Columbia mission: Ramon was 46, an engineer (in electronics and computers), a pilot, married and the father of four. As a combat pilot, he was an integral part of the 1981 raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak. He trained for Columbia at Houston's Johnson Space Center. Officially designated as a payload specialist, Ramon was described by Cmdr. Mike Anderson as "fully integrated with the crew."

Ramon, one of the mission's seven casualties, is the only non-American to receive the United States Congressional Space Medal of Honor (awarded posthumously). He was chosen to be a NASA astronaut in 1997. By 1998, he had begun a rigorous, five-year training program.

"From the moment he arrived in Houston until he lifted off, Ramon went through a transformational change. He came to understand who he was and what he represented," Cohen told *JNS.org*.

Ramon considered himself a representative of all Jews and all Israelis. Although a secular Jew, as the first Israeli astronaut, he recognized the importance of maintaining Jewish identity and unity.

"I am the son of a Holocaust survivor," he once told *Israel Radio*. "I carry on the suffering of the Holocaust generation, proof that despite all the horror they went through, we're going forward."

Ramon asked mission commander Rick Husband to provide kosher meals and received rabbinical guidance for Shabbat observance in space.

Among the topics explored in Cohen's film is the kind of things astronauts carry into space. Some carry significant personal items, while others bring items with a larger message. Poems and photographs, letters and legacy accompanied Ramon into space. His wife and children sent personal mementos and letters. Moshe Katsav, then Israel's president, provided a Tanach on microfiche. History travelled, too, in the form of a pencil drawing called *Moon Landscape*, drawn by 14-year-old Peter Ginz, who was killed at Auschwitz. A kiddush cup, and the flag of the IAF also flew. These things, said then-Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon at Ramon's memorial service, "touched and excited all Jews" and were "a source of pride and united our hearts."

The Israeli astronaut also carried a miniature Torah scroll saved from the Holocaust. The scroll had been given to a boy who celebrated his bar mitzvah in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. The rabbi who had smuggled the Torah into the camp did not survive, but the boy, and the scroll – the rabbi's admonition to tell the world what happened in that place and the boy's promise – did.

Joachim "Yoya" Joseph, the bar mitzvah boy, became a physicist and was Israel's lead scientist supporting Ramon on the ground. During their work together, Ramon learned the story of the scroll. Went he returned to Houston, he asked for permission to take the tiny Torah saved "from the depths of Hell to the heights of space."

"Ilan felt Yoya's promise deep within his heart and carried it with him deep into space," Cohen said. "Keeping the promise is an important part of the mission of this film."

Mission of Hope is the story of the most diverse shuttle crew ever to explore space.

"Moving tributes like this film remind us all that space flight always carries great risk," NASA administrator and four-time space shuttle astronaut Charles Bolden said. "But fallen heroes like Ilan were willing to risk the ultimate sacrifice to make important science discoveries and push the envelope of human achievement."

For Cohen, *Mission of Hope* became a personal mission. He sought to tell the story not as tragic, but rather as uplifting.

"When Yoya asked, 'What can I do to help you tell this story?' I did not realize that conversation would lead me down a seven-year path," he said.

Meetings with Gen. Rani Falk at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, with Ramon's widow, Rona, and the other astronauts' families followed.

Overall, making the film took the full 10 years since the Columbia tragedy.

"We had to wait for Rona [Ramon's widow] to be ready," Cohen said. "Raising money was also difficult."

Alex Grobman, historical consultant for the documentary and executive director of the America Israel Friendship League, has great admiration for Cohen. Grobman, who also appears in the production, was called on to verify the historical correctness of the story of the bar mitzvah in Bergen-Belsen, including confirmation that there was actually a Torah at the ceremony.

"Filmmakers rarely care about historical accuracy," Grobman told *JNS.org*. "Cohen's approach was different – he was meticulous in his research. For him, this was a labour of love."

Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon

"Ilan Ramon was an exceptional man, a charismatic personality who recognized that being part of the Columbia shuttle crew was a transformational experience," Grobman said. "Ramon embodied the best of Israel. One cannot view this film without understanding the depth of his humanity, love of Israel, and responsibility to the Jewish people. Being involved with this production, as a historian, as a Jew, was a great honour."

Space shuttle Columbia, Mission STS-107, launched Jan. 16, 2003. For 16 days, every aspect of the flight and its scheduled experiments was considered fully successful. But as the crew prepared for landing, Columbia exploded and disintegrated. Little was left, either human or material. Among the objects that did survive was Ramon's in-flight diary, virtually intact, and still legible.

"I felt that I am truly living in space," he wrote. "I have become a man who lives and works in space."

The crew of the space shuttle Columbia

Pictured at Ilan Ramon's private funeral are his wife, Rona, with sons Tal, then 13, right, and Yiftach, then 10.

The real Israel is messy, just like other democracies

In her new book, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*, Judith Butler, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley whose work was supported with grants from the American Council of Learned Societies, the Ford Foundation, and the Mellon Foundation, among others, caricatures Israel, Zionism and the Jewish people. In her introduction – usually the part that a writer pores over most carefully – Butler writes: "By claiming there is a significant Jewish tradition affirming modes of justice and equality that would, of necessity, lead to a criticism of the Israeli state, I establish a Jewish perspective that is non-Zionist, even anti-Zionist, at the risk of making even the resistance to Zionism into a 'Jewish' value and so asserting, indirectly, the exceptional ethical resources of Jewishness."

Gil Troy

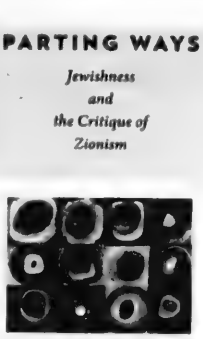
in Montreal

The statement is triply absurd. First, she acts as if she's some kind of Columbus discovering America – wow, Jews have "a tradition affirming modes of justice and equality." Second, she claims those values are antithetical to Zionism. Third, she acts as if "a criticism of the Israeli state" is a novelty and inherently anti-Zionist.

This caricature fits the growing Big Lie on the far left that claims Israel and Zionism are illiberal, anti-democratic and resistant to criticism. I leave it to the philosophers and the psychologists to explain this enduring obsession with Israel and the need to distort the truth about the Jewish state and its founding ideology. But it's important to affirm the true meaning of Zionism as an exercise in liberal nationalism seeking to bring Jewish values alive by implementing them in the Jewish homeland.

At the Shalom Hartman Institute's Engaging Israel project, we talk about Israel as a "values nation." We don't try to claim that Israel is perfect. We don't claim that other nations lack values. We are, instead, trying to continue a Jewish values conversation about Israel, to view Israel as an exciting attempt to develop a Jewish democracy and as a living laboratory implementing Jewish values in sometimes challenging conditions.

In this context, Zionism serves as a powerful, dynamic force for change. Zionism posits that Israel, like all countries, is a work in progress and, like all democratic countries, is in a perpetual quest for self-improvement. Moreover, like the United States and Canada, among others, Israel sits on certain tensions and contradictions. Modern democracies must balance majority rule with minority rights, and individual liberties with collective needs, as well as the desire to inject national values into the public square with the desire to be as open and welcoming to all citizens as possible.



As the only Jewish state in the world, Israel also has a special mission to preserve Jewish culture, to protect Jewish interests and to perpetuate Jewish values. It means that Israel won't have the same kind of separation of church and state that many Americans aspire to have, while being well aware that religion is also a part of the American state. (This porous wall of separation blurs church and state even more so in Canada). So the United States tries to avoid subsidizing any form of religious education, while in Quebec, a religious day school can get money to cover secular studies, and Israel has religious and secular streams in its own public schools.

Each of these three approaches has risks and rewards. American education is facing a values crisis as educators have a hard time teaching values in a western context that's completely cut off from God, religion and other core beliefs. In Quebec, there's a constant balancing act, and, most recently, many religious schools have been chafing under certain government requirements to teach about other religions, following a particular government curriculum – because money often comes with strings attached. Meanwhile, in Israel, haredi and Arab schools take government money without providing the kind of civics and citizenship training a democracy should have in order to raise the next generation of patriotic citizens, even as democratic Israel allows these subgroups to flourish.

Life is complicated. Nation-states are delightfully messy. I don't fear criticism of Israel or of Zionism. But I resent critics who distort and pervert, who caricature and condemn, often in a one-sided way with no sensitivity to the historical record, the enmity of Israel's enemies, or the enduring Israeli and Zionist attempt to improve.

Audience or congregation?

A long time ago, I saw a wonderful one-woman show starring Lily Tomlin called *The Search for Intelligent Life in the Universe*. At the end of the show, Tomlin confides in the audience that the aliens she befriended were watching them, thinking they were the actual show.

She says, "I feel one of 'em tug my sleeve, whispers, 'Trudy, look.' I said, 'Yeah, goosebumps. You really like the play that much?' They said it wasn't the play gave 'em goosebumps, it was the audience. I forgot to tell 'em to watch the play; they'd been watching the audience! Yeah, to see a group of strangers sitting together in the dark, laughing and crying about the same things... that just knocked 'em out. They said, 'Trudy, the play was soup... the audience...art.' "

I thought of this scene last week while enjoying Teatron's new play *Rabbi Sam*, the story of a young American rabbi trying to change the world by shaking up a typical, sleepy congregation. His ideas, creative and inventive but sometimes kooky, are held in suspicion. And of course, within moments of his hiring, one of his shul's longstanding board members decides he can't stand the new rabbi and campaigns to get rid of him.

I thought of course that I would relate personally to the character of Rabbi Sam. Luckily, I didn't. My first congregation, Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, not only tolerated my ideas, but in fact encouraged me to try new things with them. After that, my congregation in Boston, Temple Beth David, not only embraced change, but enthusiastically sought it out. And my new congregation, City Shul, having just been created, doesn't have any "we've always done it that way" naysayers, and just about anything we try is going to be, by definition, new.

Rather, it was the audience I related to. I watched the audience more than I watched the performers. An amazing thing happened: sometime during the second act, the audience turned into a congregation. They were deciding whether or not they, too, liked this new rabbi, and I could feel them judging him not as an actor but really, truly as a rabbi. Was his sermon meaningful? Was he good with the kids? Did he relate to the older folks? Was he inspirational? And when he was just a "normal" guy with his kid, was he still "rabbi" enough for them?

The audience became a congregation at a synagogue in many of the same ways that congregations often feel like audiences at a play.

The guy behind me finished the rabbi's lines for him somewhat impatiently. The woman in the row in front whispered loudly to her companion at several strategic points. And the gentleman a few seats down from me simply fell asleep, snoring with a start every few minutes.

I felt right at home in this congregation. They smiled politely at the "rabbi's" feeble attempts at jokes and shook their heads along with the supposed congregants at his outlandish stories. I think many of them "chose" a board member who was most like them and honed in on that character's feelings for Rabbi Sam.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

in Toronto

Being a rabbi is an often lonely and perplexing profession. We must be compassionate, but strong. Caring but professional. As great with nine-year-olds as we are with 59-year-olds and 90-year-olds. Up to date on the latest issues, but versed in ancient texts. More observant than our congregants, but thoroughly modern in outlook. Committed to Israel, but passionate about our community in the Diaspora.

I can't tell you how many times people have looked into my grocery basket to see what "the rabbi" is buying. And yet people let their rabbi into the most intimate and important moments of their lives – the birth of their babies, the moment their kid becomes an independent teenager, their weddings, their loved ones dying, their mourning and their rejoicing, their simchahs and their sorrows.

So when I stand on the bimah, it's the "audience" sitting together, laughing and crying about the same things, that really knocks me out. Don't worry so much about the "actors" – the folks on the bimah leading the service. Better to start getting goosebumps from the people singing next to you.

Zero Dark Thirty *recreates the hunt for Bin Laden*

Kathryn Bigelow's taut political thriller, *Zero Dark Thirty*, a contender for an Academy Award in the best picture category, has reopened a heated debate on the efficacy and/or morality of coercive interrogation methods to extract information from suspects deemed to be terrorists.

The two hour-plus movie turns on the exhaustive manhunt for Osama bin Laden, the spiritual and operational leader of Al Qaeda, the Islamic fundamentalist organization that claimed responsibility for the terrorist events of Sept. 11, 2001.

During that day of infamy, an episode roughly comparable to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, 19 Arab hijackers recruited and trained by Al Qaeda deliberately crashed three commercial airliners into the Twin Towers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., killing some 3,000 people in the worst terrorist incident in American history.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

By way of reaction, the United States invaded Afghanistan – where a reactionary Taliban government had terrorized a nation and where Al Qaeda, its guest, had masterminded the 9/11 plot – and launched a war on global terrorism. Although the United States succeeded in unseating the Taliban, scattering its leaders and giving Afghanistan a new lease on life, it signally failed to find Bin Laden, even as it posted a $25-million reward for his capture and tracked down several of his chief subordinates.

In the intervening years, Bin Laden taunted the United States by releasing a series of provocative videos. Still, he could not be found. But in May 2011, the United States, having ascertained Bin Laden's whereabouts in a fortified compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, finally exacted vengeance as U.S. commandos shot and killed him in his residence and thereby achieved a measure of closure.

Zero Dark Thirty, which landed in Canadian theatres earlier this month after opening in the United States in December, unfolds over a 10-year period in semi-documentary style and focuses on the manhunt for the fugitive Bin Laden, America's number 1 enemy.

The central character in Bigelow's fast-paced and suspenseful film, Maya (Jessica Chastain), is a smart and obsessive Central Intelligence Agency operative whose search for Bin Laden is facilitated by the detection of his trusted personal courier in the flyblown Pakistani town of Peshawar.

The discovery of the courier was indubitably a factor in solving the puzzle of Bin Laden's disappearance after 9/11. But in retrospect, how important were coercive interrogations?

In *Zero Dark Thirty*, nominated for five Academy Awards, there are a succession of gut-wrenching scenes in which suspected terrorists are brutally interrogated through a technique known as waterboarding.

Certainly, Dan (Jason Clarke), one of the American interrogators, is convinced it works. As he puts it in an early scene, "In the end, everybody breaks, bro. It's biology." He delivers this in-your-face observation after questioning a suspect whose arms are strung up to the ceiling in a clandestine detention centre, or black site. These sites, which were part and parcel of the CIA's detention and interrogation program, were opened after 9/11 by the Bush administration but discontinued by President Barack Obama shortly after his inauguration in January 2009.

Osama bin Laden

Bigelow and her screenwriter, Mark Boal, who collaborated in the Academy Award winning film *The Hurt Locker*, do not even imply that torture in and of itself led to the daring Navy Seals raid that sealed Bin Laden's fate.

Nonetheless, three U.S. senators, Democrats Dianne Feinstein and Carl Levin and Republican John McCain, issued a critique of *Zero Dark Thirty*, claiming it is "grossly inaccurate and misleading" in its suggestion that coercive interrogations gave the CIA the information it needed to nail Bin Laden.

The CIA's deputy director, Michael Morell, levelled a similar accusation, charging that the 157-minute film "creates the strong impression" that torture was the key to finding Bin Laden. "That impression is patently false," he said. "The truth is that multiple streams of intelligence" prompted CIA analysts to conclude that Bin Laden was hiding in Abbottabad, a hamlet close to Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan.

The notion that torture broke the Bin Laden case was, ironically, legitimized by two former high-ranking CIA officials.

Jose Rodriquez, who supervised the CIA's counter-terrorism operations, opined in a *Washington Post* piece that the hunt for Bin Laden "stemmed from information obtained from hardened terrorists who agreed to tell us some (but not all) of what they knew after undergoing harsh but legal interrogation."

Michael Hayden, the last CIA director appointed by George W. Bush, wrote in a *Wall Street Journal* article that "a crucial component" of the CIA's data was provided by detainees who had been "subjected to some form of enhanced interrogation."

Zero Dark Thirty, which unfolds to terrorist bombings in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, London, Islamabad and New York City, comes down somewhere in the middle on this issue, which is where the unsullied truth usually lies.

By all accounts, the information gathered by the United States on Bin Laden originated from a variety of sources: the hard slog of field work, wiretaps placed on telephone calls and emails, satellite images gleaned from patterns of daily life in Bin Laden's compound and, last but not least, from coercive interrogations in black sites in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Poland.

In one such centre in Pakistan, Maya, a red-haired, porcelain-skinned, blue-eyed beauty who must overcome implicit sexist assumptions about her resolve, threatens to send a suspect to Israel if he does not cooperate.

The implication here is that he will be treated far more roughly in Israel, where the Supreme Court has sanctioned the use of moderate physical pressure to extract life-saving information from terrorists.

Maya, perhaps a composite of several CIA agents, proves beyond a doubt that a woman can be as tough as a man. Indeed, a colleague describes her as a "killer." In portraying Maya, Chastain exudes grit and grace, qualities that enabled her to win last week's Golden Globe award as best actress of 2012.

Incredibly focused, Maya convinces her superiors that the U.S. homeland can only be protected if Bin Laden is eliminated. She also persuades them that he is holed up in Abbotabad.

The 40-minute raid on his redoubt is realistically filmed in real time and in green-tinted hues as whirring helicopters disgorge commandos wearing night-time vision goggles. They blow up doors, kill a few of its residents and carry away incriminating documents, computer hard drives and a body bag containing Bin Laden's corpse. Bin Laden himself is never fully seen, except quickly in a digital photograph snapped by a commando after his death.

Far from being jingoistic in substance or tone, *Zero Dark Thirty* tells its story earnestly and in detached fashion, letting viewers reach independent conclusions.

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ROMSPEN

Funeral for murdered couple draws over 1,000

David (Donny) Pichosky and Rochelle Wise

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

A standing-room-only crowd of more than 1,000 people attended funeral services Jan. 14 for a Toronto couple found dead earlier this month in their Hallandale Beach, Fla., condominium.

Police in Florida are investigating the deaths of David (Donny) Pichosky, 71, and his wife Rochelle Wise, 66, as a double homicide.

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, spiritual leader of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, said at the double funeral at Benjamin's Park Memorial Chapel, "We are overwhelmed by tragedy, and we are beset with questions."

Earlier in the day, Capt. Sonia Quinones, a spokesperson for the Hallandale Beach Police, said that police were awaiting the medical examiner's report to determine the cause of death and that motive was still unknown.

Wise's son, Jamie, said in a eulogy that he was "confused, frozen, angry, shocked and broken... searching for information, answers, resolution and justice. These questions won't stop, and shouldn't stop, until justice is found."

He recalled his mother's gift for connecting with people and her ability to "inspire, teach, and encourage people to dream... to see the potential within them."

Wise was a preschool administrator at Bialik Hebrew Day School and a founding director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp.

Pichosky, her husband of four years, was a retired businessman who volunteered with seniors at Baycrest, and had spent at least 20 years wintering in Florida.

Jamie Wise said his mother had "truly found her basherт" in Pichosky, whom he recalled as kind and gentle.

Her son read from a note his mother had left for him and his sister, which he said was "not meant to be read for many years."

Continued on page 49

Mature Zionism:
Criticizing Israel Without Delegitimization
with Prof. Hanan Alexander

Tuesday, February 5th 2013 - 7:30 pm

Beth Tzedec Synagogue, 1700 Bathurst Street

No Admission Fee

Prof. Alexander will explore a more mature approach to Zionism and Israel affairs that can guide public discourse within the institutions and educational programs of Jewish life, as well as society at-large. His approach recognizes that every human society is flawed and that delegitimization does not follow from acknowledging social imperfections.

Hanan Alexander is Professor of Philosophy of Education and Dean of Students at the University of Haifa, where he heads the International School and the Centre for Jewish Education. Educated at the UCLA, Stanford, and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Alexander is also a Sr. Research Fellow of the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. He is the author or editor of seven books and over 120 essays, including *Reclaiming Goodness: Education and the Spiritual Quest*, which won a 2001 Jewish national book award. He is currently completing *Reimagining Liberalism: Affiliation and Inquiry in Democratic Schooling*.

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Chazzan's role has evolved, cantor says

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

As Shabbat Shirah (the Sabbath of Song) approaches this weekend, Cantor David Rosen wants the community to know that cantors are "much more than just the voice of the synagogue."

Rosen – the president of the Toronto Council of Hazzanim, and cantor and director of youth education at Beth Radom Congregation – told *The CJN* that cantors want to have more of a presence in the community.

"Our roles have evolved over the years," he said, citing pastoral visits, life cycle events and teaching, in partnership with congregational rabbis, in addition to cantors' more traditional role as singers and prayer leaders.

This year, the approximately 30-member organization is planning its annual concert to raise funds for charity, in conjunction with Jewish day school choirs, he said. "We're reaching out to all generations." Many of his colleagues also do programs at day schools, perform at seniors homes and visit residents there, he added.

Part of that outreach is done by the council, and part of it comes about after Rosen or a colleague receives a request for help with a program.

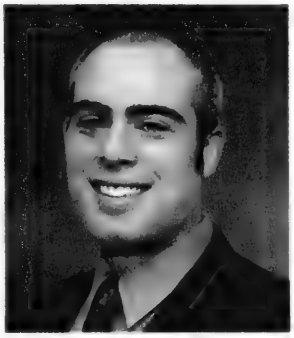
"I think that music really has the power to transcend generations," Rosen said. "I think we can access people through music, and give them an 'in' to Judaism..., whether seeing us at a concert or a community event, or seeing us onstage.

Another council project involves outreach to small communities, either in the form of concerts or by travelling there for a Shabbat, Rosen said. A few years ago, the council held a program in Sudbury, and a concert in London, Ont., is in the works for this spring.

The group has also participated in community Remembrance Day and Yom Hashoah services, and would like to become involved in more joint projects with the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

"We're working on a Yom Iyun – a day of study – for rabbis and cantors, and possibly the public, either for Shavuot or before the High Holidays."

Continued on page 49



Cantor David Rosen

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100-year-old says what's on her mind

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

At 100 years old, Rose Wexler says she's in good shape.

"Really, the only thing that is failing is my hearing, and half the time I don't want to hear what people have to say anyway," she said in an interview at her Don Mills condominium, where she lives with her caregiver.

She still likes to cook, she said, "but since I pay for the [caregiver], she should do the work. I taught her to make chicken soup, fricassee and roast chicken."

Born in Toronto on Jan. 3, 1913, Wexler, has two children, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. "I don't like to brag about what they do. It's how they turned out that count, and they all turned out well. They come to visit me often."

She told a joke about three Jewish mothers bragging about their children.

"One woman said her son is an [accountant], one said her son is a lawyer and another said that her four-year-old will become a doctor."

But seriously, she said, "education is important. It leads you to the right place."

Wexler said music has always played a big part in her life.

"I play the piano, and I taught it for years. I was a strict teacher. If I didn't like the way a student talked to me, they were finished. I was popular, though, and had a waiting list. I still hear from some of my students. Now, I'm teaching my great-grandchild to play," she said.

"Music is important. It has kept me busy and kept me going. I sang for the Holy Blossom [Temple] choir for 30 years, and we even went to Israel to sing."

She said she likes to stay occupied.

"Keeping busy is what keeps people young. I never sit around and do nothing. I'm up at 8 a.m. every day and in the shower. By 9 a.m., I'm ready to start my day. I read the paper or go to the library downstairs and get a book."

Rose Wexler

Even when she wintered in Florida, she did volunteer work, she said. "I couldn't just sit at the beach. I made a lot of friends that way."

She has lived in her building for 32 years, she said, and she has neighbours who check on her and offer to shop. "I don't like to impose on anyone, though."

Wexler said she waits for her family to call her, rather than calling them.

"I don't know when they're busy, and I have nothing to say that can't wait. I try to be independent, and I always say what's on my mind."

Being 100 doesn't mean that much to her, she said. "I'm just glad I liked what I did, and I didn't waste my time. I'm grateful for everything, and thank God for what I have."

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Bone marrow donor speaks to parents of the girl he saved

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Jeremy Braverman, 29, a Toronto native living in Chicago, recently had an emotional phone call with two strangers in California.

The man and woman are the parents of Lindsey Krueger, now 18, to whom Braverman donated bone marrow when Lindsey was 15.

Lindsey Krueger

Jeremy Braverman

Braverman registered with the Gift of Life Bone Marrow Foundation, a bone marrow, blood stem cell and umbilical cord blood registry, in 2005, while he was a student at York University.

The school's local Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity chapter had set up a booth on campus, when Braverman, a fraternity member, was a second-year student.

He said that he didn't think about it again until 2010, when he received a call "out of the blue" from the foundation to tell him that he was a potential match for Lindsey, who had leukemia.

Braverman went to New York, underwent a physical exam to ensure that he was indeed a good match, and went on to undergo the procedure.

"The whole process was anonymous, but I knew her details," he said.

A year later, he was called upon again to donate marrow to Lindsey, because her leukemia had returned.

Adam Krueger, Lindsey's father, said that after Braverman donated for the second time, the doctors began an "infusion treatment plan where they would take the donor's cells and infuse them into Lindsey's bloodstream in an attempt to re-activate the fight between the host cells and the donor cells, with the hopeful outcome of eradicating the cells that formed the cancer."

After six months, he said, Lindsey began showing positive signs, and now doctors have taken her off all chemo drugs and have seen no signs of cancer in her system.

"I cannot tell anyone how grateful I am to Jeremy Braverman for his selfless act of kindness for a perfect stranger. I can only hope that more people get tested and matched so that more people can share the same blessings we have."

In a phone interview from California, Lindsey's mother, Maria, said that she had no words to describe the emotions she felt when she spoke to Braverman, who now works for Groupon in Chicago, for the first time about six weeks ago by phone.

"Here was a perfect stranger who saved my daughter's life. She is in Florida now at the Disney College program because she has always been interested in musical theatre. That would not have happened without Jeremy."

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Darryl Sittler to play hockey at fundraiser

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Two Canadian winter traditions – hockey and skiing – will be combined in a fundraiser for the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem.

Slice the Ice for a Cause, organized by the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation, includes two events, On the Slopes for Candy and the inaugural Hockey Night in Toronto.

NHL alumnus Darryl Sittler will play in a special daytime exhibition hockey game on Jan. 27 with the top 20 Hockey Night in Toronto online fundraisers. Afterward, Sittler will party with guests at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. To play, fundraisers must bring in at least $2,500 individually or $25,000 as a team of 10.

"Having the chance to play hockey with Darryl Sittler is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said event co-chair Lawrence Mandel. "Both my co-chair, Jordan Black, and I are very excited about this new event."

Guests at Hockey Night in Toronto will enjoy kosher appetizers and desserts with an open bar. There will be prizes, a silent auction and gifts, together with entertainment and interactive games.

Online fundraisers who bring in a minimum of $1,000 will receive a free ticket to party at Hockey Night in Toronto and a free ticket to ski at On the Slopes for Candy on Jan. 31 at the Alpine Ski Club in Collingwood, Ont. Those who raise at least $500 will get a free ticket to one of the events. Other fundraising incentives include a team photo, personalized autographs and photos with Sittler.

On the Slopes for Candy is a fun-filled day of skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing, with spa services available for non-skiers. Guests will be driven on a luxury coach to Collingwood, and there will be Scotch tasting and a frozen vodka bar.

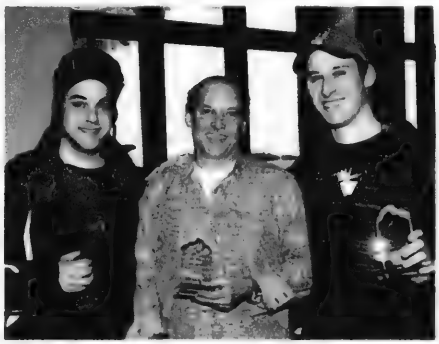
On the Slopes was renamed in memory of Candy Schaffel Black, who died after a long battle with cancer. On the Slopes for Candy has raised more than $500,000 since its inception. In 2012, over $75,000 was raised, with proceeds going toward the purchase of an incubator and cardiac monitor to support high-risk infants in the neonatal intensive care unit at Shaare Zedek.

Proceeds from Slice the Ice for a Cause will be used for critically needed medical equipment for the neonatal unit at Shaare Zedek. Approximately five per cent of the 15,000 babies born at Shaare Zedek need intensive medical supervision and treatment provided by the neonatal unit.

Shaare Zedek is in the final stage of a $60-million campaign to complete the construction of the New Generation Building. The building will house a world-class facility to serve the health-care needs of women and children.

Known as the Hospital with a Heart, Shaare Zedek relies on donors around the world, as it does not receive government support for education, equipment or research.

For tickets or for more information about Slice the Ice for a Cause, visit www.slicetheice.ca.



Slice the Ice for a Cause co-chairs, from left, are Jordan Black, Philip Black and Lawrence Mandel.

Morsi's comments condemned

Compiled by CJN Staff

Foreign Minister John Baird has condemned the president of Egypt for calling Zionists "bloodsuckers" and comparing them to "the descendants of apes and pigs" in remarks made in 2010 as a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In an interview on CBC's *News and Politics* last week, Baird said, "I think whenever you hear anything resembling that type of antisemitic rant, it causes us all deep concern. Those remarks were absolutely abhorrent, and obviously the government of Canada condemns any such remarks."

In Washington, White House press secretary Jay Carney also condemned Mohamed Morsi's remarks, made in 2010 but revealed only last week by MEMRI, the Middle East Media Research Institute.

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Muslim council condemns Quetta attacks

Continued from page 3

Khan said that on hearing of the flyer, he contacted several Sunni imams, pointing to "a need to self-searching the root causes within our own ranks. It is too easy to throw the mud on other religions/nations/countries."

Khan said three imams called him back "and their remarks were very positive."

Meanwhile, the Council of Muslims Facing Tomorrow (CMFT) condemned the Quetta attacks, laying the blame with the Lashar-e-Jhangvi and the Sipahi-e-Sahaba.

"These notorious Sunni militias are criminal terrorist organizations secretly funded by the intelligence wing of the Pakistani military," the CMFT stated.

"Sadly, and to the horror of most Canadian Muslims, there are Muslims in the community who shamelessly and without any conscience seek to exploit such tragedies, as the one in Quetta, to advance their own subversive agenda in this country.

"It is deeply painful to see how such medieval conspiracy theories persist inside the Muslim community," said CMFT president Raheel Raza. "At a time when the Muslim community faces serious internal issues, it is shameful we continue to find some Muslims who place blames on others for Muslim failings. Painful as it is, the time is long past to keep denying we Muslims and no one else are the authors of our own misfortune. Fantasizing over such ridiculous ideas that there is a 'Zionist plot' serves only to deepen our self-inflicted misery, to avoid learning any lesson from our past history, and in refusing to be responsible for our present, deny any hope for our future."

Khan, whose news website is read by thousands of Pakistani journalists, said, "In Pakistan, neither the government nor any other organization believes it was done by Zionists, Israel or Mossad. They believe it was done by Indian intelligence agencies and Russian intelligence agencies."

Nevertheless, at the end of last week, the *Daily Ummat* newspaper ran a story which, when translated from Urdu, was headlined: "Security agencies in Pakistan arrest a Mossad operative from Lahore."

The article claims the alleged agent had been held for 2-1/2 years in Guantanamo Bay, where he was brainwashed. "After that, he was sent to Afghanistan, where he was specially trained to plan terrorism. And finally, he was sent back to Pakistan."

Relying on unnamed "credible sources," the article states the alleged agent's home contained a large cache of weapons, maps of sensitive areas and a laptop that showed he had been in touch with people in Israel via email.

"When the culprit was subjected to special interrogation mechanisms, he finally confessed that he was working for Israel's intelligence agency Mossad," the article stated.

GET TO KNOW A CEO

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Proceeds go to support ground-breaking cancer research in Israel.

ICRF Israel Cancer Research Fund

Chassidim sue blogger

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A decade-long feud in Outremont between a wealthy chassidic leader and a non-Jewish blogger who chronicles alleged municipal infractions by the chassidic community went to court last week.

Michael Rosenberg, head of the prominent commercial real estate company Rosdev, along with his son Martin Rosenberg and businessman Alex Werzberger, who heads a coalition of chassidic communities, are suing Pierre Lacerte for $375,000 for defamation, harassment and breach of privacy. The case was heard in Quebec Superior Court over four days, ending Jan. 17.

That scheduled time proved insufficient, and the hearing will resume Jan. 30.

The elder Rosenberg, 58, openly charges that Lacerte is motivated by antisemitism, which Lacerte denies, saying he just wants the law applied equally to everyone and is exercising his freedom of speech.

Lacerte lives on Hutchison Street, facing Congregation Gate David, a small Bobover shul that has been there for more than 50 years. The Rosenbergs are leaders of the congregation.

Lacerte, 58, has run the blog "Accommodements Outremont" since 2007, using it to document and comment on perceived violations of the borough's parking, nuisance, building and other regulations.

His chassidic neighbours are a frequent topic, although the question of how often he writes about them came into dispute during testimony.

Since 2003, Lacerte has been photographing alleged violations and presenting these images as evidence on his blog. That's the year the congregation began doing construction work that Lacerte alleges went ahead without a permit.

To read full story, please go to cjnews.com.

Developer abandons offer to buy Ottawa shul

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Congregation Beth Shalom's property in downtown Ottawa is back on the market after a local developer walked away from its offer to buy the shul building.

In late 2011, Claridge Homes made an offer to buy the 81,000-square-foot property for $15 million, with a possibility that the price could increase by up to $9 million pending permission from the city to increase the site's density.

Beth Shalom Synagogue
[Michael Regenstreif/Ottawa Jewish Bulletin photo]

The agreement contained conditions. The synagogue, a member of the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues and Ottawa's last major downtown shul, had 120 days after signing the agreement to waive its conditions, which it did.

Claridge had until last week to waive its conditions, but on the final day advised the shul that it would not proceed with the purchase. It didn't give reasons for the move.

"I respect their decision not to proceed," said Ian Sherman, Beth Shalom's president. "They lived by the terms of the agreement. I am not aware that there were any issues, but for business reasons, they chose not to proceed."

The downtown building, which had housed a Jewish community centre and various other Jewish communal offices in addition to the synagogue until a new suburban Jewish community campus was built in 1998, had in recent years been renting space to a number of charitable organizations. Many have already made other plans and have vacated, or are planning to vacate, the building.

That leaves the congregation in a position of being a landlord – which it was trying to avoid – but with fewer tenants and less income. The congregation of 350 families can't afford to maintain the premises and the demographics of the community have changed as well, with most families moving to the suburbs, all of which prompted the decision to sell and move to another area of the city.

The plan remains the same, only the particulars and the time frame are back in flux.

"This property will be sold, and the shul will move. That is the bottom line," Sherman said. "We had several interested parties alongside Claridge when we first put the property for sale, and we have had continued interest during the past year, because developers were aware of Claridge's right to waive conditions," he said.

"Since it has been announced [that Claridge would not be proceeding with the purchase], there has been a significant degree of interest from multiple parties, and I am very confident that something will get done."

One of the options being explored is an amalgamation with Agudath Israel Congregation, a Conservative shul in the city's west end. Talks, however, have not been successful.

"We have called a hiatus on these discussions for a variety of reasons, and I know that many congregants in both synagogues would like to see an amalgamation. It is my opinion that this is a continuing, desirable and favourable option for both shuls and for the community," Sherman said.

"I continue to stay in touch with Agudath Israel and certain of their representatives and am leaving the lines of communication open. For now, my priority is to work on negotiating the sale of our property."

CELEBRATING BIALIK: Grade 3 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School celebrate the life and songs of poet Chaim Nachman Bialik in a class performance using four languages, drama, song and dance. Pictured from left are Dahlia, Samara, Shane, Aaron.

Hamilton park may be named for Wallenberg

Abigail Cukier
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — Citizens of Hamilton, Ont., last week held a program to commemorate Raoul Wallenberg Day, which is observed on Jan. 17.

UJA Federation of Hamilton's Holocaust Education Committee and city council, however, hope to eventually honour Wallenberg with a more lasting tribute.

Last month, council agreed to honour Wallenberg, possibly by naming a park within the city for him. Hamilton's public works department is looking into a location.

City councillor Maria Pearson, chair of the city's facilities naming subcommittee, hopes for more than a park naming.

"I am hoping to work with [the culture department] to have some sort of statue instead of just naming a park," Pearson said. "This was one man, a single person trying to safeguard so many people and putting his life in danger to do this. I am not saying he's the only one. I am sure there are others, others we don't even know. But that's why we have to honour the ones we do."

Ernie Mason, who was saved by Wallenberg, spoke to council to help convince them to create a tribute. Mason also shared his story at the Raoul Wallenberg Day event, which took place Jan. 16 at Adas Israel Congregation. The Holocaust Education Committee presented a program that included Mason's personal testimony, a short film, poetry, music and a preview of the Wallenberg stamp, which was released the next day.

Wallenberg saved as many as 100,000 Hungarian Jews during World War II. Often in dangerous circumstances, he handed out a protective document called the Schutz-Pass, featuring the symbols and colours of Sweden, to Jews. At the end of the war, he was taken into Soviet custody. His fate was never discovered and his body has never been found.

Mason was 10 years old in 1944. His father and older brother, Laszlo, were sent to a work camp, where his brother was killed. Another older brother went to Auschwitz, and his older sister lived with a friend, posing as a Christian.

Mason lived with his mother and baby brother near Budapest. They were also

Ernie Mason
[Barry Gray/Hamilton Spectator photo]

posing as Christian and living with a host family. After six weeks, they left so as not to endanger their host family.

His mother headed to the Swedish Embassy, where she had heard they could get citizenship papers. Encountering a long line, she went to the back of the building and a man who spoke German let them inside. He gave them papers and put them in a safe house, where they remained until the end of the war.

Mason later learned that the man was Wallenberg.

"He saved my life. Without him, my children and grandchildren would not be here. Now that the opportunity is here to do something nice in his memory, I think it is very important," said Mason. "Heroes are few and far between, and I think he was one of them."

Mason came to Hamilton in 1949. He and his wife, Dorothy, have been married for 52 years. They have two children and four grandchildren.

Madeleine Levy, co-chair of the Holocaust Education Committee, said she is proud of the committee's nationally recognized education work, but there is no tangible recognition of the Holocaust in Hamilton.

"We thought Raoul Wallenberg could be that lightning rod," she said. "He exemplifies the power of one and is someone Hamiltonians could be inspired by.

"This tribute within the city will also be a testament to all Holocaust survivors who have made Hamilton home and contributed to Canada in many ways. We want to leave a legacy to citizens of Hamilton and ensure the lessons of the Holocaust are not forgotten."

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KEEPING JEWS JEWISH

Canadian Jewish community says goodbye to a legend

Despite being small in stature, Norma Cummings, z"l had a huge heart

By Daniel Horowitz

When Norma Cummings passed away on December 20th, 2012, Montreal's Jewish community lost one of its most passionate, enthusiastic and generous supporters.

Although she was small in stature, Norma, the daughter of Louis Reitman, Founder, along with his brothers, of the iconic clothing chain Reitman's, was known by her countless admirers for her enormous heart, and as a unique individual with a passion for life, laughter, community, and most of all, family, which includes her three children, nine grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

"My brother, sister and I grew up in the late '50s, Montreal," recalls one of Norma's two sons, Richard. "It was an idyllic time. Our sense of life and our sensibilities about life were very much based on growing up surrounded by love and support. By the same token, ours was a home, and a dinner table, where the issues of the day were always present and where matters of social justice were always grist for our mill."

"Who was our mother, and how did she leave such a lasting impact on so many?" asked son, Steven, in the siblings' heartfelt and touching joint eulogy to their mom. "First and foremost, Mom believed in family. No one had our back the way our mom had our back. She believed that holidays, birthdays, happy – but also sad times – were times to be together. Families stay together by respecting and rejoicing in the common threads that bind us. Mom knitted that colourful quilt that was our family, and was vigilant in holding all the pieces together."

And today, in a time when it seems that many families are being divided by life's myriad of distractions, Norma's commitment to family has paid obvious dividends which continue to keep that bond intact today.

"There was no greater expression of this love of family than our home in Vermont where four generations continue to play, laugh and love together," said Richard. "She forged deep relations with us all. When you were alone with Mom, you had the sense that you were the only person in the world. That is why people felt so intensely about her. So many truly loved her."

"Mom was a real force," said daughter Nancy Cummings Gold, who is returning to a graduate degree in Philosophy at McGill University. "People noticed her. She was a beautiful, incredibly stylish woman – one with a very unique and independent style. Heads turned, but she was easy to reach out to. She made people feel comfortable in her presence. Mom loved our dad. She loved him fiercely. He remained her great love throughout her life. Together they built a beautiful home and gave us a wonderful childhood with strong values, a sense of justice and a moral compass. We will carry that with us forever."

Norma enjoying a summer day in 1995

And it's that sense of justice and morality that propelled the three siblings into working for the betterment of the Canadian Jewish community, both as volunteers and as a professional.

Richard is the Executive Director of Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS) in Toronto and Steven worked with CIJA and is a Past President of Montreal's Jewish Federation (CJA) and of the city's Jewish General Hospital.

The list of Norma's volunteer and charitable efforts is indeed an impressive one that includes, among others, CJA, Jewish National Fund, Jewish Public Library, Jewish General Hospital, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Tel Aviv University, Ben Gurion University, McGill University and Concordia University.

One of Norma's favourite activities, and something that perhaps best personified the woman, took place every Tuesday over the last ten years, when she would invite 20 to 30 women between the ages of 17 and 97 into her home for "Tuesdays with Norma."

"My mother's capacity to engage the world was particularly evident in this Tuesday tradition," said Richard. "And, if you got invited to Tuesdays with Norma, you also got some pretty impressive bragging rights. These women would come, sit, drink scotch, and talk about anything and everything including art, as my mother was quite a talented artist. She was simply a gracious woman and her grace translated into support for the community, for her family, and her friends. She loved to open her home to events that touched her heart and helped others. And our Yontifs were always standing room only. If we had 60 people for any given Yontif at her home, it was not unusual."

"Norma was an active and caring participant in Federation CJA," said CEO Deborah Corber. "Always helpful, positive, and with a sense of humour and grace. She felt a special responsibility to the community, due to her lineage, which transcended beyond financial generosity to incorporate leading by example."

"The passion for, and dedication to community that Norma Cummings demonstrated throughout her life is something that we should all aspire to," said Ted Sokolsky, CEO & President, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "And her legacy of communal involvement lives on today within her children, all of whom play an ongoing role in Jewish life across Canada."

Norma Cummings, in August, 2012

NOTICE

GRAND ORDER OF ISRAEL CEMETERY

has submitted by-laws to the Registrar of the Cemeteries Act *(Revised)*

Any interested parties may contact:

Grand Order of Israel Cemetery
c/o Aaron Shiffman
15 Dow Avenue
Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 1W3
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for information or to make copies.

These by-laws are subject to the approval of the Registrar, Cemeteries Act (Revised)

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ARTS TD SOCAN

Exciting archeological discoveries

There have been some exciting archeological discoveries in Israel in the last little while. Among them is the famous inscription found at Tel Dan in the northern Galilee featuring the earliest extra-biblical mention of the "House of David." This was a major nail in the coffin of the biblical minimalists, who believe that much of the early history of ancient Israel before the latter part of the first millennium was prefabricated.

Other exciting discoveries include the remains of what may be David's palace. This massive structure was discovered near the crest of the ancient City of David, where the earliest settlement of Jerusalem was found, which has been dated to the dawn of civilization, circa 3000 BCE. Although the identification of this monumental structure as David's palace has yet to be confirmed, it shows that Jerusalem was an important centre and not just a provincial backwater that was the inconsequential home of some insignificant chieftain in the Judean Hills.

A few years ago, an inscribed potsherd dating to the late 11th or early 10th century BCE was found at Tel Qeiyafa, just outside Jerusalem. What made this small piece of broken pottery so important was that the inscription on it supposedly dealt with such humanitarian issues as protecting widows and orphans. Such matters would become a hallmark of Judaism's ethical and moral base. It has been postulated that this inscription may have been part of a coronation decree dating to the accession of Saul. To see these issues emerge so early is amazing and promises to have a major impact on the study of the development of the ethics and morality of ancient Israel.

Past Forward

Alex Gropper

The last discovery is especially dear to me, since I had an indirect role in helping to bring it about. This happened when Prof. Michael Chazan, head of the University of Toronto's Archaeology Centre, told me that the centre, with the backing of U of T's Centre for Jewish Studies, headed by Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein, was about to participate in a major new excavation in the Galilee. He asked whether I was interested in helping him out. I jumped at the opportunity.

Thanks to the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies and some generous former students from the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, we adopted the dig as an ongoing project of the Jewish/Italian Friendship Project, which I helped to initiate with both the Italian and Israeli consulates in Toronto. What was even more exciting was the fact that the excavations at Tel Huqoq produced the most exciting find of the past season: an inscribed and illustrated synagogue mosaic floor dating to the late Roman/early Byzantine period, in the fourth to sixth centuries CE.

On March 14, we will be bringing the charismatic head of the excavations, Prof. Jodi Magness, to Toronto for a free, illustrated lecture, 7:15 p.m., room 400, Alumni Hall, at U of T's St. Michael's College, 121 St. Joseph St.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Gefilte fish, Part 3

Can a humble, ethnic food like gefilte fish become trendy? Cool?

I started to wonder when I saw Gefilte Fish recipes pop up on sites such as Martha Stewart's. In fairness, her recipe was provided by the doyenne of Jewish American cuisine, Joan Nathan. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte16]** Not to be outdone, the Williams-Sonoma site has a recipe from Michael Solomonov. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte17]**

Which of these do not belong: Atkins, South Beach, Zone, gefilte? Trick question. They *all* belong. Can gefilte fish be any trendier now that it has its very own fad diet? It worked for Julian Singer: "Weighing in at a whopping 165 pounds, I decidedly needed to lose about five to seven pounds. After three months eating gefilte fish about three to four times a week at one of my meals – usually for dinner – I was able to shed eight pounds and keep it off." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte22]**

And if you want to sample a different gefilte fish recipe each day for two months, here's how. The RCFJ Recipe Archive has the classics, plus Leslie's Mexican Gefilte Fish, Marian Burros's Gefilte Fish Loaf and Maryland Spicy Gefilte Fish. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte23]** At the Jewish-food Gefilte Fish Archives, there's Dilled Salmon, Chilled Terrine and about 40 others. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte24]**

Here are two suggestion for people who love the *idea* of eating gefilte fish: Vegetarian Gefilte Fish calls for eggs, onions, carrots, potato, matzoh meal but not a speck of fish. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte25]** And how's this ersatz gefilte for fish-haters? It looks like the real deal but contains *chicken* instead of fish! **[http://bit.ly/gefilte26]**

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the bathtub... there's a carp swimming in it. Shelly Kling-Yosef's short film, "*Gefilte Fish* tells the story of a young woman torn between her prenuptial family tradition to kill and prepare gefilte fish versus her sympathy for the live carp swimming in her bathtub." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte18]** Watch the 10-minute saga online. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte19]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

Speaking of videos, the Center for Jewish History brought together five culinary gurus to discuss whether the venerable Jewish dish can be adapted for palates that had long dismissed it. Join Israeli chef Omer Miller and representatives of the 2nd Ave. Deli, Kutsher's Tribeca, and Brooklyn's trendy Gefilteria for a lively 50-minute "Gefilte Talk." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte28]**

And here's an excerpt from the Gefilteria's "manifesto": "Gefilte is about reclaiming our time-honoured foods and caring how they taste and how they're sourced. It is about serving a dish with pride, and not simply out of deference to hollow convention... We of the Gefilteria plan to bring our foods out of the jar and back to the street, to the pushcarts where we began, to the flavours of the people." **[http://bit.ly/gefilte21]**

A few years ago, the Israeli post office probably did more to get gefilte fish into the mouths of thousands of people than a generation of bubbies. It immortalized the food on a postage stamp with the words "Gefilte fish" written in English, Yiddish and Arabic. The stamp depicts five pieces of fish crowned with carrot slices (along with the ingredients listed below the perforation!) Standing on guard in the top right corner of the stamp, the humble fish grinder. **[http://bit.ly/gefilte27]**

Highway@rogers.com

Everyone is included

Rabbi Geoffrey Haber

A couple brought their child, who is developmentally disabled, to synagogue. As the Ark opened, the little boy blurted out, "Torah." His parents were exhilarated: this little boy, struggling to express himself, used appropriate words in the appropriate context. It was a moment of triumph.

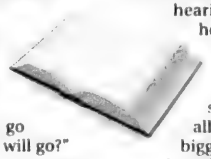
But their exhilaration was short-lived as they were told to take the boy out. Afterward, this couple was told that his outburst disrupted the service and they should not bring him anymore. Angrily, they stormed out of the building and refused to come back. How could they stay in a congregation that treated people with disabilities in such a manner?

Our Torah teaches in Leviticus: "Do not set a stumbling block before the blind." This asks us to help smooth the way for those with disabilities to live as normal a life as possible by removing obstacles from their path. It asks us to show a little sensitivity, understanding and caring; to help our fellow human beings; to live by the dicta "Love your neighbour as yourself" and "All Israel is responsible for one another."

There was a time not long ago when people would spurn those with special needs. Either out of ignorance or fear or because of stigma or awkwardness, people would avoid the issue of disabilities and disabled individuals. But now the quality of life of those with disabilities has a place on the Jewish communal agenda, for those with disabilities are, indeed, a part of the Jewish community.

This is abundantly clear in the Torah. In Exodus, Moses comes before Pharaoh demanding that he

Rabbinic Reflections



let the people of Israel go free. Pharaoh asks: "Who will go?" Moses responds: "With our young and with our old, we will go forth. With our sons and with our daughters, with our herds and with our flocks, we will go." Stridently, Moses tells Pharaoh that the whole community will go forth into the light of freedom.

Our synagogues must be welcoming places for all people, including those with special needs. When Moses tells Pharaoh "everyone" will go and worship God, he means *everyone*! Further, the Hebrew word for temple literally means "house of holiness," or more commonly, "sanctuary." The Hebrew word for synagogue, literally means "house of gathering." The synagogue must be a sanctuary to all who wish to gather in assembly under its roof, including those with special needs.

Synagogues seeking to welcome those with special needs can be inclusive by making their buildings wheelchair accessible, including the bimah, by having infrared hearing aids to allow the hearing impaired to listen to the service with greater ease and by having large print siddurim for the visually impaired. But the biggest change needed is educating congregants to welcome those with disabilities into their midst.

When we make efforts to welcome all, we, too, can claim: "With our young and with our old, we will go forth." With *everyone* in our community, we go forth into the light of accessible worship and freedom of religious practice for all who wish to pray, study Torah and perform acts of lovingkindness with us.

Rabbi Geoffrey Haber is director of spiritual care at Baycrest in Toronto.

Internship at The CJN was a memorable experience

Guest Voice

Taylor Isen

My name is Taylor Isen. I am 17 and have been an intern at *The Canadian Jewish News* for the past 3-1/2 months. My time here has been an experience that I will never forget. By coming to *The CJN* offices every day for three hours as part of my co-op class at Thornlea Secondary School, I have learned not only about journalism and newspapers, but also about myself.

When my co-op teacher, Gus Babalis, told me about working for *The CJN*, I was both excited and nervous. I was happy to find somewhere that could really help me to find my path in life, but I was also a tad uneasy, because I haven't grown up in a very religious household. Yes, my family and I celebrate the High Holidays, but I never felt quite as proud of my Jewish identity as I do after working for *The CJN*.

Throughout my months here, I've been working on creating blog posts for the newspaper's youth-oriented Heebonics website. I have learned a lot about the Jewish world around me by writing them. I've written a post about Israel's endangered wildlife, as well as one on how people are trying to bring Tel Aviv's high-energy nightlife to Toronto events, to name just two.

Also, I have learned about a writing style that I had never been exposed to in school. It's a more casual kind of writing, one that emphasizes quality over quantity, and the ability to be as descriptive as possible in the shortest amount of space.

The other thing that really made my time at *The CJN* special was that I was able to get my own pieces of work published in the newspaper. This was very exciting for me, because I felt like readers actually got to hear my voice. This is my third and final article to be published in the newspaper, and I feel blessed that I got this opportunity at the end of my high school career.

I hope that all the people that I worked with at *The CJN* – copy editors, reporters and web administrators – had as good a time teaching me as I had learning from them. Thank you all!

Midrashic Moments
Will Return

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and her husband
David Pichosky ז"ל
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HOLIDAY TREES: Junior and senior kindergarten students at Netivot HaTorah Day School are excitedly looking forward to Tu b'Shvat. Pictured are Tehilla, Dorryan, Ariel and Gilad standing tall as trees for a Rosh Chodesh Shvat assembly.

דער ייִדיש ווינקל

דזשערי קעין

עקזאָטישע פּליאָזשעס

פּאַר די טוריסטן, וואָס האָבן ליב אויסצופֿאָרן די גאָרע וועלט

פֿון חיים מוכער

אין ניי-יאָרק, 175 קילאָמעטער פֿון אָקלענד, נעפֿינט זיך דער האָלב-אינדזל "קאַראַמאַנדעל". מיט דער אוניקאַלער הייסער פּליאָזשע אויף איר מזרח-זייט. דער נאָמען פֿון דער פּליאָזשע איז פֿאַרבונדן מיט די אונטערערדישע הייסע קוואַלן, וואָס שלאָגן זיך אַדורך דוכן זאַמד. יאָ, יערלעך באזוכן אָט דאָס אָרט א ים מיט טוריסטן, אָן ערך 130 טויזנט. דאָס איז אינם פֿון די מאַמע כּארמטסטע ערטער אינעם דאָזיקן נעאָטערמאַלן רעגיאָן. דאָס צוקומען פֿעטעם וואַרעמען וואַסער קומט נעווינלעך פֿאַר בעת די אָפּפלוטן, ווי אויך בכּשׂך פֿון צווייי שָׁעה פֿאר אוֹן נאָך די אָפּפלוטן. אָט די ציַיט ניצן די פּליאָזשע-באַזוכער אויסטן אויף צו גראָבן גרויסע גרעבלעך אין זאַמד. דאָס וואַסער ווערט אָנגעוואַרעמט ביז 64 גראַד צעלזיוס.

די פֿאָפּאָקאָלע-פּליאָזשע ווערט אויסגעגרופּט די פּליאָזשע פֿון גרינגס זאַמד. זי נעפֿינט זיך אין סאָוט-פּוינט אויף האָוואַי. דער אשיקער קאָנוס, וואָס ריינלט אַרום אוֹן באַשטייט פֿון כריסטאַלין-קריסטאַלן, גיט דער פּליאָזשע צו א גרינע שאַטירונג.

פּונדערווייַטנס זעט די פּליאָזשע אויס אינגאַנצן גרין, אָן מע טוט אָבער א נעם א זשמענקלע זאַמד אוֹן מע גיט עס א באַטראַכט עטוואָס נעעמטער, קאָן מען דערזען מער קריסטאַלן פֿון גילדענע ביי-קאַליין.

דער אינדזל וואַקאַיַא (פּידזש'), וואָס איז פֿאַרלירן צווישן טראָפּישע נעווייקסן אוֹן העל-בלויַע דורכזיכטיקע לאַגונעס --- איז אינם פֿון די וויכטיקע גן-עֵדן-ערטלעך אויף דער וועלט, וואָס זיַינען פֿון ציוויליזאַציע נאָך ניט באַרירט געווארן. אויף וואַקאַיַא וואַקסן גוואַוא-בייטער אוֹן בליען א קיילעכדיק יאָר עקזאָטישע גיבּיסקוס. אינבער דער פּליאָזשע שפּאַציַרן אַרום הירשן אוֹן וויַלדע פּערד, אָן קיין שום מורא פֿאַר די ניַיגעריקע בליקן פֿון די ייַנגדע, צווישן די נעווייקסן פּליען אַרום אויסערגעווייַנלעכע פֿויגלען. די טוריסטן אויף וואַקאַיַא קענען דורכמאַכן אַן אומפֿאַרגעסלעכע נסיעה צו די אָמתע אַבאָריגענישע דערפּער אוֹן זיך באַקענען מיט די אוראַלטע מנהגים אוֹן זיטן פֿון די נאַטטערייַנסלעכע אינדזל-תושבים, אשטייגער, דערזען דעם וועלט-באַרימטן ריטואַלן טאַנץ אויף קוילן.

דעם שם פֿון דער "פּליאָזשע לויט דער לעצטער מאָדע" האָט שוין פֿון לאַנג נעקראָגן לאָס-סאַליַאס אויף דער שפּאַניישער איבּיצא. פֿון מיַי ביז אָקטאָבער דריַיט זיך אַרום דאָס אזוי-גערופענע "גאָלדענע יונגווארג", ווי אויך די "וועלטס-לייכן אוֹן לייביקע" פֿון קלעוולי לענדער. אָט-אַ דאָ מאַכן וויַערע קעדמישלעך די בעסטע אויף דער וועלט קלובן אוֹן די-דזשיינן, אויף די טאַנץ-פּלעצער פֿאַרוויַילן זיך די פֿאַרשטייער פֿון דער "באָהעמא", מיליאָנערן, מאָדעלקעס אוֹן גלאָם באָווסטע פֿאַרשוינען. איבּיצא איז ניט בלויז דער סאַמע מאָדישער,נאָר אויך דער טיַערסטער קוראָרט פֿון דער וועלט. בכּדי זיך דאָ אָפּצורוען, מוז מען זיך רעכענען מיט די הוצאות פֿון נישט וויניקער ווי 1000 דאָלאַר א טאָג. איַין קלייניקייט ---- איבּיצא!

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From left, Yaron Ashkenazi, executive director of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem; Henri Levenheck, Lily Singer's surviving cousin and a Holocaust survivor; Lilly Zepp, and Fran Sonshine, national chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem.

Girl meets cousin of bat mitzvah twin

Vicki Tobianah
Special to the CJN

Lilly Zepp a 12-year-old Toronto girl who celebrated her bat mitzvah this past fall, has almost nothing in common with Lily Singer.

Singer, born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1932, never got to celebrate her bat mitzvah.

There's no trace of her or her family after 1944. Her surviving cousin, Henri Levenheck, who now lives in Toronto, only knows that sometime during the Holocaust, they were sent to Auschwitz and never returned.

But the two girls have one important thing that connects them: their first names.

In order to make her bat mitzvah celebration more meaningful, Zepp took part in the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem's twinning program, which matches a bar or bat mitzvah child with a child of the same name or birthday who perished during the Holocaust. She was paired with Lily Singer.

This was also one of the very rare times that a relative of the Holocaust victim actually lives in the same city as his or her twin. So in a special ceremony in Toronto on Oct. 25, Zepp got to meet her twin's cousin, Levenheck, who years ago submitted the names of all of his family members who were killed in the Holocaust to the Yad Vashem database of Holocaust victims.

"It's a rebirth, a good feeling that she's not forgotten," said Levenheck, 84. "If not for me, then nobody would know she existed. Her whole family disappeared. Now, after 70 years, her name is remembered."

Levenheck lived with his parents and two brothers in Strasbourg, France, at the time of the war. His uncle, Lily's father, lived in Budapest. He doesn't know much about what happened to them.

"I don't know the circumstances, but I suppose like many Hungarian Jews, only some survived," he said.

Through programs such as its twinning initiative, the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem ensures that the memories and stories of the Holocaust never die. Since the program's inception more than 20 years ago, dozens of bar- and bat-mitzvah-aged children have been paired, or "twinned" with a child Holocaust victim.

"They're really adopting the name and the memory and most of them are investing a lot of time and doing research on the Yad Vashem data to try and find out more information about the girl or boy they adopted," said Yaron Ashkenazi, executive director of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem.

"When you're speaking about six million [Jews killed in the Holocaust], it's a very almost unbelievable phenomenon to understand," he said. "But once you're going to a specific person, a specific girl or boy, then it's a completely different story. Suddenly you see a face."

At the emotional ceremony last fall, Levenheck told Zepp about his family's history, and Zepp was presented with a certificate of recognition for participating in this program. Together, they lit a candle in honour of Lily Singer's memory.

"She's the age of what my cousin's granddaughter would be," said Levenheck. "I want them to be remembered by somebody, somewhere."

Mazel Tov

מזל טוב

Happy ninth birthday to Emma-Belle Freid. We are so proud of you and love you so much. Mom and Dad.

Look whose 95! Teddy Moses! Mazel tov from your six grandchildren; one great-grandson, and Bobby, Debbi, Karen and Bob.

Mazel tov to Jillyan Farbstein & Jamie Gold on your engagement. Wishes for a lifetime of health and happiness. Love the Farbstein and Gold families.

Happy 97th birthday to Bertha Wolstat. Love from her sons Earl and Larry and all their families and friends!

Benji & Danielle Sucher announce the birth of Paige Hannah, Nov. 11. Grandparents: Rolanda & Coby Sucher, Lynn & Harvey Chalton, Rolanda & Coby Sucher.

Mazel tov to Jesse Ovadia who has successfully completed his PhD in political science, from your proud and loving mother, Anne Gewurtz.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

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What's New

By LILA SARICK

Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News
for the :-) generation

Deadline reminder: Jan. 28 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 7 and Feb. 4 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 14. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 24

ADULT LEARNING

The Melton School of Adult Learning holds a class at Beth Emeth taught by **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**: The Book Of Jonah, 10-11 a.m., Jan. 24-Feb 28. toronto@meltonschool.org to register.

DRAGON BOAT INFO NIGHT

One Family Fund holds an info night about their dragon boat trip May 6-11. 88 Yonge Blvd., 7:30 p.m. RSVP Jennifer@onefamilyfund.ca.

Friday, Jan. 25

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a young adult seder with **Denise Handlarski**, 7 p.m., Jones/Gerrard area. RSVP 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

SHABBAT SHIRAH

Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir and Band celebrates Shabbat Shirah, starting at 7: 15 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 26

TU B'SHVAT SEDERS

City Shul holds an adult Tu b'Shvat seder. By pre-registration only. www.cityshul.com or 647-799-3557.

Beth Sholom holds a Tu b'Shvat seder 10:30 a.m. **Naomi** 416-783-6103 or naomi@bethsholom.net.

SHABBAT SHIRAH

Shaarei Shomayim hosts a gala concert with violinist **Moshe Hammer.** For tickets, call 416-789-3213.

Beth Tikvah, **Beth Emeth, Beth Radom** and **Beth Jacob Hamilton** synagogues host a Melaveh Malka Concert, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tikvah. Havdalah, sing-along and folkdancing. Tickets $10 in advance, $15 at the door. Children under 13 free. 416-221-3433.

Beth Tzedec celebrates Shabbat Shirah with a sermon in song, 8:45 a.m. **Cantor Simon Spiro** and the band Beyond the Pale perform at a community concert, 8 p.m. Tickets $20/$25, info@beth-tzedec.org; 416-781-3511.

Sunday, Jan. 27

SHABBAT SHIRAH

Beth Emeth Sisterhood celebrates Shabbat Shirah with the Varsity Jews, brunch and performance. Call 416-633-3838.

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Oraynu Congregation hosts a Tu b'Shvat Seder, 5:30 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr. 416-385-3910.

YOUTH CONCERT

The Kachol Lavan Choir and the Temple Sinai Youth Choir perform 11 a.m., Temple Sinai, 416-487-4161 or office@templesiani.net.

ISRAEL & THE MIDDLE EAST

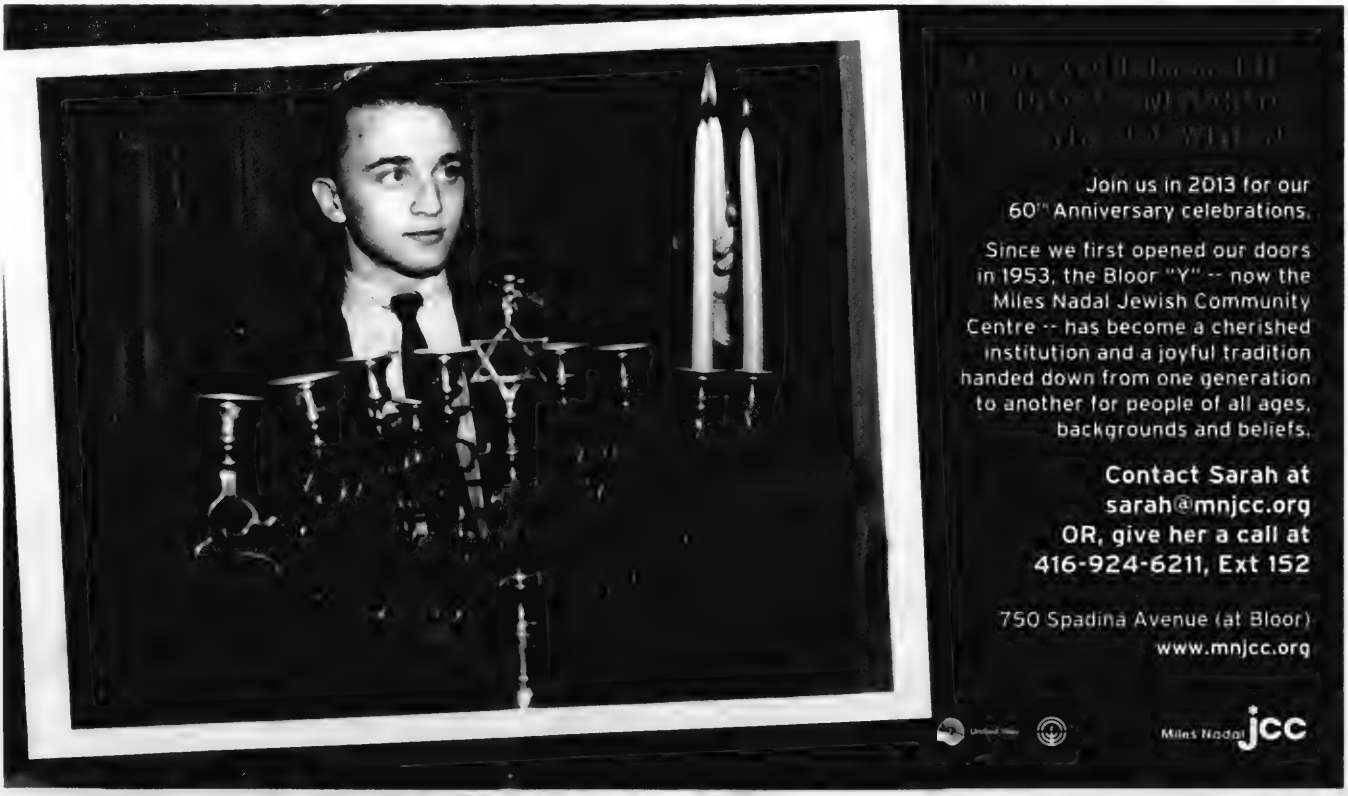
Mordechai Kedar discusses "Israel and Her Struggle to Survive in the Middle East," 10:30 a.m. at the Village Shul, 1072 Eglinton Ave. W.

Dr. Kedar speaks at Temple Sinai at 7:30 p.m.

JEWISH FOOD CONFERENCE

Shoresh Jewish Environmental Programs and the Miles Nadal

Continued on page 27


Join us in 2013 for our 60th Anniversary celebrations.
Since we first opened our doors in 1953, the Bloor "Y" -- now the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre -- has become a cherished institution and a joyful tradition handed down from one generation to another for people of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs.
Contact Sarah at sarah@mnjcc.org OR, give her a call at 416-924-6211, Ext 152
750 Spadina Avenue (at Bloor)
www.mnjcc.org
Miles Nadal jcc

Continued from page 26

JCC discuss the intersection between Jewish tradition and contemporary food issues, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Miles Nadal JCC. Email sabrina@shoresh.ca or visit http://shoresh.ca; then click on Shoresh Food Conference.

THE FLYING RABBI

Rabbi Stephen Wise, the Flying Rabbi, discusses "Israel-Repairing the World," 7:30 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue.

Tuesday, Jan. 29

MIX IT UP

One Family Fund holds a cocktail evening with silent auction and entertainment, 7 p.m., 1 King St. W. Onefamilyfund.ca; then click on Mix It Up.

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

Screening of *The Debt*, Beth Tikvah, 2 p.m. $5 at the door.

AN EVENING WITH AL GORE

Temple Sinai presents former U.S. vice-president **Al Gore** speaking from New York by satellite, 7:30 p.m. $10/$15. 416-487-3281.

Wednesday, Jan. 30

JEWISH GENEALOGY

Cantor Ron Graner speaks about the music of David Nowakowsky to the Jewish Genealogical Society, 8 p.m., Temple Sinai. www.jgstoronto.ca.

HANDWRITING & KABBALAH

Annette Poizner discusses "Using Handwriting and Kabbalah for Self-discovery," 1:30 p.m., Shaar Shalom.

Thursday, Jan. 31

MEMORY AND AGING

Dr. Morris Moscovitch discusses "Memory, Aging and the Brain," 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue.

ONE FAMILY HIKE

Learn about the One Family Fund's Road to Jerusalem Hike (Oct. 13-17), tonight at Beth Torah Congregation, 7:30 p.m. or **Feb. 6,** Holy Blossom, 7:30 p.m. RSVP Jennifer@onefamily fund.ca.

Other News

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

A spousal bereavement group for ages 55+ runs Jan. 29 through March 5, 2-4 p.m., Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 418 or 462.

DAYCARE REGISTRATION

Chabad Markham's Torah Tots is now offering a full-day program. **Goldie Plotkin,** 905-886-0420, ext. 225.

Registration is now open for Temple Sinai's nursery school, 2013/2014. Call **Bibi Golberg**, 416-487-3281, or bibi@tem plesinai.net.

HILLEL ACADEMY REUNION

Hillel Academy of Ottawa, class of 1963 is holding a reunion in Ottawa May 19. For more information, contact **Murray Major** ibmsub waymilty@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Reena is looking for a volunteer to serve as a marketing and outreach co-ordinator. Strong marketing background and communication skills required. Health and fitness facilitators to connect with individuals with developmental disabilities also required. Call **Arlene Margolese**, 905-889-6484, ext. 2111, or amargolese@reena.org.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m, **Shaar Shalom.** Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at **Beth Emeth.** 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. How and when to tell the children, as well as ideas and strategies to best meet your child's needs will be discussed. Jan. 24, Promenade Mall, Suite 313, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Barber, hairdresser, Jan. 31, 9:30 a.m. Casino Rama, Feb. 13. Tuesdays, seniors gentle fitness with personal trainer, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.; Membership registration now open for 2013.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Jan. 29, **Natasha Fatah** discusses "Reporting on Ethnic and Cultural Diversity," 10 a.m.; Jan. 30, interactive animal show, 1:30 p.m.; Jan. 31, **Elizabeth Stanton** discusses "Bone Health and Osteoporosis," 1:30 p.m.

Wagman Centre Entertainers are in rehearsal for their new production and looking for men who love to sing, dance and entertain. Call **J. Ross**, 416-733-0580.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext 155, **Michael Mandel** discusses "Jewish Toronto as Reflected in the Yiddish Press 1935-1953," Jan. 31, 1:30 p.m. Opera appreciation with **Iain Scott** Jan. 29, Feb. 5., Feb. 12, 1:30 p.m.

Caregivers Support Group meets at Dementia Support Seniors Day Centre, Jan. 30, 7 p.m., 1140 Sheppard Ave. W., unit 12, 416-398-7898.

Edithvale Seniors gentle fitness offers Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement classes on Mondays 10:30 a.m. $60. A group is forming for easy-to-learn Tai Chi Chih, Thursdays 10:30 a.m. $85 for 6 lessons. Beginner's special: 2 students $150. Call **Helen**, 416-665-9050.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Purim Carnival and Circus Show, Feb. 24, 10:30 a.m. For circus tickets, call ext. 0.

Opera with **Iain Scott** runs Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Jan. 24, *Tosca*, Jan. 31, *Don Giovanni*.

Film lectures with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Shalom Singers, Thursdays, 10 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

Registration for daycare and nursery 2013-14 now open. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4351.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Awakening the Voice, Sounding the Soul: Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Jan. 23-June 26, 7:30-9 p.m., twice monthly. $10 drop-in or $80 for the series. Info: music@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Woody Allen**, Mondays until Feb.11, 7-9 p.m.

Songwriting workshop with **Kobi Hass,** Jan. 31-April 4, 7-9 p.m. Hands-on course for both relative beginners and experienced songwriters. Call ext. 0 or music@mnjcc.org.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Photographs of Jewish Morocco by **Aaron Vincent Elkaim** on display in the gallery until Jan. 27.

The Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. www.srcentre.ca.

"Love and Relationships through the Teenage Lens," **Rabbi Avi Levinson,** Jan. 24, 8 p.m.

Living with Integrity, **Rabbi Mendel Bernstein,** Jan. 28-March 4.

"Jewish Parenting," **Rabbi Chezi Zionce**, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Book club with **Nick Maes,** Jan. 24, Feb. 21, March 21, 7:30 p.m.

Bingo, Jan. 31, 1 p.m.; CPR and first aid, Feb. 3, 1 p.m.; Glee Club, Jan. 28-April 15, 7:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 16

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

Reflections on a gap year in the Holy Land

All across North America, high school seniors are busy deciding where they want to find themselves next September. While many will head straight to university, the idea of spending a year in Israel first has become an increasingly popular option for today's Jewish teenagers.

There are new programs opening all the time, each catering to an ever-broader range of interests, backgrounds and professional tracks. Many of these now offer up to a full year of college credits as well, and institutions as reputable as Harvard University, Yale University and MIT have begun to actively encourage their students to take a gap year before starting on campus. Today, spending a year in Israel makes more sense than ever before.

It's an option I chose for myself, and an option 30 of my classmates chose as well. Where are we? We're at Bar-Ilan University and Hebrew University, on Young Judea and Nativ, in yeshivot and seminaries and in the IDF.

What are we doing? We're exploring Judaism and studying chemistry. We're volunteering in ambulances and interning with newspapers. We're hiking up mountains, camping in deserts, touring historical sites and meeting some of the greatest politicians, artists and religious leaders in the Jewish world today.

Who are we with? We're with 10,000 Jews our age who have come from 42 different countries to spend this year in Israel, too. (If I ever had doubts that there really are that many of us here, the first Friday morning on Ben Yehuda Street in Jerusalem promptly put them to rest!)

For myself, I decided to spend the year in yeshiva. Like most people who chose this option, I came with a goal: to solidify my commitment to Jewish values and deepen my connection to the Jewish People.

Guest Voice

Alex Maged

Everything they say about Israel is true. There's no comparing even the best of classes or prayer services back home to the ones found here. If you want to push the limits of what Judaism can be, if you want to give yourself a real chance of finding your avenue to relate to it, then you need to study Torah under its brightest teachers, experience what it means to celebrate the Jewish holidays in the Jewish homeland, and search for HaShem where He's most accessible. This is what I came looking for, and it's what I've found.

But I've found something else, too. You first notice it when, picking up on your accent as you struggle to ask the bus driver which stop you should get off at, seven different passengers chime in to help you with directions. You're reminded of it every time a casual conversation ends with an exchange of phone numbers and an invitation to spend Shabbat. You see it most strongly when the volunteer co-ordinators in the soup kitchen you're helping out at or at the blood drive you're running impose time limits on your group, because there are actually too many people who want to help out and everyone needs to get a chance to give.

More important than Judaism of the head or heart, Israel has shown me Judaism of the day to day. Judaism in practice means that when rockets are falling on kindergartners in Netivot, you cancel your classes and put on a carnival to pick up their spirits. It means inviting teenagers with developmental challenges to join you on your Shabbatons and tiyulim, because they deserve to have fun, too. It means that instead of spending the first day of a new semester in the classroom, you spend it in hospitals and orphanages, putting smiles on the faces of those who are less fortunate. In a word, it means to think beyond yourself, to care for others, to give.

I strongly doubt there can be any experience more valuable than spending a year learning about, and then living out, values such as these – values that should form the foundation of one's identity.

When you leave high school and gain your independence, the natural tendency is to look inwards and begin the pursuit of your own happiness. Taking a year in Israel has helped those of us here frame our newfound freedom with the correct perspective.

Slowly, surely, I think we're learning that real maturity means learning to expand your focus outside of yourself and consider others. We have immersed ourselves in a society whose members, if ideologically divided at times, care for each other with a sincerity that is truly unique. We are training ourselves in an ethical system proven to instil sensitivity, consideration and an appreciation for the value of giving in its adherents.

We're discovering ourselves, but not in a vacuum. We are charting our identity within a national context and religious framework much larger than ourselves. This is what a year in Israel has meant so far, at least to me.

If you're a high school student looking to begin the next stage of your life with an unparalleled opportunity to grow and mature, to cultivate an identity rooted in timeless values, and to forge lasting connections with your people and their land, then a gap year in Israel is something I strongly recommend for you, too.

Alex Maged is a graduate of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. He's currently studying in Yeshivat Lev HaTorah in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Jacobs, Leah	Jan. 4/13	75 Stockdale Cres
Fluss, David	Jan. 4/13	86 Sanibel Cres
Perlmutter, Frances	Jan. 2/13	Halendale, Florida
Citron, Hilda	Jan. 4/13	91 Bannockburn Ave
Ritche, Jack	Jan. 4/13	535 Brookdale Ave
Lewkowicz, Jerry	Jan. 5/13	Private
Rose, Sadie	Jan. 4/13	Private
Muscat, Miriam	Jan. 7/13	
Morton, Aurelia	Jan. 8/13	
Kivenson, Tuva	Jan. 6/13	3560 Bathurst St
Shukhman, Olga	Jan. 9/13	541 Finch Ave. W
Beinart, Naomi	Jan. 8/13	
Bluestein, Jean Jennie	Jan. 10/13	205 Cummer Ave
Dybner, Galina	Jan. 11/13	6030 Bathurst St
Tarnow, Sara	Jan. 12/13	541 Finch Ave W
Hyams, Erusha	Jan. 8/13	
Kominova, Ioudif	Jan. 14/13	Private
Isenberg, Beverley	Jan. 14/13	36 Hetherington Cres

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Ruth Mulstein	Jan 3/13	10 Torresdale Avenue
Harry Reingewirtz	Jan 4/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Pearl Segall	Jan 5/13	615 Castlefield Avenue
Mae List	Jan 6/13	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Rose Apelowicz	Jan 6/13	26 Stonedene Blvd.
Philip Pass	Jan 5/13	1717 Avenue Road
Bernie Berger	Jan 7/13	55 Ameer Avenue
Henry Balaban	Jan 7/13	205 Cummer Avenue
Madison Zoey Caplan	Jan 7/13	3 Delia Court
Shirley Schwartz	Jan 7/13	262 Ridley Blvd.
Paula Hertz	Jan 9/13	1770 Main Street West
Danielle Lee	Jan 8/13	592 Wellington Street, W.
Stephen Hershoff	Jan 9/13	3197 Lakeshore Blvd.
Jack Lerman	Jan 9/13	866 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Eve Atlin	Jan 9/13	65 Skymark Drive
Dani Raskin	Jan 9/13	17 Lander Crescent
Yetta Brown	Jan 9/13	170 The Bridle Path
Joe Krakowsky	Jan 10/13	38 Aristan Drive
Patricia Kingston	Jan 11/13	5444 Yonge Street
Sally Plast	Jan 11/13	120 Promenade Circle

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~Pirkei Avot

The entire Bialik family is distraught by the tragic loss of our retired Preschool Vice Principal

Rochelle Wise z"l
and her beloved husband
Donny Pichosky z"l

Rochelle was an adored member of our community and respected as an outstanding educator and woman of great character and kind spirit.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Rochelle's and Donny's families and hope they find comfort knowing our thoughts and prayers are with them at this most difficult time.

May their memories be for a blessing.

Bialik Hebrew Day School has established a fund in memory of Rochelle and Donny. To contribute, please contact bgurvey@bialik.ca.

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בית ספר יסוד ע"ש ביאליק טוב שול

UJA Federation

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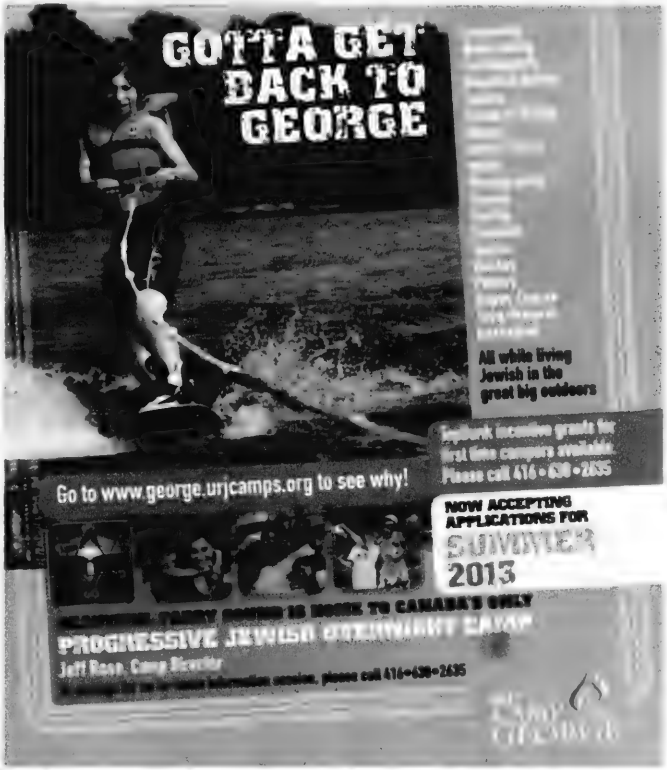
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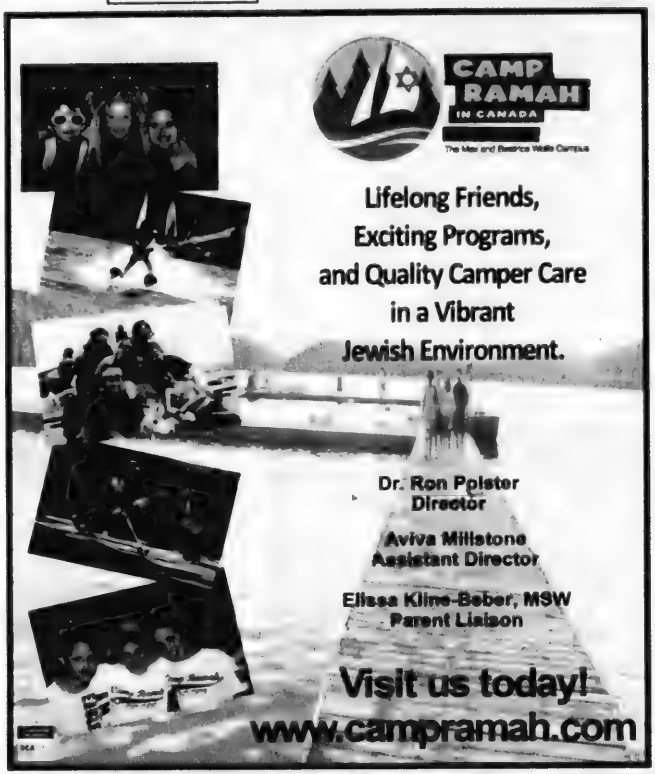

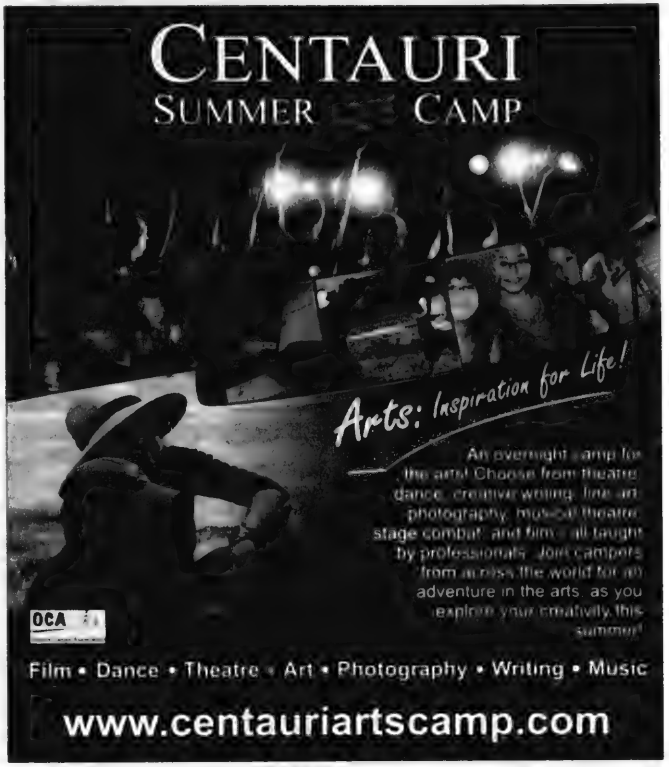
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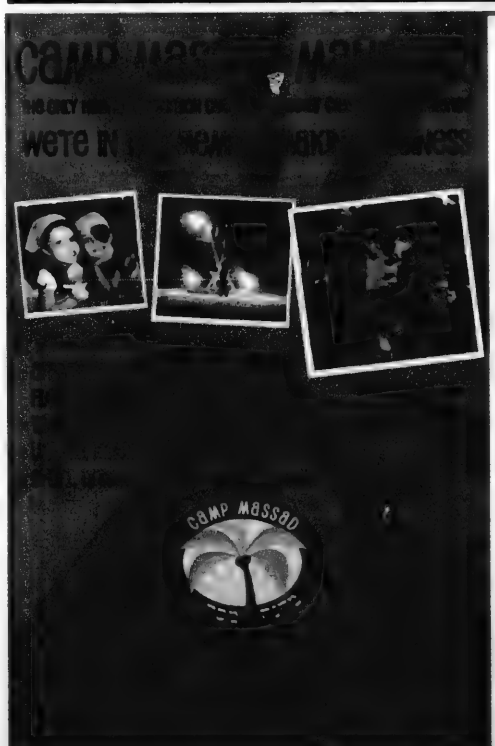

CAMP MASSAD MANITOBA – HEBREW SPEAKING, JEWISH FUN

Camp Massad of Manitoba, the only Hebrew immersion overnight summer camp in North America, is now accepting camper registrations for the summer of 2012. World renowned for its unique, innovative, interactive and energetic programming, Massad has been enhancing Jewish life in Manitoba and beyond for more than 60 years.

Camp Massad embraces all campers in a warm, nurturing, safe and fun environment that respects different abilities and fosters confidence, creativity, camaraderie and life-long connections to Jewish culture, history and Israel. All of Massad's programming is designed to bring out the best in every camper and reinforce the sense of community that is a trademark of the camp. At Camp Massad, the spirit of Jewish youth and Jewish life is celebrated in every moment of every day.

Camp Massad offers sessions for children from ages 8-16. The sessions run throughout July and August and are flexible, very reasonably priced and, for younger age groups, shorter in duration than at other overnight camps. Massad regularly attracts campers from across North America, and will make special arrangements to escort out-of-town campers to the camp, just outside of Winnipeg.

Although Hebrew is the working language of the camp, the ability to speak and understand Hebrew is not a pre-requisite for attendance. Every summer, countless children arrive at Camp Massad without any knowledge of Hebrew, and proudly return home from Massad with a basic understanding of Hebrew words and phrases.

Camp Massad's programming staff represent the best and the brightest of Winnipeg's young adult Jewish community. Kind, creative, compassionate, nurturing, dependable, talented, fun and energetic, they ensure that every child is well cared for and every child participates fully in all programs and activities. With a counselor camper ratio of one to four in most cabins, every camper at Massad is guaranteed a positive and unforgettable summer camp experience.

At Camp Massad, every daytime activity and every evening program abounds with laughter, cheers, celebration, song, shtick, and an amazing energy and spirit – known at Massad as *ruach*.

During the day campers enjoy a wide variety of activities that allow them to express themselves artistically and athletically, meet new challenges, learn new skills and games, and make lifelong friends. These include swimming, kayaking, tennis, basketball, flag football, scouting, singing, drama, dance, music, drumming, movie-making, and arts and crafts, as well as special Israel focused programming and interactive camp-wide games. Daily tefillah, Shabbat and Havdallah are integral aspects of Massad

In the evenings all campers are immersed in the sights and sounds of Massad's unforgettable multi-age programs – programs that give campers unique opportunities to perform, create, compete, cooperate, and explore new worlds. With names like *Yom Shalom, Yom Yisrael, Festival, Carnival, Eurovision, Rikud Zar, Olympiada, Televizia and Meshugarama*, these programs are the epitome of fun, excitement and adventure, and truly have to be experienced in order to be believed. Maccabiah at Massad is incomparable, with fantastical worlds emerging from paper and paint, and full-scale theatrical productions putting every camper centre stage.

Massad's advanced camp offers specialized programming for youth ages 14-16. Through its focused activities, creative workshops and myriad opportunities to learn new skills, this excellent leadership training program creates proud and capable future Jewish community leaders.

Camp Massad follows kosher dietary laws, and all special dietary needs are accommodated. Camp Massad employs an on-site health officer and is 10 minutes from the local hospital. Camp Massad is an accredited member of the Manitoba Camping Association.

For further information contact **Executive Director Danial Sprintz at 204-477-7487 or at info@campmassad.ca.** To get a peek at Massad visit **www.campmassad.ca** or **Camp Massad Manitoba on Facebook.** To register on-line go to **https://registration.campbrain.com/Portal/Login.aspx?H=massad&G=734**

All campers registered by February 15, 2013 are eligible for a $200 discount ($25 for the five day Bisselleh session).

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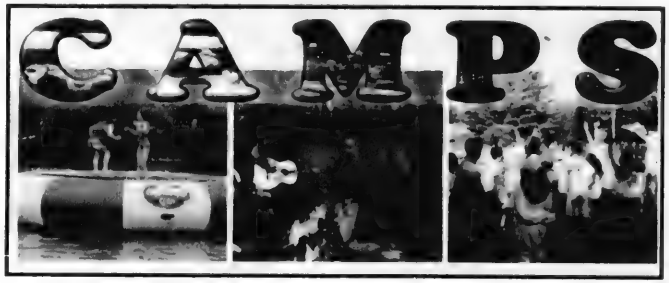

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Yemen halts funding for its 100 Jews

Gabe Fisher
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — The Yemeni government has cut off funding for the remaining 100-odd members of the country's ancient and internally displaced Jewish community, a Sanaa-based NGO said on Saturday.

According to the Sawa'a Organization for Anti-Discrimination, Yemen has halted housing and basic services allocations for Jews, a move the organization called "unfortunate and unacceptable."

Sawa'a demanded that the "National Reconciliation Government... restore these allocations again [and] provide [Jews] with housing and safe living, as they are considered to be war-displaced."

Most of the remaining Jews in Yemen now live in a guarded compound in Sanaa after they were driven from their homes in Saada by Al Qaeda-aligned anti-government forces in 2007. According to Sawa'a, media access to the compound is restricted, and, in October, several Sawa'a staff members were arrested during an attempted visit.

Jews from Yemen resettle in Israel in 2009. *[Israel Sun photo]*

"The return of Jews to Saada currently is not possible," as such a move would entail "a direct threat to their lives, their safety and security," the organization said.

Sawa'a, in conjunction with the current community rabbi, Yahya Yusuf, was working to restore Jewish property lost to the Al Qaeda insurgents, Israel Radio reported Sunday.

In December, Sawa'a protested the exclusion of the Yemeni Jewish community from a national conference that was meant to promote dialogue between various groups in the civil war-torn country. At the time, it was reported that the organization had issued a report documenting the discrimination against the country's Jews, including their political disenfranchisement and lack of access to jobs and education.

The Jews of Yemen trace their origins in the country to the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem, in the year 586 BCE. Geographically isolated from Ashkenazi communities in Europe and Sephardi communities in Asia and North Africa, the small community maintained contact with the outside Jewish world through occasional visits by emissaries and correspondence with rabbis, most notably Moses Maimonides in the 12th century.

The first Yemeni Jews immigrated to Israel in the 1880s, but the largest immigration wave came immediately after the declaration of the state, when some 50,000 Jews were brought to Israel in Operation Magic Carpet during the years 1949 and 1950 by the Joint Distribution Committee.

The few remaining Jews in Yemen have faced deep distrust and persecution as militant Islam has become more prevalent. In the latest incident, in May 2012, mechanic Aharon Zandani was killed by a knife-wielding Al Qaeda operative outside the Jewish compound.

In the wake of the murder, Zandani's body was flown to Israel for burial, accompanied by his family.

– With files from Elhanan Miller Timesofisrael.com

Latin American Jewish Congress meets in Venezuela

JTA

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — The Latin American Jewish Congress is holding its plenary meeting in Venezuela "to strengthen the link with a community that has difficulties," according to the organization's executive director.

World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder is scheduled to attend the regional meeting in the Venezuelan capital, which begins Sunday, Latin American Jewish Congress executive director Claudio Epelman told *JTA*.

Latin American Jewish Congress officials were scheduled, on Jan. 22, to meet with Venezuela's vice-president and former minister of foreign affairs, Nicolás Maduro. President Hugo Chavez has declared that Maduro will serve as the Venezuelan president in case he cannot assume his new term in office because of his recurring illness.

Latin American Jewish Congress president Jack Terpins told *JTA* that he will continue to work to strengthen interreligious dialogue, work with Jewish and Muslim regional communities to use their coexistence as an example to help bring peace to the Middle East, and to support Jewish youth participation in politics through the New Generations program, which already is working in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil.

During this week's meeting, the organization's agenda for 2013-14 will be set and new officers will be elected.

Argentina will have, for first time, two vice-presidents, one from the Jewish umbrella DAIA and another from AMIA, the Buenos Aires Jewish community centre. Also, for the first time, both Argentine institutions will present a joint paper about the Argentine government's current negotiations with Iran on the 1994 AMIA bombing case, which focuses on advancing the cause in the judiciary field rather than through politics or diplomatic negotiations.

In October 2011, Chavez, an ally of Iran, won re-election, defeating Henrique Capriles Radonski, the grandson of Holocaust survivors. Chavez is currently in Cuba recovering from cancer treatments.

In recent years, the Venezuelan Confederation of Jewish Associations has expressed concern about antisemitic statements in Venezuela's state media and asked Chavez's government to ensure security at the country's synagogues.

The Carmel forest rejuvenates

Ben Sales
JTA

CARMEL FOREST, Israel — The rabbi's yarmulke fluttered in the wind, his hand holding it to his head, as he recited *K'El Maleh Rachamim*, the traditional prayer for the deceased.

In front of him were 50 guards from a nearby prison. Behind him, a wall displayed the names of 44 prison service cadets, teachers, police and firefighters who died when a bus carrying the cadets was engulfed by the largest fire in Israel's history.

The Mount Carmel fire started on Dec. 2, 2010, and burned for five days, destroying 6,000 acres of northern Israel's Carmel forest. In June, the government released a harsh report criticizing the actions of its agencies during the fire.

But even as the country continues to mourn those who died in the fire, the forest is being reborn. Trees are regenerating on their own, new species are being planted, protection against future fires is increasing and hikers are returning to once-charred trails. Israel's fire services have also grown.

On Jan. 18, for the first time since the fire, families will come to plant trees in the forest in advance of Tu b'Shvat, the Jewish New Year for trees.

Today, the fire area looks like a giant bald spot in the middle of a dense forest of pines and oaks. Rolling hills, with no trees, are surrounded by verdant slopes where the ground is hardly visible. On the empty hills, a few solitary trees have survived. Many of them are black on one side and green on the other, partial victims of the fire.

Closer to the ground are rows of light brown tubes about two feet tall made from a plastic material that looks like cardboard. A few leaves peek out from underneath. These are the oaks, carob trees and Jerusalem pines planted by the Jewish National Fund (JNF), the quasi-governmental organization that helps develop Israel's land and nature and is famous for planting trees across the country.

"Usually, a natural forest you leave to nature," said Omri Boneh, director of Israel's northern region for JNF. "But in the specific environment of the Carmel, if we don't intervene, it will lead to a very dense forest with lower biodiversity and great vulnerability to a future forest fire."

JNF sits on a committee to rehabilitate the forest, along with Israel's Nature and Parks Authority, the Environmental Protection Ministry and the Agriculture Ministry. Formed in 2011, the committee has been able to accelerate its work after being granted a nearly $15-million budget last year.

The committee hopes to turn tragedy into opportunity. The team wants to let the forest regenerate on its own but will intervene in a few ways: thinning out the pine regrowth to prevent future fires from spreading quickly, introducing new tree species and rebuilding hiking trails.

The Carmel forest is rejuvenating after its devastating forest fire of December 2010. ***[Flash90 photo]***

"We're changing the nature of the character of the flora," said Guy Ayalon, the Nature and Parks Authority's northern Israel director. "When they're dense, they are a risk for a fire like the one we saw."

The authority plans to introduce more Jerusalem pines as well as oak, almond, olive and carob trees – all native to Israel and thus, Ayalon explains, in better sync with the environment. Boneh said that a wider range of trees will attract a wider range of wildlife to the forest.

Both men expect the rehabilitation process to take at least 10 years, by which time the newly planted trees will grow tall and thick. In the meantime, Ayalon hopes the government will keep funding the project.

"Forest care needs to happen all the time, and Israel needs to know how to invest in it," he said. "If you do adequate prevention, fires will be rarer and smaller."

Dry Bones

The government, meanwhile, has invested in its fire prevention capabilities, which drew heavy criticism in the Carmel fire's wake. It has united the local fire stations under a new national umbrella agency and invested nearly $100 million in fire equipment and personnel. The funds have paid for new gear for firefighters, an expanded fleet of trucks and, for the first time, a fleet of eight planes dedicated to fire prevention. Each plane can spray nearly 80,000 gallons of water.

Still, Fire and Rescue Service spokesman Yoram Levy said, Israel has a long way to go. He said the goal is to be able to respond to fires within nine minutes. The average now is 14.

The government has promised the service an additional $268 million over five years. But with Israel facing a $10-billion budget deficit this year, Levy suspects that may turn out to be an empty promise.

"Now we're talking about budget cuts, and [members of Knesset] were saying they want to cut us," he told *JTA*. "They're definitely going to try."

Boneh is happy to see Israel's fire services improve, but says that, in the end, preventing fires like the Carmel is nearly impossible.

"It doesn't matter what we do," he said. "On Dec. 2, [2010], there hadn't been significant rain, the dryness of the soil was extreme and there was wind. If there's a fire, it'll get to that size."

For now, though, Boneh and Ayalon hope to rebuild the forest they saw burn – and to see it last.

"Planting a tree in Israel testifies to our roots in our homeland," Ayalon said. "But you have to make sure that the trees are appropriate to their surroundings."

Netanyahu responds to Obama

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, responding to comments attributed to U.S. President Barack Obama, said Israelis would determine the country's best interests. "Only the Israeli people will determine who best represents the State of Israel's vital interests," Netanyahu reportedly said Jan. 17 on a visit to the Gaza division of the Israeli army. "Over the past four years Israel has withstood tremendous diplomatic pressures. They insisted that we curb our demand for action on Iran; that we withdraw back to the 1967 lines, that we divide Jerusalem – that we stop building in Jerusalem. We fought against those pressures. I will continue to safeguard Israel's vital interests, for its security," Netanyahu said. The comments came a day after *Bloomberg* columnist Jeffrey Goldberg wrote that when Obama was told Israel had approved plans to advance the development of housing in the controversial E-1 corridor between Maale Adumim and Jerusalem, which Palestinians said would make a two-state solution impossible, "Obama said privately and repeatedly, 'Israel doesn't know what its own best interests are.' With each new settlement announcement, in Obama's view, Netanyahu is moving his country down a path toward near-total isolation."

Hadassah hospital bailout

Hadassah transferred $10 million to Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem to help cover its subsidiary's $50-million deficit. The New York *Jewish Week* reported that the Zionist women's group took the unusual measure after learning of the deficit run up by the hospital, which was founded nearly 80 years ago. Meanwhile, the hospital's director general, Ehud Kokia, submitted his resignation. Hospital board chair, Esti Dominissin, will serve in the role until a replacement is found. National director Marcie Natan said Hadassah would hire PricewaterhouseCoopers, a consultancy firm, to help reduce the hospital's debts.

Tent cities dismantled

Israeli troops dismantled a Palestinian tent city, the second erected in recent days in the Jerusalem area. The soldiers entered the Palestinian outpost in northwest Jerusalem near Beit Iksa on Monday and began to take down the four tents and the structure serving as a mosque. The military used bulldozers to remove the structures, according to a Palestinian news agency. Twenty Palestinian protesters at the site were reportedly removed peacefully. It was the second Palestinian outpost established last week and the second to be dismantled. Israeli troops late last week dismantled one erected in the controversial E-1 corridor between Jerusalem and Maale Adumim. Israeli forces removed some 25 protest tents on land the Palestinians say is necessary to form a state. The removal came hours after Israel's Supreme Court lifted a temporary injunction on dismantling the outpost. The court accepted the government's argument the outpost could lead to a security crisis.

Files from JTA

PA minister denies Jerusalem's Jewish history

JNS.org

The Palestinian Authority (PA) recently said that all of Jerusalem, including the Western Wall, has never been used as a place of worship throughout history by anyone besides Muslims "until the ominous Balfour Declaration was issued in 1917."

This directly contradicts a myriad of Jewish and non-Jewish historical sources that indicate otherwise.

PA Minister of Religious Affairs Mahmoud Al-Habbash said Jerusalem and the Western Wall are "the sole right of Palestinians," according to Palestinian Media Watch, in response to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's statement regarding Jerusalem's 3,000-year Jewish history during Chanukah last month. Al-Habbash called Netanyahu's words "worthless from a religious, historical or legal point of view."

The Western Wall is the last remnant of the Second Jewish Temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. The famous Jewish historian from that era, Josephus Flavius, who lived in Jerusalem, documented the destruction of the city and wrote extensively about the history of Jews in the region during the Antiquities.

"So the Romans being now become masters of the walls. They both placed their ensigns upon the towers and made joyful acclamations for the victory they had gained... they slew those whom they overtook without and set fire to the houses whither the Jews were fled, and burnt every soul in them," Josephus wrote in *The Wars of the Jews*, according to Project Gutenberg.

The PA, however, teaches that no temple ever existed in Jerusalem as a way to claim that Jews and Israel have no right to Jerusalem or the Western Wall.

In 1871, Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of State, William H. Seward, wrote that in Jerusalem, "the Jews are 8,000 and have the southeast quarter." But the PA minister's statement is the latest of many from the PA denying such history.

"The superfluous [nation] in this region, and the one harming its security and stability, is the occupation [Israel] in all its shapes and stages, whether in the past or in the present, and whether in the form of military occupation, settlement, or fabricating Judaization that have no historical or legal basis," stated an op-ed in the official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*.

A WELCOME VISITOR: Former Israel Defence Forces soldier Gilad Schalit, who was held captive by Hamas for more than five years, recently visited the Friends of the IDF/Nefesh B'Nefesh Lone Soldiers Program in Jerusalem to meet with 50 lone soldiers, those who move to Israel to serve in the IDF from other countries worldwide. The FIDF/Nefesh B'Nefesh program, in collaboration with the Jewish Agency for Israel and Jewish National Fund, assists newly arrived soldiers with their transition into their new lives in Israel and national service. Schalit is seen playing pool with some of the lone soldiers.

Jewish leaders back gun changes

JTA

WASHINGTON — An interfaith alliance that includes Jewish religious and lay leaders is seeking a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines.

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence held a news conference on Jan. 15 calling for the bans, as well as for improved background screening of gun buyers. On what would have been civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr.'s 84th birthday, the group also urged Americans to work together to help curb gun violence, and spoke of the need to improve the treatment available for people with mental health problems.

At the news conference, Rachel Laser, deputy director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, said there has been "enough pain, enough despair, enough injustice. Let us learn from our grief and the errors of the past, and resolve in this very moment to do better."

Laser said that religious leaders throughout the country will mobilize their congregants to join in an Interfaith Call to Prevent Gun Violence on Feb. 4. On that day, Americans will call their Congress member and ask that they be "held accountable for the safety of our communities."

Alliance members also sent a two-page letter to Congress that urged the lawmakers to lead the way toward a safer society that not only protects children in schools against a mass shooter – a reference to the massacre at a Newtown, Conn., elementary school – but also stops individual inner-city gun murders as well.

Forty-seven religious leaders from numerous faiths signed on to the letter. The signers included the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the Jewish Reconstructionist Movement, the Rabbinical Assembly, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and Women of Reform Judaism.

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Book publisher to be distributed south of the border

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When sales of 1,000 units are considered pretty good and 5,000 puts you into the bestseller category, it may be time to go looking for a bigger sandbox to play in.

At least that's the strategy of upstart Mantua Books, a mini, if not micro, publishing company based in Ontario that's looking to the sunnier climes south of the border to help put it permanently in the black.

Mantua is a small operation but one that feeds on big ideas: it focuses on politically incorrect authors that mainstream publishers seem to ignore. The brainchild of real estate developer Howard Rotberg, Mantua has carved out a niche for itself by offering works by conservative commentators whose books are beyond the pale for larger publishers. These are authors who unabashedly favour Israel and defend traditional western civilization, with its freedoms and rights, he said.

Rotberg, whose day job involves developing affordable and "infill" housing and renovating heritage buildings, has poured his soul and plenty of his own money into Mantua Books. It's more than a business, and he's more than a publisher. In fact, he describes himself as "a soldier" in a war for traditional western values and for Israel against an alliance of leftists and Islamists. Mantua is the vehicle by which he fights the good fight to place before the public authors who stand up for these traditional causes, he said.

"I see it as a war of ideas and censorship by a mainstream media and publishing houses and academia. My role is to found and run and grow a publishing house that is friendly to authors dealing with Israel and the fundamental freedoms in the West that need to be heard."

The deck may be stacked against him – the mainstream press rarely reviews Mantua's offerings, he said – but he's finding an audience for his stable of authors. In a few months, Mantua will begin selling its books in the United States thanks to an arrangement with a U.S.-based distributor.

That will give him access to a vast new market – sales to American libraries alone will make a difference to his bottom line. "Canada is only a small part of the international market. Success hinges on getting American and international distribution," he said.

In the past year, he's penned agreements with a U.S. and an international distributor. One of Mantua's books, *Romance and Revolutions*, has already been distributed in England.

Rotberg launched Mantua in 2003, but the company was pretty much dormant until 2007. Since then, it has published, among others, *High Noon for America: The Coming Showdown* by Jamie Glazov, *Those That Bless You, I Will Bless – Christian Zionism in Historical Perspective* by Paul Merkely, and *Delectable Lie – A Liberal Repudiation of Multiculturalism* by Salim Mansur.

Howard Rotberg

As Mantua became more widely known, quality authors came on board, but developing a distribution channel proved the most difficult obstacle to success, Rotberg said.

Technology is also playing a part in making Mantua's books available to the public. In fact, "the publishing industry is undergoing a huge transformation. For smaller distributors, it's a good change," Rotberg said.

The traditional model of selling through bookstores is being challenged by ebooks, the digital, downloadable form of the medium, he continued.

Books that sold for $20 or $30 in paper versions can be sold for $9.99 digitally. That removes the very costly process of printing and shipping, which cut into publishers' profit margins, he said.

Ebooks are also more appealing to young people, who are used to viewing written material online.

Gone are the days when young people decorated their apartments with shelves containing hundreds of books, he said, adding that digital books take up less space, are portable and less costly.

About 20 per cent of Mantua's sales are ebooks, and that's expected to climb to 50 per cent in five years. Currently, the vast majority of sales, 60 per cent, are paper books sold through Amazon. Another 10 per cent are sold through Mantua's website, and the remaining 10 per cent are sold in bookstores.

But by going digital and circumventing the need for print editions, is Mantua sowing the seeds for its own demise? Rotberg believes there's still an important role for traditional publishers, even in the digital age.

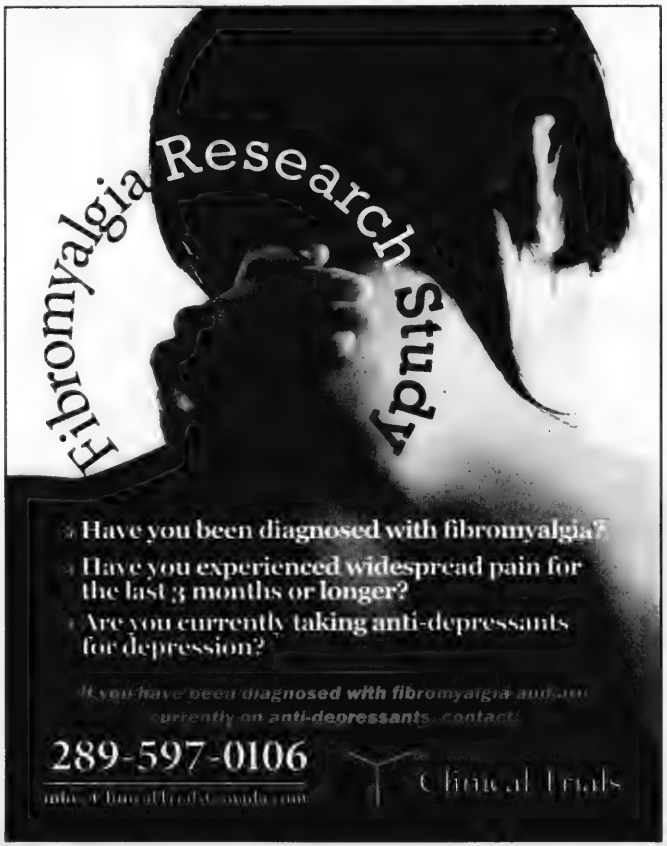
"We promote the book, help authors set up lectures, book tours, retain publicists. We help authors with the editing process," he said.

At Mantua, which Rotberg operates with a couple of volunteer assistants, he does all the editing himself. Mantua hires PR and marketing consultants in whatever markets the company is trying to reach.

As a small, self-financed publisher, Rotberg has brought the company "from zero" to "a break-even proposition."

"We are growing with every year. Our books are selling in the four figures in Canada, which is very good for Canada," he said.

"The reason we've become profitable now is that as a mature publisher with the good titles we have, distributors are interested in working with us. That drives costs down so we can make money."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Tel Aviv to offer free city wide WiFi

Compiled by CJN Staff

Residents and tourists in Tel Aviv will receive free WiFi connection beginning in March as part of a new project initiated by the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipality.

Voted as one of the "Three Most Innovative Cities in the World" by the *Wall Street Journal*, Tel Aviv-Jaffa will provide free WiFi access at 80 major locations around the city, including the city's Mediterranean promenade, the Hatikvah Market, Florentin Street, Park Hayarkon and Old Jaffa, as well as major city streets, parks and at tourism sites. Effectively, the entire city will be covered by next fall.

"We are thrilled about this new project that will further propel Tel Aviv-Jaffa's identity as one of the world's most tech-savvy and innovative cities," said Ami Allon, consul for tourism, Israel Government Tourist Office – Canada.

"We hope this new initiative will help simplify travel around Tel Aviv-Jaffa and provide additional excitement for travellers arriving in Israel this year."

Users can access the free WiFi service on computers, tablets and smartphones with bandwidths of at least 20 MB.

Author discusses use of pot in Jewish tradition

Chavie Lieber
JTA

After graduating from a modern Orthodox high school in New York, author Yoseph Needelman, now 30, moved to Jerusalem to explore the use of marijuana in Jewish tradition. For eight years he bounced around religious institutions, interviewing spiritual leaders to find out if there was indeed a place for drugs in the Jewish world.

The result of his research is compiled in *Cannabis Chassidis* (Autonomedia), a book that explores the Jewish use of marijuana.

With the U.S. states of Colorado and Washington having recently voted to legalize marijuana for recreational use, popular views of the drug are rapidly evolving. Needelman's book may find an audience among those seeking religious and practical advice on the use of marijuana.

JTA caught up with Needelman while he was on a book tour in America.

Tell me a little bit about yourself and how you came to write this book?

I grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y., and went to modern Orthodox day schools. I went to Israel after high school to find things in Judaism that I felt must have been part of ancient traditions of how to live well, notably cannabis. I was introduced to drinking in a religious context, but relating to marijuana [religiously] was a big question for me. If the Torah is a religious framework that guides us in enjoying everything that is good, it must relate to other things I connected with, like pot or yoga.

I wrote this book because I think kids need advice and counsel on doing drugs that they are going to do anyways. If they are smoking pot and taking other drugs, they need to know how to do it effectively. My book discusses how to do those things in a helpful, effective and responsible way. That might include noticing the point where you don't need a particular drug anymore.

Why do you think religious institutions have a negative outlook on drugs like marijuana?

Judaism is defined by its certain rejections. It is designed to protect us from foreign ecstasies and bad habits. I think here in America, certain western values became the law, and they reject smoking and using herbs for a bunch of reasons. Judaism, which emerged from the ashes of Jerusalem's survivors, the people who were able to make themselves seem most unthreatening to the state, demands that its successful leaders not threaten anyone, especially not the state, so it's become taboo. Marijuana is not identified as being especially Jewish, even though a lot of big rebbes traditionally were associated with it.

Where is it written that Chasidim use drugs, and who are some of the famous ones?

The Vilna Gaon [an 18th-century rabbi and opponent of Chasidism] wrote in his *cheirim*, or writ of excommunication, that Chasidim are untrustworthy because they dance, sing and smoke. Some famous rabbis that sound like they used drugs were Rabbi Yisroel Ben Eliezer, or the Ba'al Shem Tov, the father of the chassidic movement. A Baal Shem/Doktor is someone who picked wild grasses and barks and made medicines out of them, which he would sell, along with advice on how to use [them] properly. He used to smoke from a water pipe to experience an *aliyat neshamah* or ascension of the soul.

His biographer, Rabbi Yakov Yosef of Polonoye, said that he would give his entire portion in this world, and in the world to come, just for a taste of what the Ba'al Shem Tov got from his pipe.

Rabbi Israel Friedman of Ruzhyn used to smoke a pipe, too, and fill up the entire room before Shabbat. He would open a window and say, "These are the clouds of the week leaving, and the clouds of Shabbos are coming in." Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev used to smoke a pipe before he prayed.

Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, who came much later, was actually opposed to drugs, but he would smoke occasionally [in order to gain trust from] people who were already on a high level of spiritual awareness and curiosity. Carlebach, however, was always frustrated by the sense of dependence the group had on it.

Was marijuana ever used for Jewish practices?

In Exodus 30:23, it talks about the anointing oils and there's an ingredient called *knei bosem*. [The 11th-century commentator] Rashi says it is "important," and the Ramban explains in greater detail that the ingredient is "universally valued, in every country, and every empire." Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, a later redactor, gives over other opinions, one which is this ingredient is marijuana, because it was globally popular, especially in traditions of lands like Yemen and Morocco.

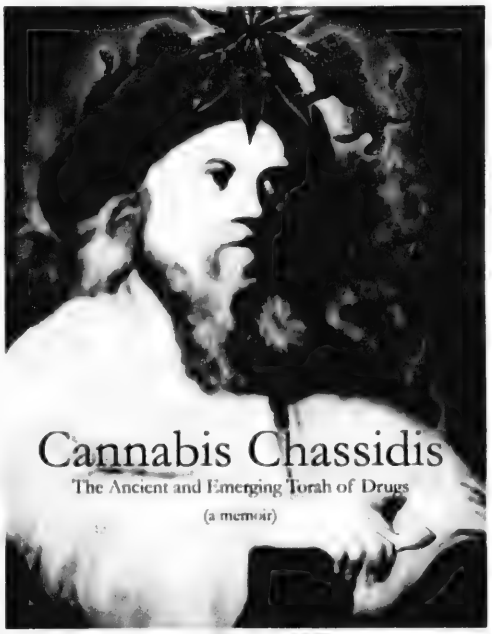
In your book, do you talk about using drugs for a spiritual experience?

No, I don't like when people say that. The drugs don't create a spiritual experience. Maybe the intentions of why you are using can be spiritual. But pot alienates you from your responsibilities and needs. It's not like alcohol that makes you feel warm. But then again, marijuana is the least dangerous drug – the worst thing it can do is make you lose track of your priorities.

What are the benefits of marijuana?

The main advice I suggest are a few things. The best framework for smoking pot is when you are on your own and you have an activity to focus on. It's also good to be in a small group of people that you really love. It's also really important to make sure that smoking pot won't become a problem for you, and that it won't keep you from noticing what's really important.

The good effects are that it [can give] a sense of peace of what's going on around you. It can help you break down daunting issues that might be on your mind and help you process things more easily. Weed is also great for praying, especially if you're not in a hurry. And of course, the best way to use it, spiritually, is to share it with someone.



Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes.

They should not exceed 2,000 words. Selected submissions will appear in the Passover Supplement of The CJN on March 28 2013, in either our Montreal or our Toronto edition, or both. If you have a preference, please state it on your submission. Not all submissions can be published. We look for originality.

E-mail submissions to:
cjnliterarysupplement@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is February 28, 2013.
We can only accept e-mail submissions.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

SPOTLIGHT ON COMPOSER DAVID NOWAKOWSKY & WORKS RESCUED FROM HOLOCAUST

David Nowakowsky (1848-1921) and his music were almost wiped off the face of the earth, and even his tombstone was destroyed. Thousands of his manuscripts were smuggled out of Russia to his granddaughter **Sofie** in Germany after the Bolsheviks seized Odessa's Brody Synagogue in 1922. In 1937, Sofie hid the music on a farm in occupied France before fleeing with her family to Switzerland.

Cantor **Ronald Graner** gives a talk on "Music of a Forgotten Master – Searching for David Nowakowsky," focusing on the music, how it survived, the people involved in its rescue and their family trees. Presented by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto. Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave. Wednesday, Jan. 30, 8 p.m. www.jgstoronto.ca

• • •

Chai Tea and Movie: Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents *Hello I Must Be Going*, a 2012 American-made comedy by director **Todd Louiso** that opened the last Sundance Film Festival. The Minskys are nearly finished remodelling their "empty nest" when their newly separated daughter, Amy, returns home and, after a period of self-pity, falls for the handsome son of her father's potential business partner.

With **Melanie Lynskey**, **Blythe Danner** and **Christopher Abbott**. Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Cinemas, 4861 Yonge St. at Sheppard. $15. Sunday, Jan. 27. Tea at 4 p.m., movie at 5 p.m. 416-324-9121, www.tjff.com

• • •

Jewish Playwriting Festival: The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents the return of In the Beginning: A Jewish Playwriting Festival. The festival is designed as an opportunity for emerging theatrical voices that offer fresh perspectives on Jewish history, heritage and experience. Sponsored by the RBC Foundation, it offers Canadian playwrights the chance to workshop scripts with professional actors and directors culminating in a staged public reading.

Submissions are invited and should include the script, a synopsis of the play and the playwright's resume. Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company, Attn: Avery Saltzman, 121 Parkway Forest Dr., Suite 107, Toronto M2J 5H4. The festival takes place at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, from June 17 to 20, 2013.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Soundstreams presents "The Three Faces of Jerusalem," a pluralistic afternoon of music and poetry with various performers of Jewish, Islamic and Christian fare. Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Sunday, Jan. 27, 3 p.m. $65 to $20. 416-408-0208, www.soundstreams.ca

• Film critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series on "Woody Allen Past and Present" with a segment on "The Contemporary Comic Voice," featuring a discussion with clips of *What's Up Tiger Lily?*, *Bananas*, *Modern Times* (**Charlie Chaplin**), *Jaws* (**Steven Spielberg**), *She's Gotta Have It* (**Spike Lee**), *Annie Hall* and *Lovesick* (**Marshall Brickman**). $12 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Jan. 28, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Singer **Ilana Waldston** performs songs from her jazz and cabaret repertoire with piano and bass accompaniment. Musideum, 401 Richmond St. W., Monday, Jan. 28, 8 p.m. $20. 416-599-7323, www.jazznlaughs.com.

• **Dolly Bell** gives a PowerPoint presentation on her recent book, *Growing Up Jewish In China*, to inaugurate an exhibition of about 50 photographs. Robarts Library, 130 St. George St. Jan. 30, 2 p.m.

• **Michael Mandel** presents an illustrated talk on "Jewish Toronto as Reflected in the Yiddish Press, 1935 to 1953." Active Seniors & Boomers, Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Jan. 31, 1:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Songwriting workshop with **Kobi Hass** helps students find their voice, sharpen their craft, and create memorable songs. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursdays from Jan. 31 to April 5, 7 to 9 p.m. $200. Registration, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *The Wonderment of Life*, a new collection of 15 whimsical paintings by Minsk-born contemporary mixed-media artist **Julia Hacker**, is on view at the Wychwood Barns Gallery, 76 Wychwood Ave., Feb. 1 to 3. For times please visit www.artjuliahacker.com or call 647-999-5130.

• *Pipe Dreams of Madame Recamier*, an exhibition of works by sculptor **Clint Neufeld,** continues at the Koffler Gallery Off-Site. At General Hardware Contemporary, 1520 Queen St. W., until March 3.

TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS
HELLO I MUST BE GOING
Just as Ruth and Stan Minsky are about to finish remodelling their empty nest, their daughter Amy lands on their doorstep. Recently dumped by her hotshot lawyer husband and with no career prospects, she is wallowing in self-pity. Amy's life is suddenly turned upside down when she falls for the handsome son of her father's potential business partner. Jeremy (played by Christopher Abbott from HBO's Girls) is perfect in every way, except one: he is only 19. As Amy, Melanie Lynskey (Two and a Half Men) delivers a pitch-perfect performance of an adult with a lot of growing up do. Blythe Danner, as the mother, is at her icy best.
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Ilana Waldston

Françoise Atlan is one of the performers at "Three Faces of Jerusalem". *[See story on page 45.]*

Soundstreams celebrates 30th anniversary

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

If there's a way to bridge the cultural and religious gaps in the Middle East and achieve peace between Jews, Muslims and Christians, it might be found through music.

At least that's the belief at Soundstreams, a Toronto-based non-profit centre dedicated to discovering and presenting new Canadian musical compositions and artists. It's celebrating its 30th anniversary with a concert dedicated to Jerusalem.

Titled The Three Faces of Jerusalem, the Jan. 27 performance at Koerner Hall will feature an eclectic mix of world music representing the three Abrahamic faiths of the region.

Scheduled to represent Judaism are internationally renowned Sephardi vocalist, Paris-based Françoise Atlan, and Israeli oud master Yair Dalal.

They'll be joined on stage by Palestinian-Canadian singer Roula Said, Montreal-based Persian sitar player Kiya Tabassian, viola de gamba player Pierre-Yves Martel, percussionist Ben Grossman and conductor David Fallis, among others.

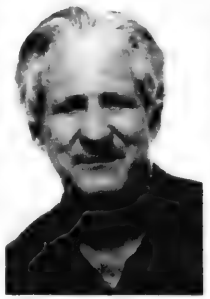
Canadian composer James Rolfe will also premiere his *Five and a Half Bridges*, a musical ode to the quest for peace in the Middle East.

Lawrence Cherney, artistic director and founder of Soundstreams, said the anniversary concert has been in the works for two years and is about fostering peace through music.

"When we originally developed this concert, we had no idea of the significance it would have, given the current political climate in the Middle East," Cherney said. "Each of the artists who have agreed to participate has illustrated an ongoing commitment to use music and collaboration as a way of bringing people together."

Speaking to *The CJN* from New York last week, Cherney said he hoped the show's audience would come away with a renewed sense of hope for the Middle East.

"The presentation will explore Jerusalem's roots and the heritages of all three religions," he said. "Despite periods of strife in the region... there have been times when all three [religions] have got along, and in a way, they're all joined at the hip. There were periods, especially in medieval times, where if you heard two songs written in Jerusalem, aside from one in Arabic and the other in Hebrew, one wouldn't know what culture you were hearing.



Lawrence Cherney

"The program never had a political agenda. But it has the belief that art and music can bring people together and bridge the gaps between cultures."

Reached in Paris last week, Atlan told *The CJN* she was looking forward to working with the other musicians at the event.

Of particular interest to her is the opportunity to work with Dalal, whom she said she has been in contact with ever since the two met in Israel last year and promised each other they would eventually collaborate on a project.

"This will be a nice meeting between artists. All artists on this project present a bridge for one another. We are all artists with specific identities and we will put these all together," Atlan said.

She is also eager to return to Toronto to perform for the community. She will be singing in Hebrew, Ladino and Arabic, though, as of last week, the specific songs for the gig remained up in the air, she said.

The artists are scheduled to gather in Toronto starting Jan. 23 to choose and rehearse their set lists in the run-up to the show.

For more information, visit www.soundstreams.ca.

Romantic comedy feels at times like tragedy

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Hello I Must Be Going should strike a disheartening chord of recognition among some viewers.

What if your beloved daughter goes through a painful divorce and lands on your doorstep?

That's the theme of Todd Louiso's feature film, scheduled to be screened by Chai Tea & A Movie on Sunday, Jan. 27, at 5 p.m. at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Cinemas. Ostensibly a romantic comedy, it unfolds at times like a tragedy.

Amy (Melanie Lynskey) has been dumped by her philandering husband and returns to the suburban home of her upper middle-class Jewish parents, Stan and Ruth Minsky (John Rubinstein and Blythe Danner). She arrives in an aimless frame of mind as they continue to remodel their ranch-style house.

Given to fainting spells and crying fits, Amy has become a recluse, not having left their house in three months. "You just had some bad luck," says her father, trying to calm her frayed nerves.

Amy's fortunes seem to take a turn for the better after she meets Jeremy (Christopher Abbott) at a dinner party hosted by her parents. Jeremy, 19 and about a decade younger than Amy, is an aspiring actor who has serious doubts about acting.

He's also the son of an entrepreneur who's thinking of forming a partnership with Amy's father, a lawyer who badly needs the business so he can settle into retirement comfortably.

Melanie Lynskey and Christopher Abbott in *Hello Must Be Going.*

As the film gains traction, Jeremy seduces Amy, who seems to have nothing better to do than to roll in the hay with him. Louiso handles these scenes competently enough, creating a dual world of lustful encounters and budding business deals.

He is also adept at drawing a portrait of a young divorcee struggling to get back on her feet and deciding whether her romantic fling with Jeremy is worth the trouble.

Lynskey is convincing as Amy, while Abbott delivers a fairly credible performance as a young man who falls hard for an older women.

Danner, looking alternately haggard and glamorous in a supporting role, is the personification of a bored and frustrated housewife whose destiny lies entirely in her husband's hands. Rubinstein, cast as a minor player, has little to do and is eminently forgettable.

Hello I Must Be Going has something to say about failed relationships and new beginnings, but it feels like yesterday's loaf of bread and is thus somewhat stale.

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Alouettes' coach Trestman takes helm of NFL's Bears

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

Marc Trestman's Jan. 16 announcement that he was leaving to become head coach of the Chicago Bears after five years helming the Montreal Alouettes didn't exactly take sports pundits by surprise.

They all knew that Trestman, whose contract with the Als expired after last season, was itching to get back to the National Football League (NFL) as a first-time head coach, even if he was always too characteristically circumspect to say so publicly.

They also seemed to agree that Trestman's departure would leave a void that could prove challenging to fill, even if the team stayed competitive with stalwarts such as veteran quarterback Anthony Calvillo, pro football's all-time leading passer.

"The Als should remain competitive without Trestman," commented sportswriter Herb Zurkowsky of the *Gazette*.

Trestman, 57, a native Minnesotan, was the second Jewish coach to oversee the Als, after Marv Levy in the 1970s. (Hall-of-famer Levy also went on to be a head coach in the NFL, with Kansas City and Buffalo.) Trestman becomes the NFL's only Jewish head coach in his new role with the Bears.

He boasted an enviable record with the Als after coming on board in 2007.

It included a total win-loss regular season record of 59 wins and 31 losses, four East Division championships (2008, 2009, 2010 and 2012), and three Grey Cup appearances, with victories in 2009 and 2010 and a loss in 2008. In 2010, Trestman was named CFL coach of the year.

The Grey Cup win in 2009 over the Saskatchewan Roughriders was especially memorable, when the Alouettes came back from 16 points down with 11 minutes to play and then prevailed by one point with a field goal and no time left on the clock.

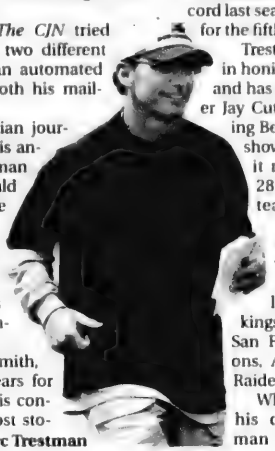
At the time, Trestman was his usual low-key self, telling *The CJN* that a "little bit of luck" helped his team come through in the clutch.

Last week when *The CJN* tried to reach Trestman at two different cellphone numbers, an automated voice reported that both his mailboxes were full.

Speaking to Canadian journalists one day after his announcement, Trestman said his new job would not have been possible without the Als.

"I'm filled with an incredible amount of humility today," he told reporters. "This [new position] is an incredible opportunity."

He succeeds Lovie Smith, who was with the Bears for nine years. The team is considered one of the most storied franchises in the NFL. It had a 10-6 record last season, but missed the playoffs for the fifth time in the last six seasons.


Marc Trestman

Trestman is considered an expert in honing the skills of quarterbacks and has said he's eager to help starter Jay Cutler and the underperforming Bears offence improve over its showing this past season, when it ranked 16th in points and 28th in total yards out of 32 teams.

Trestman previously served as assistant coach with a number of NFL teams, including the Cleveland Browns, Minnesota Vikings, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, San Francisco 49ers, Detroit Lions, Arizona Cardinals, Oakland Raiders, and Miami Dolphins.

When not occupied with his duties as a coach, Trestman resides in North Carolina.

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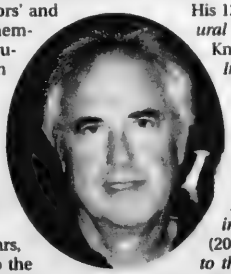
PGA Canada to present Rubenstein with highest award

Compiled by CJN Staff

The PGA of Canada will recognize golf writer Lorne Rubenstein with its George Cumming Distinguished Service Award on Jan. 25 at Canada Night during the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando, Fla.

"On behalf of the PGA of Canada's national board of directors' and the association's 3,800 members, I'd like to congratulate Lorne Rubenstein on being named the 2012 recipient of our most prestigious award, the George Cumming Distinguished Service Award," said PGA of Canada president Gregg Schubert.


Lorne Rubenstein

"For more than 35 years, Lorne has contributed to the game of golf through his passions as historian, journalist and author."

Born in Toronto in 1948, Rubenstein was curator for the Royal Canadian Golf Association's museum and Canadian Golf Hall of Fame from 1976 to 1982 before become the first editor of *SCORE-Golf* magazine from 1981 to 1983.

He has also written a golf column for the *Globe and Mail* since 1980. He has won four first-place awards from the Golf Writers Association of America, one National Magazine Award in Canada, and, most recently, he won the award for the best feature in 2009 from the Golf Journalists Association of Canada.

His 12 books include *The Natural Golf Swing*, with George Knudson (1988); *Links: An Insider's Tour Through the World of Golf* (1990); *The Swing*, with Nick Price (1997); *The Fundamentals of Hogan*, with David Leadbetter (2000); *A Season in Dornoch: Golf and Life in the Scottish Highlands* (2001); *Mike Weir: The Road to the Masters* (2003); *A Disorderly Compendium of Golf*, with Jeff Neuman (2006); *This Round's On Me* (2009); and the latest *Moe & Me: Encounters with Moe Norman, Golf's Mysterious Genius* (2012).

Rubenstein is also a member of the Ontario Golf Hall of Fame and the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame, and was honoured with the Canadian Sports Media Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009.

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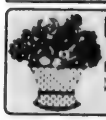

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'They took a genuine interest in the lives of everyone they came across'

Continued from page 12

She told them, "Please remember what I taught you about love and kindness, respect for others, and your responsibility to the Jewish community. Remember to acknowledge daily the gifts and blessings God has given you."

Wise's daughter, Dina Shapiro, recalled her mother as an "incredible, loving, formidable, charitable woman" who was devoted to her family and her work.

As well, she said, her mother began to write books with Shapiro's daughter once she learned to read. Shapiro also read a recent children's book that Wise and Pichosky collaborated on.

"They brought so much joy to each other... and to all who spent time with them," she said.

Pichosky's daughter, Sari Rosenblum, recalled a loving father who made lunch for her every day when she worked around the corner from him at her first job.

A widower when he met Wise, Pichosky had known his first wife, Sandra, from the time he was 12 years old. They were married 46 years. Religion became "an essential part" of Pichosky's life after he kept a promise to God to become observant if he survived brain surgery in his late 20s, Rosenblum said.

A concerned neighbour found the couple Jan. 10 after they didn't show up for lunch the previous day and failed to answer repeated phone calls.

In Toronto, Bialik issued a statement Jan. 11 saying that the "entire Bialik family is distraught by the tragic loss of Rochelle Wise and her beloved husband, Donny Pichosky. Rochelle was an adored member of the community and respected as an outstanding educator and woman of great character and kind spirit."

In Florida, Wise volunteered at a Hebrew day school in Hallandale, helping children with learning problems. She also was an active member of Na'amat, the Jewish women's organization.

Bobby Freeman, a co-director of Crestwood, wrote in an online condolence message that he came to know Wise as "a unique woman, with strength of character, foresight, and the ability to lead with love."

A statement from the camp said that Wise "was a selfless individual who took a genuine interest in the lives of everyone she came across. As the director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp from 1990 until her retirement in 2005, Rochelle dedicated herself to the personal growth and development of every child and staff member in her care, and to creating summer memories that would last a lifetime. With limitless energy, unwavering courage and a passion for children, she was an inspiration to a generation of kids, an example to day camp directors across Toronto, and an amazing friend to those of us at Crestwood Valley."

A bereavement notice sent to Shaarei Shomayim members said that Wise and Pichosky "were important longtime members of our community along with their children and grandchildren. They were both selfless individuals who took a genuine interest in the lives of everyone they came across."

With files from JTA

Cantors have been forced to reinvent themselves

Continued from page 13

Rosen, who was invested as a cantor by the School of Sacred Music of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2003, noted that the council is pluralistic and includes members from Reform, Conservative and Orthodox congregations.

"Our Orthodox colleagues will not sing at a concert with a woman cantor (because of prohibitions against hearing a woman sing), but will sit around the table with her," he said.

"We try to be sensitive to both," he added, explaining that the council strives to alternate men-only events with mixed ones.

Speaking generally, he said that cantors have been forced to reinvent themselves. The council tries to offer professional development to cantors in the field, to help hone and improve their skills, he said.

In addition to an expanded role for cantors outside of prayer services, things have changed in their role at services. Prayers have become "much more participatory," Rosen said. "That's shifted greatly over the last 20 years."

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Israeli musician to conduct COC

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Daniel Cohen may be young, but he's already performing with the best.

Although he'll just be turning 29 next month, the self-described proud Tel Avivian has been travelling around the world, conducting orchestras in Europe, Israel, and now, Canada.

The morning of our interview was Cohen's first free morning in 28 days, he said. He had just spent time in Tel Aviv conducting *Wozzeck*, by Alban Berg, which he said may be the most complex stage work ever written and his favourite piece, as well as being the first opera he ever heard.

He left for Italy afterward to conduct Beethoven symphonies with the Teatro Petruzzelli orchestra in Bari. That's when he got the invitation to conduct Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* for the Canadian Opera Company (COC) next month. He had only 11 days at home in Tel Aviv to study the score before being whisked off to Toronto.

"[It] was really a marathon for me," Cohen said. "I had 11 days without sleep, just to get through this score and study it deeply enough to rehearse it with this phenomenal cast of singers."

Although Cohen has never been to Canada, the COC invited him to conduct after receiving a recommendation from French composer/conductor Pierre Boulez and Israeli Daniel Barenboim, whom the COC's general director, Alexander Neef, called conductors of great renown.

Cohen is "very relaxed and free and at ease with what he is doing, and very comfortable even when faced with a challenging repertoire," Neef said, adding that Cohen has extensive experience conducting opera. "In a conductor, you need someone who knows how to work with opera singers and prepare an opera for performance."

Cohen said there's a big difference between conducting operas and conducting symphonies. In a typical symphony, the conductor arrives at rehearsal with his or her own interpretation of the music, which would be influenced by the character and sound of the orchestra. Conducting an opera can be much more complex.

"It's not a purely theatrical piece, and not a purely musical piece," he said, describing it as a multi-layered creation that combines each singer, conductor and director's interpretation of the music. "It's more of a collective effort in which all these amazing musicians contribute to making this overall production."

Cohen said he doesn't come from a musical family. His parents sent him to take piano lessons when he was six, but like many children, he wasn't thrilled with the instrument. Instead, he fell in love with the violin.

Daniel Cohen, who has conducted operas around the world. ***[James Cannon photo]***

"My mother claimed I didn't like how the sound of the piano kept dying, and that I wanted to have a sound that I could sustain," he said, admitting he thinks it's a bit farfetched that he would have made that claim at such a young age.

He said he knew he wanted to conduct from the time he took up the violin.

'From the outside, it's a very glamorous life, but... it's a terribly difficult life'

"I like having that large palette of the orchestral sounds, where you have the violin and the oboe and the percussion instruments and the strings," he said. "It's a beautiful canvas to paint on."

He began conducting in London, England, where he studied at the Royal Academy of Music. He described his family as anglophiles – two of his grandparents served in the British army.

"Britain was in my blood," he said. "I had this impression that London was like living inside a T.S. Elliot poem, and I loved that idea."

At the academy, he put together an orchestra called Eden Sinfonia. Being in charge of an independent orchestra meant he worked in every role, including creating the programs, carrying the chairs to the stage, printing the music and more.

"I don't think I slept at all in those four years, but I learned so much," he said. "You can't really be a chef at a restaurant until you spend a few years washing the dishes."

Ultimately, that experience has helped him in his current work.

"You're stepping in on a tiny little stage for one person, and you're standing in front of 80 to 100 people who, most of them are old enough to be your parents, and you're asking them to work extremely hard to make your musical vision sound the way you want it," he said. "That's a lot to ask of a professional musician."

Although the age difference might seem stressful for Cohen, he said he doesn't usually feel it.

"The moment that anything goes wrong, then it matters that I'm young, but as long as I'm doing a good job, it never does," he said, though he joked that he might simply be denying the amount of pressure in order to cope.

Once the opera in Toronto wraps up on Feb. 22, Cohen will head back to the island of Jersey, off the coast of France, where he is chief conductor of the Jersey Chamber Orchestra.

Later this year, he'll take part in the Lucerne Festival, where he will share a concert with French composer Pierre Boulez, who supervised the composition of a piece written specifically for Cohen, which he will perform there.

"It's a great honour for me," Cohen said. "It's like for a young artist to open for the Beatles."

He said he's looking forward to learning from Boulez, whom he described as one of the few great examples of someone who is both a conductor and a composer.

Although Cohen said he doesn't feel as if he has accomplished enough to give advice to beginners, there's one piece of advice he remembers from his early days.

"From the outside, it's a very glamorous life," he said. "But to any of us who are lucky enough to work, they would all say the same thing: it's a terribly difficult life."

Specifically, the biggest challenge is that he's rarely in any one place for long, and it's almost impossible to have a personal life or a family.

"As good as you're going to get, and as successful as you're going to get, and as rich as you're going to get, you're not going to get anything that's recompense for living that life except music," he said, remembering this advice from one of his former teachers. "If you're doing it for any other reason, stop now."

La clemenza di Tito runs at the Canadian Opera Company for nine performances starting on Feb. 3. For more information about Cohen, visit danielcohenconductor.com.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

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The fingerprints of family life

Married With Kids

Lauren Kramer

As a mom, there are a ton of daily little annoyances to contend with: Kids who don't wipe their bums or flush the toilet. Clean clothes that land in the laundry hamper because little hands are too lazy to fold them up and put them back in the closet. Gobs of toothpaste in the basin, and homework, backpacks and sweaters discarded throughout the house.

But over the past few weeks, as the voice in my head started its litany of complaints at having to incessantly pick up and clean up, my thoughts turned to Newtown, Conn. I started thinking about those poor parents who no longer hear the echo of little feet running through their homes, and whose children's backpacks sit dormant in the corner, never to be carelessly flung over a shoulder again.

I thought about the trauma of having to wake up each day with the knowledge that there will be one less bowl of Cheerios on the kitchen table, one less mop of hair to lovingly comb and one less warm embrace, that tight, comforting hug that says, without words, "I love and need you." How on earth do you live with that?

We measure time by the tragedies that life flings our way. I learned that when my mother passed away nine years ago. Asked to pinpoint when something occurred, I'd involuntarily calculate first the painful weeks, and then the months and years since I'd last seen her alive. She was 57, and though taken well before her time, we'd both known she'd die first. It's just nature's way.

Growing up, I knew a kid who desperately wanted a motorbike, a request his father adamantly refused. "If I die," he told his son, "you'll grieve, but you'll get over it. But if you die before me, I'll grieve, and I'll never, ever get over it."

Such is the torment of the bereaved parent – a lifetime sentence of sorrow, heartache and longing for a dead child. All they did was go to school, those young, innocent Newtown kids. And there, in a place of trust, learning and nourishment, they were mowed down by a force of pure evil, their lives obliterated in an instant.

How do you see any beauty in the world after a loss so incomprehensible? Is it even possible to ever feel truly happy again, after death has not just knocked on your door, but stolen your child, the light from your very eyes?

I ache for those parents' loss as I pick up the debris of toys and clothes from the floor, stack homework assignments and sort laundry for the umpteenth time.

As much as housework is drudgery, ever since Newtown, I've been cherishing the fingerprints of a happy childhood embedded in my daily chores. Those grass-stained jeans, muddy shoes and dog-eared pages of homework are testament to the exuberance, hope and happiness that defines my children's lives. Lives I'm privileged and awed to be a part of.

LASAGNA SOUP

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 pkg imitation ground meat
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1/2 tsp fennel seeds, crushed
- 4 c vegetable broth
- 28 oz can diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/2 lb whole wheat pasta
- 4 oz ricotta
- ½ c parmesan cheese, grated
- ½ c mozzarella cheese, grated
- handful basil, chopped

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add imitation meat; cook until lightly browned, breaking into crumbles as you go. Remove from pan and set aside. Add onion to pan; saute until tender, about 5 mins. Add garlic, red pepper flakes, fennel; saute until fragrant, about 1 min. Add broth, tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, bay leaf, "meat" crumbles, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat - simmer 30 mins. Add pasta and cook until al dente, about 7 min. In a small bowl, mix together ricotta, parmesan and mozzarella cheeses. Serve soup topped with the cheese mixture and basil. *Serves 4, adapted from Closet Cooking*

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Renowned Spanish author Antonio Muñoz Molina, left, who is the recipient of the 2013 Jerusalem Prize awarded by the Jerusalem International Book Fair.

Sephardi French filmmaker Alexandre Arcady, who presented his latest film, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, at this year's Festival Cinémania.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa notes that trade between Israel and Canada has not grown.

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) finished in 20th place at Concordia University's John Molson MBA International Case Competition out of a field of 36 top business schools from around the globe.

South Florida, from Palm Beach to Miami, is one long arts festival during the winter. Films, exhibits, concerts and theatre run throughout the season.

Steven Spielberg's films, including his latest, Lincoln, continue to reflect his Jewish upbringing. Like most movies, the script of the legendary director's life and career begins with some adversity – he was initially ashamed of his religious identity.

Idle No More

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

Idle No More, the current native protest movement, has a powerful momentum.

It's supported by native Canadians and non-natives alike, and it's moving ahead with an intensity that can only reflect many Canadians' dissatisfaction with government policy in general. The fact that Idle No More is able to attract so many non-natives is a success in and of itself.

Idle No More is a movement with a mission to empower native Canadians to push the federal government to deal with them honestly on issues such as treaties, housing and health.

It's also a crusade to clarify the true native narrative, one that is clear and audible to everyone from sea to shining sea. If done well, Idle No More can help us realize we have sinned against native Canadians in many ways, particularly through the creation of residential schools, the last of which closed in 1996. Hopefully, we will learn, or re-learn, that before then native children were often taken from their mothers' arms and transported 1,000 miles away to schools run by the church and the state.

Idle No More will give us a glimpse into the inner workings of native leadership as they strategize among themselves and with the feds. We will undoubtedly witness the elegance of the elders and native governance, which is rooted in age-old teachings and wisdom.

I'm hoping Idle No More will put an end to stereotypes such as the the "lazy native." Those whom we call lazy are more than likely mournful and without hope for the future. Why wouldn't they be? Their world was systematically dismantled, and when they asked for their things back, they were denied.

I'm hoping citizens across the country, whether in Newfoundland or British Columbia, will recognize through this movement that they harbour such stereotypes and that they go through a process of intense introspection to see the damage they might have caused, sincerely apologize, and work with our aboriginal people toward a better Canada.

Idle No More has encouraged me to think about stereotypes. I've noticed they slip into our individual and national psyche when we're not looking. I am amazed at some of the unfounded statements I've heard about native Canadians from educated people. Somewhere, someplace, from someone, they heard that natives are naturally violent, conniving and sly. This helped me understand how our enemies were able to amp up their propaganda machine and convince millions of people that Jews are lazy, liars, penny pinchers and even baby killers.

Idle No More may or may not maintain its current momentum. It's hard to say. But what is clear is that social media, which is here to stay, has played a role in uniting natives and non-natives across Canada in a most important way and will continue to do so. That groundswell, that spring thaw, was so dynamic that Prime Minister Stephen Harper had to meet with native leaders and commit to personally overseeing the native portfolio.

Familiarize yourself with Canada's aboriginal people and their plight. Google "native Canadians" to get going. It's all there. Find out if your synagogue has a social-action committee and if the native issue is on its agenda. Encourage your rabbi and leadership to speak about Idle No More and what we can do, the Jewish community, to help our native brothers and sisters, many of whom are suffering within our own boundaries.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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This Week

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Florida police remain tight-lipped over couple's murder. *Page 6*

Arts & Travel

Gabi Epstein takes on Tzitel in *Fiddler* production. *Page 32*

Books

Pulitzer Prize-winning author examines postwar Eastern Europe. *Page 34*

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Yair Lapid's supporters showed their jubilation as the election results were reported last week. ***Please see more election coverage on pages 7, 8, 9, 11 and 29.*** *[Israel Sun photo]*

Israeli voters surprise experts

David Horovitz
The Times of Israel

Analysis

Trust the Israeli electorate to produce a surprising and acutely complicated electoral result, at the end of an exemplary, empowering exercise in democracy. Here are some initial conclusions.

1. Israel did not move to the right

Remarkably, given the regional instability and consequent Israeli wariness, the right-wing bloc took a bit of a pasting. It's a more hawkish right-wing bloc, but it's a smaller one, somewhat less able to get its own way. Instead, Israel moved a little to the centre, as exemplified by the remarkable debut of Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid party. What does this mean for the big regional issues, and especially for interaction with the Palestinians? Well, that depends on the nature of the coalition. And for that, we may have to wait a while.

2. Netanyahu is battered, but he's still a winner – almost certainly, with some serious caveats

You go into national politics because you want to lead your nation. And once you've made it to prime minister, you go into your next elections in order to remain prime minister. That's what Netanyahu has apparently managed. This despite Netanyahu not being particularly popular and being a very well-known quantity in an election where many voters plainly favoured the fresh, inexperienced and unsullied candidates. The vote was one for change. Dozens upon dozens of sitting Knesset members were swept aside. But Netanyahu rolled with the wave, and here he is again.

Continued on page 28

Benjamin Netanyahu

Yitro
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Havdalah: 6:14
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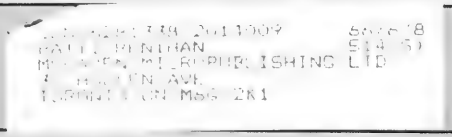

Explosion confirmed at key Iranian nuclear plant – see page 28

CANADA

Shuls Get SIP Funds

OTTAWA — The federal government's ongoing Communities at Risk: Security Infrastructure Program (SIP) last week announced this year's funding recipients, which included two shuls. In Toronto, Beth Tikvah Synagogue received $32,769, while Hamilton's Adas Israel Congregation got $32,096. The $1-million fund is disbursed annually to communities at risk of hate crimes to help implement security measures. It's administered by Public Safety Canada. Since its inception in 2008, it's given some 80 Jewish groups more than $1.8 million.

Shoah Recalled

TORONTO — Markham, Ont., Mayor Frank Scarpitti marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day at a Jan. 29 council meeting, which also featured a showing of the new short film based the memoir of local resident and Holocaust survivor Felix Opatowski, 88. After the film, Opatowski presented his memoir, *Gatehouse to Hell*, to the mayor. He was joined by a representative of the Azrieli Foundation, which published his book and produced the short film. Markham joined 16 other Canadian municipalities in marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day, including Toronto, Ottawa, Halifax and Vancouver.

WORLD

Post Chides Obama

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Barack Obama should "reset" his ties with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the *Washington Post* urged. "The wise U.S. policy would be to concede, and maybe even welcome, Mr. Netanyahu's re-election while quietly urging him to construct a centrist government," said an editorial on Jan. 22, the day of Israel's election. The *Post* chided Obama's "poor handling of Israel, which he has not visited and where he is widely regarded as supportive of the nation's defence but unsympathetic to its psyche."

School Approved

LOS ANGELES — A dual-language Hebrew and English charter school was approved for Los Angeles. The Lashon Academy is the first Hebrew-language charter school approved by the Los Angeles Unified School District, which has some 230 charter schools, including other dual-language immersion schools.

Jewish-Arab American Sues Over Search

DETROIT — A Jewish-Arab American woman is suing a U.S. airline and the federal Transportation Security Administration for removing her from a plane and strip-searching her.

Shoshana Hebshi, whose mother is Jewish and father is Saudi Arabian, is suing Frontier Airlines and law enforcement for ethnically targeting her.

Shoshana Hebshi

A SWAT team forcibly removed Hebshi, 36, an American citizen who lives in Ohio, and two Indian men in handcuffs from Frontier flight 623 after it landed on Sept. 11, 2011, in Detroit. She was held for hours, questioned and strip searched.

A fellow passenger had accused the three of acting suspiciously. Hebshi did not know the Indian men, who reportedly were sitting in her row.

Also named in the Jan. 22 lawsuit are the Wayne County Airport Authority, Detroit Metro Airport Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Patrol.

Hebshi said she was "frightened and humiliated" and believes she was singled out due to her ethnicity.

"Racial profiling is unconstitutional and counterproductive. No one is safer because an innocent mother of two was dragged off a flight, strip searched and held for several hours," Sarah Mehta, an attorney with the ACLU of Michigan, said in a Jan. 22 statement issued.

The TSA would not comment on pending litigation.

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Fire destroys landmark bagel bakery

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

It will be "a while" before the Ontario fire marshall determines the cause of the three-alarm fire that destroyed Haymishe Bagel Shop on Bathurst Street near Lawrence Avenue on Sunday morning, said a captain with Toronto Fire Services.

Capt. Mike Strapko, who works in public information services, said in a telephone interview that firefighters will not have any information until the water is cleared from the basement of the bakery and any information found is sent to the forensics lab.

"This normally takes a long time," he told *The CJN*.

He said that four people were in the bakery when they noticed fire in the basement at around 10 a.m. Seventeen fire trucks and 65 firefighters responded to the 911 call.

Division Cmdr. Bob O'Hallam told *CP24* that the first crews arrived and found heavy flames in the basement.

"They tried to enter to attack the fire there, but the floor was already collapsing and they were forced out."

The fire eventually spread to the apartment above.

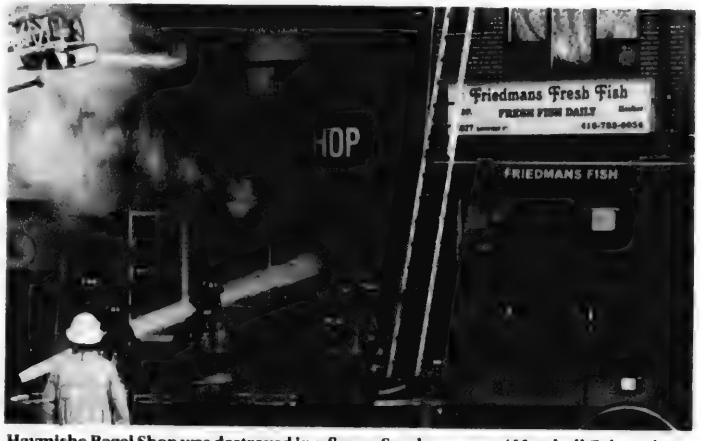
Strapko said that the only person injured in the fire – six people were assessed by Toronto Medical Services – was a firefighter who hurt his ankle, but he remained on the job.

It took until around 2 p.m. for the fire to be contained.

Neighbouring businesses were evacuated, said Strapko, but none had more than light smoke damage.

In November 2006, a four-alarm fire destroyed Perl's Meat & Delicatessen on the same block.

To view video, go to cjnews.com



Haymishe Bagel Shop was destroyed in a fire on Sunday. *(Marshall Cohen photo)*

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Unnoticed, under the radar

From the editor's desk...

In the fog and smoke of the constantly churning Middle East, a change in the tone and substance of Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas' public remarks since the Palestinians were granted non-state member status by the UN General Assembly, has been little noticed in world media.

On Jan. 4 in Ramallah, on the occasion of the anniversary of the founding of the El-Fatah militia of the PLO, Abbas delivered a fiery speech that could have been written for PLO founder Ahmad Shukeiry or his benighted successor Yasser Arafat.

Ignoring every paragraph of every page of every bilateral agreement the PA has signed with Israel since 1993, Abbas exhorted his people to embrace a future burning with the stinging vapours of exploding bombs and discharging rifles.

So shockingly sharp was Abbas' swerve from previous speeches, Prof. Dore Gold, Israel's former ambassador to the United Nations, noted that it "may have marked a turning point in the relations between the Palestinian Authority president and the State of Israel."

Islamic affairs expert Jonathan Halevi, writing for the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, characterized Abbas' Jan. 4 message as "a radical political doctrine."

What struck Gold and Halevi as gravely surprising, if not a bit unnerving too, was Abbas' frequent resort to themes of violence and non-accommodation.

"Abbas chose to re-emphasize that the Palestinian people remain on the path of struggle to realize 'the dream of return' of the Palestinian refugees and their millions of descendants," Halevi wrote.

It was especially noteworthy for Halevi that Abbas invoked the names of some of vilest slaughterers of Jews in Palestinian history as fit and worthy role models for the youth of his nation.

"Abbas pledged to continue the path of struggle of previous Palestinian leaders, mentioning the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, who forged a strategic alliance with Nazi Germany, and heads of Palestinian terror organizations who were directly responsible for the murder of thousands of Israeli civilians. All are equal and suitable partners in the Palestinian struggle, and their ideological platform – even if it is terrorist and/or radical-Islamist – is a source of inspiration for the Palestinian people," Halevi wrote.

Of course, the commonly heard rejoinder to Halevi's observation is that "one person's terrorist is another person's hero." But stretching the notion of hero to include Adolf Hitler and his confederates attests rather revealingly and disgustingly to the character of the individual suggesting that stretch. There is absolutely no room, not the tiniest, milli-measurement of light, for any moral relativism on the suggestion of Hitler/Mufti as hero.

Gold speculated that vast geo-political and geo-cultural changes in the region since 1993 account for the sudden shift in Abbas' demeanour.

"With the uprisings in the Arab world since 2011," Gold wrote, "a new rejectionist front has come to power through Islamist parties that are now ruling from Tunisia to Egypt."

Accommodation with the Jewish state is plainly at odds with the core dogma of the Islamists whose rising tide of rejectionism and confrontation seems to be washing across much of the Arab world.

It may be that Abbas does not want to stand on the wrong side of Arab history, as he perceives it. He may be reorienting PA policy. Or, alternatively, he may simply be doing what he does with an expert's finesse: saying one thing to the West and quite the opposite to Ramallah. Was it a coincidence that Abbas delivered his Jan. 4 message during the Israeli election? Perhaps he wished to push the Israeli electorate further to the right to enable him to continue proclaiming his people's victimhood to Israeli intransigence?

Mahmoud Abbas

But, much as they confounded the many vaunted Mideast pundits, the Israeli voters confounded him too.

The majority of Israelis clearly voted to try to find a mutually respectful, secure way in which to find an agreement with the Palestinians. They may be forgiven, however, for not yet reposing all of their trust in Mahmoud Abbas, who urges his people to regard Hitler's henchmen and accomplices as great figures of history.

The most compelling observation about Abbas' recent behaviour belongs to Halevi. He concluded, rather sadly, "Anyone who expected that Abbas would follow a more moderate course after the UN General Assembly resolution of Nov. 29, 2012, upgrading the status of the PLO's observer mission to that of an observer state, was undoubtedly disappointed with Abbas' remarks. He was not preparing the Palestinian people for making peace, but rather reverting to rhetoric perpetuating and even escalating the conflict." *–MBD*

SeeJN

ANSHEL WISE'S CIGAR STORE AND 'STEAMSHIP OFFICE'

The Ontario Jewish Archives holds ledgers from steamship agents based in Toronto who booked the travel of immigrants escaping the pogroms in Europe. Revealed in these documents are the names of the men and women who left their lives in Europe behind to sail to Canada, seeking opportunities for themselves and for succeeding generations. One of the ledgers is from Anshel Wise's cigar store and "steamship office" on Dundas Street West in Toronto. Wise, an immigrant himself, helped bring hundreds of Jews from Europe on the shipping lines. From left are the Wise children: Syd, Lil and David, in 1922. For more information, visit www.ontariojewisharchives.org.

(Ontario Jewish Archives photo)

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Police tight-lipped about Florida murders

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Hallandale Beach Police are still not releasing details about the Jan. 9 murder of Toronto snowbirds Donny Pichosky and Rochelle Wise, but they met with residents of the couple's condo complex Jan. 22 to reassure them there is no increased risk to them.

As well, Hallandale detectives were scheduled to meet with Toronto police and the couple's families here this past Sunday and Monday to learn more about the victims' lives, according to the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*.

Hallandale Beach police chief Dwayne Flournoy told the *Sun-Sentinel* that police believe providing details to the media would "severely hamper" their ability to solve the case.

In an online video accompanying the article, Flournoy expressed confidence that police would solve the case.

"I'm very encouraged with the evidence we've collected, the analysis of the evidence, and some of the theories that we have developed," he told the paper.

Donny Pichosky and Rochelle Wise

Hallandale Beach mayor Joy Cooper called the crime "highly unusual" for the city, according to the paper.

Pichosky, 71, and Wise, 66, were found Jan. 10 by a concerned neighbour who had a key to their Venetian Park townhouse after they failed to show up for a planned lunch and didn't answer repeated phone calls.

Wise was a preschool administrator at Bialik Hebrew Day School and a founding director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp.

Pichosky, her husband of four years, was a retired businessman who volunteered with seniors at Baycrest, and had spent at least 20 years wintering in Florida.

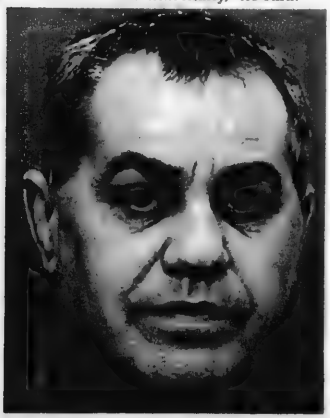
Alleged subway scammer facing nearly 70 charges

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Alleged subway fraudster Israel Aharanovitz remains in custody as police receive increasing numbers of calls from victims.

As of last week, some 60 to 70 people had come forward with complaints of being scammed, said Det. James Turnbull of the Toronto Police Service.

"I've never had that many," he said.



Israel Aharanovitz

One of the calls came from a woman who recalled a run-in with Aharanovitz in New York City in 1987 or 1989.

"She remembered he scammed her before," Turnbull said.

Given the volume of calls he's received, he still hasn't been able to return them all, he added.

So far, Aharnovitz, 63, faces nearly 70 charges of fraud under $5,000.

Police allege he targeted mostly women in the Jewish community while in subway stations.

"He purported to be a visitor from Israel then asked for a loan to help him out of a financial dilemma," police allege. "The victims would turn over a quantity of money to the man."

The sums ranged from $40 to $1,000.

Aharanovitz, a native of Israel, was arrested Jan. 9 at the Glencairn subway station after police saw him approach several women. Initially, he was charged with four counts of fraud under $5,000.

Police believed there were more victims, and appeals to the public resulted in the large number of people responding with information about the suspect, Turnbull said.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-1300, or to call Crimestoppers at 416-222-TIPS (8477). They can also go online at www.222tips.com, text TOR and leave a message to CRIMES (274637).

Yair Lapid proves the Israeli centre is thriving

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The surprising emergence of Yair Lapid's centrist Yesh Atid party with 19 seats in the Jan. 22 Israeli elections has caused a number of western journalists to re-evaluate their belief that Israel had been shifting to the right.

Polls throughout the campaign undermined this view, despite some rightward movement within already conservative political factions.

Indeed, the "rightward" drift isn't true of Israeli society as a whole, the "rational centre" (as some Israeli analysts have termed it) of which has been steadily represented for many years by about two-thirds of the populace. This is the two-thirds that supports a two-state solution with the Palestinians, but believes, in equal numbers, that such a deal is not possible with the current Palestinian leadership and with Hamas ruling Gaza. That's why,

Yair Lapid

in this election, only 18 per cent of Israeli voters placed negotiations with the Palestinians as their top priority for the government.

What filled that spot for almost half of voters were socio-economic issues: jobs, wages, affordable housing, shared citizen responsibilities, etc. These are the same issues that brought out half a million people to protest in the streets of Tel Aviv and other cities in the summer of 2011. These are the voters who felt their concerns were not adequately addressed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. It's Lapid who has taken up their cause and pledged not to abandon it if he joins a new government.

Western journalists are now playing catch-up to the long-standing and newsworthy realities of Israeli society, which have been largely overlooked by the familiar coverage of political elites and conflict-driven stories involving the Palestinians. Just a couple of years ago, veteran Jerusalem-based *NBC News* correspondent Martin Fletcher remarked that Israel is the most covered but least understood country in the world. Fletcher admitted that he himself had contributed to this lack of understanding by failing, along with his colleagues, to adequately report about Israeli society.

In the immediate aftermath of the election and with Lapid in the international spotlight, a couple of Israeli analysts tackled some common myths about both Israelis and their politics. In a Jan. 23 interview with *CTV News*, prominent Israeli writer Yossi Klein Halevi, describing Lapid as the big winner of the election, noted: "We tend to think of Israeli society as divided between left and right, but there is a very large centre that is hawkish on security but dovish on territory. Lapid managed to project this centrist sensibility."

In a piece written that same day for *Tablet* magazine, Klein Halevi explained what constitutes the Israeli centre (and he didn't exempt the Israeli media, either, from failing to correctly portray it): "The Israeli media is speaking relentlessly of an even divide between the left-wing and right-wing blocs. That's nonsense. Yesh Atid isn't a left-wing party; half of its voters define themselves as right of centre. Instead, the rise of Yesh Atid affirms the vigour of the centre. Despite the historic failure of every centrist party – Kadima, the last attempt, virtually disintegrated in this election – centrist Israelis continue to seek a political framework."

The centre thus includes the centre-right along with the centre-left. By this definition, many who support Likud certainly belong to the centre. It may come as a surprise to learn, for instance, that according to last December's Israel Democracy Institute/Tel Aviv University Peace Index, 52 per cent of Likud voters support the two-state vision.

In a Jan. 24 *Ottawa Citizen* opinion piece, Barry Rubin challenged another common misperception: "Elections are not between left and right ideological blocs." Such blocs do exist, but they constitute only one-third of the parties (Arab parties, far right, far left, and religious). Rubin observed: "The remaining two-thirds of the electorate votes roughly in a spectrum that coincides with that of Canada, and it is their choices that provide the main governing parties. They constitute five parties ranging from the centre-right Likud of Netanyahu, through three centre-centre parties, to the moderate left Labour party."

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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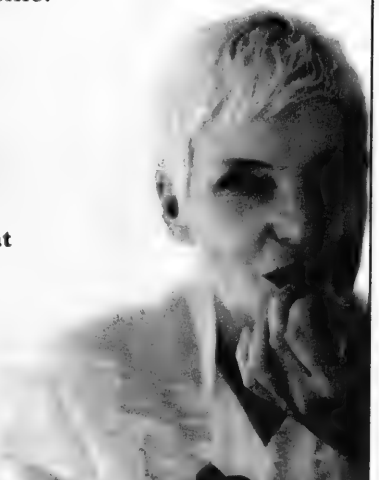

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Iran still on the agenda

Eclipsing the reports last weekend of the attempts in Israel by the freshly elected members of the 19th Knesset to cobble together a new governing coalition was a fast-moving series of reports concerning Iran.

Mohammad Reza Heydari, a former Iranian diplomat who defected in Norway in 2010, gave an interview to Israeli media last Friday in which he unambiguously stated that the theocratic regime in Tehran would have no reservations about using a nuclear weapon against the Jewish state.

"If Iran gets to the point where it has an atomic bomb, it will certainly use it, against Israel or any other [enemy] country," Heydari told his interviewer on Channel 2.

Two days later, on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, at the 26th International Islamic Unity Conference in Tehran, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called, once again, for Israel's demise.

As reported by *The Times of Israel*, Ahmadinejad told the assembly: "Under [the] circumstances [in which] the corrupt, uncultured and murderous Zionists are occupying and killing oppressed people, we should not sit idly by." His meaning was clear to everyone in the large hall.

But even as the Iranian president was speaking to the august assembly on Sunday, he was undoubtedly distracted by reports seeping into western media – despite his best efforts to prevent the seepage – that the prized nuclear facility in Fordo had been set ablaze, apparently by a large explosion.

Iranian officials denied that there had been an explosion or fire at the plant. But the report that found its way into the light was too detailed to be quickly brushed aside. It appeared on the website wnd.com and alleged that the blast destroyed much of the installation and had trapped more than 200 people underground. It further claimed that the blast "shook facilities within a radius of three miles," that Iranian security forces had "enforced a no-traffic radius of 15 miles," that the Tehran-Qom highway was shut down for several hours after the blast, and that, "as of [last] Wednesday afternoon [Jan. 23], rescue workers had failed to reach the trapped personnel."

There were also unconfirmed reports that the United States and Israel knew about the explosion and indeed may have somehow been involved in bringing it about.

The truth will eventually be known. If indeed there was a fire at the Fordo facility and if sabotage played a role, the Iranian regime too, in addition to the facility, will have been rocked.

Tehran can harbor no doubts about the resolve of the countries it continually threatens to deprive it of the means to carry out its threats. Iran's obsession with obtaining a nuclear weapon will be very high on the policy agenda of the new Israeli government, as it was for the last one.

It should also be high on the agenda of every western government.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel's consumer price index rose 1.3 per cent in December 1987, bringing the cumulative rise for the year to 16.1 per cent, the lowest inflation rate in 15 years, the country's Central Bureau of Statistics reported.

Dry Bones ISRAELI VOTE

Editorial Advisory Board: **Maurice Benzacar, Michael Brown, Donald Carr, Rabbi Michael Dolgin, Jake Goldstein, Jeffrey Kopstein, Keith Landy, Lou Ronson, Alan Sandler, Rabbi Philip Scheim, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, Ehud Telem, Nelson Wiseman.**

Palestinians must make concessions for peace

Israel Lyon, chair of JSpace Canada's co-ordinating committee, claims that Israeli settlements in the West Bank "do impede peace" ("West Bank construction," letters, Jan. 17). That is garbage. Peace talks didn't happen when there were no settlements, but they did when Israel was building them. Fatah's refusal to negotiate because of settlement construction is just a way for the Palestinians to put the blame on Israel for lack of progress toward a peace agreement. When these talks were happening, the Palestinians made no concessions and turned down several offers of a state. The real reason there is neither talk nor agreement is that there are two Palestinian groups, fighting with each other and undemocratic, and neither will settle for anything but control of all of Mandate Palestine.

Fatah refuses to drop the demand that their so-called refugees, all semi-prisoners of Arab governments and kept on welfare by the United Nation s for the last 65 years, be returned to Israel. Hamas, in its written constitution calls for the complete destruction of Israel and the killing of Jews. Yet, Israel is supposed to make peace.

Until the world – the United States, the European Union and Russia – stops thinking that pressuring Israel for concessions, which have never worked, is the key to peace and puts that pressure where it belongs, on the two Palestinian groups, there is no hope of a negotiated peace agreement. What is happening is farcical and would be hilarious if it weren't so stupid and potentially tragic.

Ken Frankel,
Montreal

• • •

Israel agreed to return captured lands

Sam Mitnick is correct that United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 calls for "every state in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized borders free from threats and acts of violence" ("Rockets threaten peace talks," letters, Jan. 17). However, according to resolutions subsequent to the 1967 Six Day War, while Israel successfully captured the West Bank territories, Israel then agreed to return areas of the captured lands (Abba Eban, 1968) that, from an international perspective, are designated occupied lands. In return, Israel gets defensible borders and recognition as a sovereign state. Israel, unlike any other nation in the region, requires security guarantees. The Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 substantiates this recognition of Israel. But what has Israel done since 1967? It has built settlements with 300,000 settlers, permitted vandalization of Palestinian properties, uprooted olive trees, etc., and endured a horrendous Palestinian terrorist campaign in return for their grievances with us. The Israeli government must stop what's construed by many, including the majority of Israelis, as destructive activities mitigating the possibility of a two-state resolution to the Mideast conflict.

Smadar Meiri
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

Martyred WWII cantors

Ishei Yisrael Ut'fillatam is a list of European cantors who were martyred during the Shoah. The phrase "*Ishei Yisrael Ut'fillatam*," borrowed from the *Amidah*, means "the fiery offerings and prayers of Israel." This liturgical wording originally described the intensity of religious fervour required for true prayer, as if to say: may our words have the same meaning and effect as fiery sacrifices once did for our ancestors. Initiators of the project borrowed it to indicate that in the death camps and elsewhere, those who bore the responsibility of leading their congregations in pleading before the Almighty themselves became the sacrificial offerings of their era.

The list, currently totalling 1,447 names, dates and places (where available), was started by Cantor Joseph Levine and Cantor Solomon Mendelson, They found the majority of names in the databanks of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. Others came from searches of Yiddish and Hebrew volumes such as the many *Yizkor* books of decimated communities whose survivors had published them in Israel beginning in the late 1950s. The compilers are now turning to individuals who might remember a relative who served as a cantor in Europe before World War II. Anyone with such information is requested to email the Cantors Assembly at caoffice@aol.com.

Joe and Doris Levine
Philadelphia, Pa.

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Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

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Why I voted for Yair Lapid

When Yair Lapid's father, the well-known journalist and politician Tommy Lapid, was on his death-bed, he told his son: "I'm leaving you the state of Israel."

Tommy, a Holocaust survivor, meant this metaphorically: the generation of

Yossi Klein Halevi

survivors was entrusting the gift of a Jewish state to its children. But with the rise of Yair Lapid, head of the Yesh Atid (There Is a Future), which emerged from nowhere to become Israel's second-largest party in last week's election, Yair's "inheritence" could become literal. More than any other politician aside from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself, Yair may now determine the next phase of Israeli politics.

"Yair," not "Lapid": we call our politicians Bibi and Shelly and Tzipi with a misleading intimacy, when in fact we can't bear most of them. But even Israelis who wrongly dismiss him as a lightweight – a former TV talk show host and heartthrob, with no government or combat experience – tend to like Yair.

That's because he is frankly, unapologetically, in love with the State of Israel. There is nothing complicated about Yair's Israeliness. He is not a hyphenated Israeli, whose loyalty to the state depends on its fulfilment of an ideological agenda. Yair conveys the impression of a man comfortable in all parts of Israel. He is a secular Israeli who has shown increasing interest in Judaism. He supports a two-state solution and opposes settlement construction outside the large settlement blocs. Yet, he launched his campaign from the West Bank city of Ariel, sending the message that settlers are part of Israel too.

He opposes the wholesale draft exemption of ultra-Orthodox young men, but he advocates a gradualist approach and has an ultra-Orthodox rabbi on his Knesset list. He emerged as the voice of middle class disaffection, yet included on his list two Ethiopians, representatives of one of the country's poorest constituencies. (Other parties tend to include a token Ethiopian.)

Some see Yair's Israeli eclecticism as an expression of ideological immaturity, of indecisiveness. In fact, it reflects his ability – alone among today's leaders – to define the Israeli centre.

To understand Yair's Israeliness one needs to understand his father, who emerged as a teenager from the Budapest ghetto committed to a single act of faith: the Jews need a home. Tommy's Zionism was simple. It was about gratitude to Israel for helping heal him from the extremities of exile. Tommy's Israel didn't need to be territorially whole or a light to the nations. It simply needed to be.

Yair's biography of his father, *Memoirs After My Death* – one of the best books to emerge from the "second generation" – is written in Tommy's voice, as if from the beyond. (Tommy was a famous atheist, and Yair ends the book with these words: "And then I stopped breathing... After that, there is nothing. I told you so.") That is more than a clever device: it is an expression of the near-total identification of a son with his father, and with his father's history. So deeply has Yair internalized his father's story that he can write Tommy's "autobiography" in a voice that Israelis will recognize as unmistakably that of Tommy Lapid.

And yet, as Yair has insisted since entering politics, he is not his father. "I've learned from my father," he's repeatedly said, "but also from his mistakes."

Tommy's biggest political mistake was his divisiveness: his party, Shinui (Change), was aggressively secular, not only attacking ultra-Orthodox separatism

[Israel Sun photo]

but also mocking ultra-Orthodox beliefs and lifestyle.

By contrast, Yair has sought dialogue. Last year, in an address at the ultra-Orthodox campus of the Kiryat Ono College, Yair conceded that the ultra-Orthodox had won. Secularists, he said, thought we could create a state that would marginalize you, while in reality we can't make any major political decision without your input. But, he added pointedly, secularists also won: we've created a modern state with a thriving Hebrew culture. And so, he concluded, both camps have to choose between continuing their culture war or jointly taking responsibility for the state they share.

More than any other party, Yesh Atid defines the country's emerging cultural centre. The son of Tommy Lapid has included no fewer than two rabbis on his list. But that list also includes Ruth Calderon, a leader of the growing movement of secularists seeking a new Jewish identity outside of Orthodoxy. The message is radical diversity within a shared Israeliness.

Yair's ideological challenge will be to clarify the political centre and give coherence to the instincts of a majority of Israelis. That centrist majority seeks a politics that isn't afraid to acknowledge the complexity of Israel's dilemmas. These voters agree with the left about the dangers of occupation and with the right about the dangers of a delusional peace. Centrists want a two-state solution and are prepared to make almost any territorial compromise for peace. But they also believe that no concessions, at least for now, will win Israel legitimacy and real peace. Centrists want to be doves but are forced by reality to be hawks.

I voted for Yair because, as a centrist Israeli, I have no other political home.

Netanyahu, who accepted a two-state solution in principle and then imposed a 10-month settlement freeze, tried to turn Likud into a centre-right party, more pragmatic than ideological and able to attract voters like me. But the ideological right within the Likud revolted. Today's Likud appears more hospitable to the far rightist Moshe Feiglin than to centrists like Dan Meridor, denied a safe seat in the Likud primaries.

The Israeli media are speaking relentlessly of an even divide between the left-wing and right-wing blocs. That's nonsense. Yesh Atid isn't a left-wing party; half of its voters define themselves as right of centre. Instead, the rise of Yesh Atid affirms the vigour of the centre. Despite the historic failure of every centrist party – Kadima, the last attempt, virtually disintegrated in this election – centrist Israelis continue to seek a political framework.

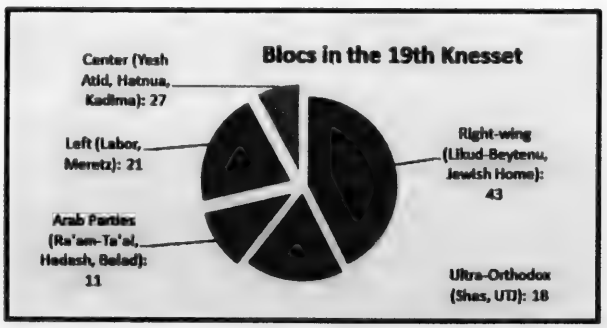
Will Yesh Atid be different from its failed centrist predecessors? How will the inexperienced Yair Lapid withstand the brutalities of Israeli politics?

I think Yair will continue to surprise us. What has taken him this far is his straightforward thinking, precisely what Israeli politics so desperately needs. (And his political adviser happens to be his father's closest friend, Ehud Olmert, the ultimate politician.) If Yair remains true to his ideologically simple but emotionally profound Zionism, he could help lead us to an Israel less at war with itself.

Yossi Klein Halevi is a senior fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem and a member of its Engaging Israel team. This article first appeared in Tablet.

Israeli election results

1.	Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu	31
2.	Yesh Atid	19
3.	Labor	15
4.	Habayit Hayehudi	12
5.	Shas	11
6.	United Torah Judaism	7
7.	Hatnua	6
8.	Meretz	6
9.	Hadash	4
10.	Ra'am-Taal:	4
11.	Balad	3
12.	Kadima	2


Blocs in the 19th Knesset
Center (Yesh Atid, Hatnua, Kadima): 27
Left (Labor, Meretz): 21
Arab Parties (Ra'am-Ta'al, Hadash, Balad): 11
Right-wing (Likud-Beytenu, Jewish Home): 43
Ultra-Orthodox (Shas, UTJ): 18

[Courtesy of The Times of Israel]

Finding inspiration on a desert hike

Because of deadline constraints, I'm finishing this article on Jan. 21, the day before Knesset elections here in Israel. You'll be reading this after the results are in and coalition discussions are well underway.

The Talmud teaches us that "prophecy is given to fools," but I tend to agree with countless polls' predictions that the two major Knesset blocs will remain intact, with a clear majority for right-wing parties of different hues. As *Times of Israel* editor David Horowitz's noted, the main difference will be that "the right has become the far-right."

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

This is not a result I would choose, and it doesn't augur well for Israel. Nor does the dearth of inspiring leaders from the centre-left segment of our political spectrum.

But things aren't all bleak.

During this lacklustre election season, I have also found pleasure. My daughter, Naomi, just turned 18 and will be voting for the first time, and I've been observing her decision-making processes. She's been reading party platforms, participating in Facebook discussions on the issues, and standing up for her own worldview, even if it wasn't always popular.

And thankfully, not everything in this country revolves around politics. My family is preparing for my son Natan's bar mitzvah. As part of that process, and prodded by a friend, Elie, whose son Emanuel will also be bar mitzvahed soon, Natan and I recently joined them for two days of hiking in the south on sections of the Israel National Trail, an almost 1,000-kilometre-long path that meanders from the Lebanese border to the Red Sea.

The day we began, Elie and I had planned to meet at a campsite southeast of Mitzpe Ramon, to sleep there and begin hiking early the next morning. That plan evaporated when a meeting I was attending went well beyond schedule, and Natan and I left Jerusalem at 7 p.m. instead of at 2.

Elie, who has undertaken to trek the entire 1,000-km trail before Emanuel's bar mitzvah, has already hiked many sections. He told me to make my way to Ein Yahav, an agricultural settlement bordering Jordan in the northern Arava, and upon my arrival, he directed me to the home of "trail angels," wonderful people all along the trail who open their homes to hikers, providing them with free shelter, showers and food.

Arriving at our angels' home, Natan and Emanuel disappeared to play basketball and ping pong with our hosts' kids, while Elie and I got to know their amazing parents: he a red pepper and cherry-tomato farmer, she a special-education teacher, happily bringing up four kids in this remote part of the country.

And as often happens in Israel, it turns out we have common acquaintances. Once a week, they drive 50 minutes toward Eilat to study with a remarkable young Reform rabbi I also know who lives in the Arava and provides locals with his own brand of religious services.

After a great night's sleep in our hosts' living room, at 6 a.m. the next morning, we set off to the starting point of our 40-km, two-day hike. It wasn't easy. Up steep mountainsides and down even steeper cliffs, we trekked for almost 10 hours each day in near-desert conditions – perfect for this time of year. The views were spectacular and the experience exhilarating.

Besides one large group of scouts going the opposite direction, during those two days, we hiked alone, only occasionally passing and being passed by an Orthodox family of seven hailing from a small community in the Golan Heights. Our two parties camped together overnight at a remote campsite with no creature comforts and absolutely no access to the world beyond – including no cellphones or Internet service.

Clambering out of my tent at dawn, the sight was otherworldly. With a ray of sunshine poking over the mountaintop, I watched as one of our travelling companions said her morning prayers facing a mountain several hundred times her own height. It was enough to make just about anyone a believer.

At the end of those two days, my feet ached and I felt I could go no further, but I soon realized how reinvigorated I really felt.

Similarly, when I worry about my kids' future here in Israel, I realize what a wonderful place this is and how much more wonderful it could be. Despite the obstacles, people will find the resolve to continue striving to make it even better.

Obama, Israel and R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

As Israelis reached the end of another intense election campaign, covering a wide range of complex issues, the president of the United States suddenly intervened by attacking Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies and declaring that "Israel doesn't know what its best interests are." Even given the history of friction between President Barack Obama and Netanyahu, this interjection was surprisingly harsh and violated the basic norms of behaviour in relations between democracies.

The citizens of most countries, including the often prickly Americans, generally don't like to be told that they are incapable of choosing leaders and governing themselves, and that outsiders know better. And Israelis are particularly sensitive to the intervention of powerful foreign governments, for whatever reason, including well-intentioned (and paternalistic) motives.

For 2,000 years, the Jewish People did not have the opportunity to govern themselves and were subject to the whims, and often, the hatreds, of the leaders of powerful empires. Indeed, the fundamental objective of Zionism was, and remains, the restoration of Jewish self-determination in a sovereign state in our historic homeland. Like any other nation, we must determine our own fate, for better or for worse, and while mistakes are inevitable, at least they're our mistakes. That's the essence of freedom and democracy.

Powerful outsiders – including foreign political leaders, journalists, Jewish philanthropists and organizations from the Diaspora – are free to give advice and provide assistance, but when it comes to critical decisions, they are, and must, remain the responsibility of the citizens of Israel and our elected leaders. When distant advice turns into manipulation or the imposition of policies, it becomes an infringement on sovereignty and independence.

In addition, in this case, as in many others, Israelis are far more familiar with the complexities and options than distant observers, including the leaders of powerful countries. How simple it must seem to Obama and his advisers, sitting in Washington, to look at Israel, which he failed to visit once during his first four-year term, and repeat the popular mantra that settlements are the main obstacle to peace. If this were indeed the situation, Israelis would be the first to embrace the hope of an end to 65 years of hatred, warfare and mass terror.

But most Israelis live in a different and more complex reality, and they're still recovering from the false optimism of the 1993 Oslo peace accords, which ended in a mass Palestinian terror campaign.

That experience was reinforced by the 2005 Gaza withdrawal, when settlements weren't frozen, they were dismantled. And in response, Gaza became the launching pad for thousands of rockets aimed at Israeli cities. Nevertheless, during Obama's first term, Netanyahu agreed to an unpopular settlement construction freeze, and once again, the Palestinians took no measures toward peace.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Yes, it's easy to find a few Israelis who agree with Obama and other foreigners who think that they know Israel's "true interests" better than the elected government, but this group had every opportunity to present its opinions to the voters, and they have been repeatedly rejected.

This is not due to some conspiracy of "right-wing settler fanatics" – the anti-settler movement in Israel is very prominent in the media, and receives massive financial assistance from European governments and ideological groups such as the New Israel Fund. As the vast majority of Israelis showed again on Jan. 22, they simply remain unconvinced by these claims.

Even more than erring on the substance, or trying to manipulate public opinion and impose his views of "Israel's best interests," Obama erred by failing to show respect. If he and his advisers knew anything about Israeli democracy and the spark at the core of Zionism, they would understand that respect for national sovereignty – for being a state with equal rights to determine our destiny and interests – is essential and not subject to compromise. Given his own personal background, respect is a value that Obama should readily understand.

Election may signify shift in priorities

The Jewish voter turnout in last week's general election in Israel rose to 70 per cent, while the Arab turnout was higher than expected, surprising Israeli pundits on both counts.

A disquieting narrative had emerged that many Israeli Jews were bored by the campaign and might even stay at home on election day. But they showed up in greater numbers than anticipated, thereby reinvigorating Israeli democracy.

In the Arab sector, observers feared that more than half of Muslim and Christian Arabs, representing about 20 per cent of Israel's population, would boycott the election, underscoring their disaffection and alienation from the Jewish state. But after the dust had settled, the Central Elections Committee announced that 56 per cent of Israeli Arabs had participated in the Jan. 22 election, compared to 53 per cent in the last one.

All in all, 67.8 per cent of Israelis exercised their democratic right to vote, the highest proportion since the 1999 election, when Ehud Barak, a former army general running as a Labor party candidate, defeated the Likud incumbent, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

In this election, Israelis rebuked the status quo, but did not reject it altogether. Voters essentially sent a message calling for fresh new faces and a shift in priorities from the external to the internal.

They most definitely did not usher in a historic political earthquake of the kind that forced prime minister Golda Meir to step aside following the election in the wake of the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Given Israel's unresolved conflict with the Palestinians, Iran's drive to develop a nuclear arsenal and the tumult that has rocked the Arab world since the 2011 Arab Spring rebellions, foreign affairs figured quite heavily in the rhetoric of candidates, as was the case in previous elections.

But with the echoes of the 2011 social protest movement still resounding in their ears, many lower and middle-class Jewish and Arab voters tended to focus on bread-and-butter socio-economic grievances rather than on external issues.

For the typical Israeli voter in 2013, the rising cost of living and the unaffordable price of housing, for example, were more important in their calculations than Iran's nuclear ambitions or Israel's stalled peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

Reflecting on the results of the election, Prime Minister Netanyahu declared that the Israeli public had conveyed to him a clear, unambiguous message of the need for "great internal changes."

As he prepared to launch coalition negotiations, a process that may take as long as two months, Netanyahu suggested he would place the emphasis on domestic rather than security matters.

Citing three core issues he will focus on as he tries to cobble together a government, he said he would deal with the cost of housing, the question of national service in the armed forces on a more equitable basis, and the reform of the system of government.

After all the votes were finally counted, Israel was revealed yet again as a deeply divided country, fractured along political, social, religious and ethnic lines.

The right-wing secular and religious bloc, spearheaded by the joint Likud and Yisrael Beiteinu list, won 61 seats, while centre-left and Arab parties amassed 59 seats.

If nothing else, fickle voters humbled high-flying politicians, showing them they cannot take anything for granted.

They gave Netanyahu, potentially a three-term prime minister, a weakened mandate to continue governing should he succeed in forming another coalition government. But in a devastating body blow to his prestige, they whittled down his Likud party's parliamentary representation.

By all accounts, some of his supporters defected to Naftali Bennett's Jewish Home party, a more right-wing version of the Likud that advocates the annexation of 60 per cent of the West Bank, where Jewish settlements are located.

Voters sent Avigdor Lieberman, the former foreign minister, a harsh message, too, cutting his Yisrael Beiteinu party down to size.

It would appear that some of his backers, mainly Russian immigrants, abandoned him after his indictment on charges of corruption. In all probability, some of them shifted toward the centre, voting for Yair Lapid, the pragmatic leader of the new, upstart Yesh Atid (There is a Future) party.

Lapid was the big winner in this year's election, winning a stunning 19 seats, with Yesh Atid becoming the second biggest party in the Knesset and replacing Yisrael Beiteinu as a kingmaker.

By no coincidence, Lapid was the first opposition politician Netanyahu phoned after the election to discuss future alignments. During the final stages of the campaign, Lapid said he would be willing to serve in a government led by Netanyahu. Lapid will probably join Netanyahu in what could be a right-wing-centrist government.

Although Lapid is currently riding high, and is that rare Israeli politician who exudes glamour, charisma and trust, he should be careful not to succumb to the temptations of complacency.

Yair Lapid

Middle-of-the-road parties in Israel, ranging from Yigael Yadin's Democratic Movement for Change to Tommy Lapid's Change party, have catapulted into the limelight, only to disappear beneath the waves without a trace.

Lapid, the late Tommy Lapid's son, was not the only centrist politician who fared reasonably well.

Shelly Yachimovich, the head of the reinvigorated Labor party, managed to bag 15 seats, not a bad outcome for a party that had sunk into obscurity and irrelevancy under the leadership of a series of lackluster leaders, including Ehud Barak, the current defence minister.

But in a crushing blow to his pride and standing, Shaul Mofaz, the Kadima party leader, was solidly rejected by voters. Kadima, having been established by then-prime minister Ariel Sharon in 2005, won 28 seats in the 2009 election, but this time around, it was reduced to a paltry rump of two seats.

Tzipi Livini, a former Kadima leader and foreign minister, as well as head of the new Hatnuah party, gained only six seats, leaving her in a fairly marginal position.

Right-wing zealot Bennett picked up 12 seats, not winning a sufficient number of mandates to qualify him as a potential power broker. But the presence of his party in the Knesset signifies Israel's rightward turn since the Six Day War.

The Jewish left, as exemplified by the Meretz party, won six seats, improving its position in the Knesset. But the left remains a spent force in Israel.

OUTSTANDING CONSISTENCY, BORING CHART.

YEAR	NET RETURN	YEAR	NET RETURN
2002	10.6%	2007	10.5%
2003	9.7%	2008	9.9%
2004	9.8%	2009	8.7%
2005	9.9%	2010	8.7%
2006	10.3%	2011	8.2%

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ROMSPEN

'Abandon romantic fantasies' of Israel: prof

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

North American Jews who want to maintain an adult relationship with Israel should be prepared to publicly criticize its imperfections, the University of Haifa's dean of students says.

"To maintain a serious relationship with an object of our love over time, we need to develop a more mature approach to Israeli society, which by no means is perfect," said Hanan Alexander, a professor of the philosophy of education who is scheduled to speak at Beth Tzedec Congregation on Feb. 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Alexander, who also heads the university's International School and its Center for Jewish Education, said Israel's supporters have a responsibility to speak out when abuses of power in Israel are exposed.

In an interview, he suggested Jews should be more critical of Israel.

"When we overly romanticize a subject of our affection, we have a tendency to relate to that subject uncritically. We don't want to hear about problems and faults."

But this is an unhealthy attitude, he warned. It creates "a very fragile relationship," resulting in "disappointment, hurt and abandonment."

Israel is neither better nor worse than any other place, noted Alexander, the author and editor of seven books on education. "Israel, like most democratic societies, strives to improve and make things better for its citizens."

At the same time, Jews must voice criticism openly as they debate Israel's imperfections, said Alexander, a graduate of Stanford University and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

"Only when we abandon our romantic fantasies about Israel and confront it as it really is can we encourage improvement. We can also then recognize Israel's many accomplishments, while seeking to address its faults."

Claiming that Jews and non-Jews abroad relate to Israel naively, he said they should not fear that criticism might embolden or strengthen Israel's enemies.

Hanan Alexander

"Israel is a strong, highly self-critical society and can withstand criticism. Israel will even benefit from criticism."

One reason why North American Jews tend to look at Israel naively is because their institutions and schools relate to the Jewish state uncritically, not paying sufficient attention to "hard questions" about "sensitive topics" that some may find difficult to discuss, he said.

Those who claim that Jews should not air their "dirty laundry" in public are wrong, he said. "In the digital age, everyone's dirty laundry is all over the Internet. To refrain from discussing sensitive or problematic issues comes across more as denial than concern, and in the end does more harm than good."

He added, "Free expression is a key principle of an open, liberal, pluralistic democracy. As an open society, Israel benefits from those who express their concerns in public. And if someone delivers an unfair critique based on a false premise, which is all too often when it comes to Israel, the best way to address this issue is in the public square. The best response to bad speech is more speech, not suppression of speech."

The majority of North American Jews have not grown disillusioned with Israel, he argued.

"Most Jews in the mainstream middle appreciate the complex situations in which Israel often finds itself," he said. "But the best way to keep people engaged is to solicit and take an interest in their views. All Jews have a stake in Israel, so it is important to listen respectively to a variety of opinions from abroad as well as at home."

Alexander contends that the delegitimization of Israel in intellectual and academic circles is a serious problem, but the arguments levelled against Israel in these forums are often grounded in highly questionable assumptions.

"Israel is held up to standards not expected of others," he said. "Those who deny Jews their inalienable right to political self-determination and cultural self-expression in the name of human rights are denying a fundamental right to Jews. If Jews have no right to national self-determination, neither does anyone else."

Alexander claimed that anti-Israel critics who base their arguments on neo-Marxism, post-modernism and post-colonialism greatly simplify Israel, hewing to the notion that Israel has no right to exist if it does not conform to "some fanciful ideal."

Jews need to recognize the rights of the Palestinians, both in Israel and the West Bank, he said.

"To claim our rights reasonably, we need to acknowledge the rights of others. Reasonable people may differ concerning the effectiveness of this or that [Israeli] policy, but all are obliged to agree that, if the Palestinians have national rights, so do Jews."

Alexander said Jews must acquire "a more mature understanding" of Israel as a liberal democracy, which is as imperfect as any other in the world.

"As Winston Churchill once said, the imperfections of democratic societies probably make democracy the worst form of government – except for all the others."

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Volunteers assemble 'survival kits' for homeless

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

With temperatures plummeting recently, the cold snap came as a bit of a shock to Torontonians.

But it was much worse for the homeless. For most of us, it's hard to imagine being homeless, never mind living on the street in the extreme cold. When temperatures drop to extreme-cold levels, homeless shelters are overflowing.

Project Winter Survival (PWS), a volunteer-run organization that provides essential supplies to people living on the street during the winter, has this year distributed 3,000 "survival kits" through 172 agencies in the Toronto area.

The group's 14th annual drive was launched Jan. 12. The first phase was a packing event at PWS headquarters, at the Bargains Group on Caledonia Road in Toronto. "In just over three hours, 200 volunteers packed 93,000 items into 3,000 survival kits for the homeless," PWS co-founder Jody Steinhauer said.

Health workers predict that the situation on the street for the homeless in 2013 will be bad. Anne Marie Batten, a street nurse, said, "We had a record number of homeless deaths in 2012, and many shelters are full and overflowing."

She added that the survival kits are essential for people living on the street, "as those individuals who have pets as a means of emotional support… cannot bring them into shelters… and couples who do not want to be separated [can't stay in shelters]. We also use the kits to establish relationships with homeless people that have trust issues, such as individuals with mental illnesses and substance abusers."

From clothing and food to personal-care items – and a sleeping bag – the survival kits often mean the difference between life and death for the homeless.

Volunteers pack survival kits – made up of clothing, food, personal-care items and a sleeping bag – for the homeless.

The second phase of the PWS annual drive was distribution day on Jan. 19, when the kits were loaded onto trucks by 150 volunteers. Picking up the kits were representatives from organizations such as Ve'ahavta: the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, Congregation Darchei Noam, the Red Cross, Covenant House, Scott Mission, Eva's Initiative and the Salvation Army.

Ve'ahavta's community outreach liaison, Ori Belmont, described the situation of one of Ve'ahavta's homeless clients. "The gentleman that I spoke with is a very warm and endearing middle-aged Jewish man. Not unlike many others in his situation, extremely articulate and bright. Many erroneously believe that those living on the street, or in a shelter like this man, are neither," Belmont said.

"I described to him the contents of a survival kit generously donated to us… He explained to me the socks, hat and water bottle would be particularly useful. This man's home was behind a well-known kolel. He had a makeshift structure, sleeping cardboard boxes and a blue tarpaulin. His tallit bag was hanging from a tree drying off, as was his black hat."

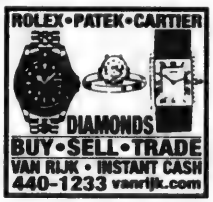
Belmont said the man told him, "My faith in humanity is strong, and despite my predicament, it will never change."

PWS was founded 14 years ago by Steinhauer, chief bargain officer of the Bargains Group, a discount wholesaler, together with her husband, Lorne Simon. Since then, PWS volunteers have assembled and distributed over 15,000 survival kits.

"When we started to hear about the challenges of the homeless, we decided as business leaders to make a necessary contribution to help meet the overwhelming demand by local agencies that struggle to help the homeless survive the frigid Toronto winters each year," Steinhauer said. "Sadly, requests for PWS kits continue to rise each year. We will never let this project end as long as there are homeless people on the street."

Any one of those people on the street could be us, if we had a bad turn of luck, Steinhauer said.

For more information, visit www.projectwintersurvival.



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Shoah survivor on Wallenberg stamp

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

When Canada Post issued a stamp commemorating Raoul Wallenberg earlier this month, the Crown corporation had no idea one of the images on it was of Winnipegger Judith Weiszmann.

The stamp features Wallenberg's picture against a backdrop of the life-saving Schutz-Pass document he created to save Jews from Nazi persecution and deportation from Hungary.

It so happens that the pass Canada Post inadvertently used belongs to Weiszmann (neé Kopstein), who was saved by Wallenberg when she was 14. Her husband, Erwin Weiszmann, was also saved when Wallenberg issued a Schutz-Pass to him at Budapest's Josefvarosi train station in 1944.

Erwin passed away in 2011.

Wallenberg is credited with saving some 100,000 Hungarian Jews from the Nazis before disappearing under mysterious circumstances into Soviet custody. His fate afterward is still a mystery.

The Weiszmann's daughter, Ann, contacted *The CJN* last week to alert readers that the woman on the Schutz-Pass was her mom. She said Canada Post had purchased the image of the pass from a company that sells such things.

Judith and Erwin, who were married for 58 years, survived the war through Wallenberg's heroism. Afterward, the couple remained in Communist Hungary, where they were secretly married by a rabbi. Both also obtained civil engineering degrees.

They fled their home country in 1956 after the failed Hungarian Revolution, escaping to Austria.

But Judith and Erwin still felt uncomfortable living so close to the Soviet Union and decided to start a new life in North America, immigrating to Canada in 1957 and eventually setting up a successful engineering consulting firm in Winnipeg.

Speaking to *The CJN*, Judith said seeing her Schutz-Pass on a stamp was unexpected.

"I had no idea [Canada Post] was doing this. It came as a complete surprise," she said. "No one contacted me. And I don't think they could have made the connection that it was me, since it was my maiden name on the pass. But it is a great honour for me to be on this stamp."

As a 14-year-old in Budapest at the time, she said she knew full well the significance of having a Schutz-Pass, and she credited Wallenberg – she met him once, briefly – with "fierce bravery" in the face of the Nazi occupiers.

"To go around with a poker face and tell high-ranking German officers that they cannot take [people with Schutz-Passes] away... with his fearlessness he performed miracles," she said.

Judith Weiszmann above and inset on Wallenberg stamp

Wallenberg had employed her father as a co-ordinator in his embassy office after rescuing him from a forced labour camp, Weiszmann said, and the family received their Schutz-Passes from Wallenberg through her father.

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Documentary a 'call to action'

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Unmasked Judeophobia – The Threat to Civilization, a documentary that examines the rise of anti-Jewish ideology around the world, was screened by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) on Jan. 15. The film, which drew a packed audience, focuses on the proliferation of anti-Israel bias in academia and cultural institutions, misinformation campaigns and state-sanctioned denials of Israel's right to exist.

To read story, go to cjnews.com

The Officers and Members of
Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University
and the
YU Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov
are saddened by the passing of

Mrs. Judith Rubinstein ז"ל

Beloved wife of the late Bill Rubinstein, Beloved mother and mother-in-law of Eli and Renee Rubinstein, and Rochelle Rubinstein. Much-loved grandmother and great-grandmother to Jesse and Devra Kaplan, Zekiel Kaplan, Alisha Kaplan, Tamar and Jonathan Koschitzky, Ilan and Dana Rubinstein, Erez and Goldie Rubinstein and Hadassah and Jeremy Pertman and her dearly loved great-grandchildren.

May the noble life of Mrs. Judith Rubinstein inspire the Jewish values exemplified by her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren and be a source of blessing for our community and the Jewish People.

May the entire family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Yeshiva University

Richard M. Joel
President, Yeshiva University

Dr. Herbert C. Dobrinsky
VP for University Affairs, Yeshiva University

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner
Rosh Kollel,
YU Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

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USY alum is now group's regional director

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

For Max Marmer, United Synagogue Youth – the high school affiliate of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism – has been a "second family.

"It has given me so many lifelong friends, and so many different experiences," he said.

Max Marmer

Now, in his new role as regional youth director for the Eastern Canada Region of United Synagogue Youth (ECRUSY), the 21-year-old York University administrative studies student wants to provide the same kind of experience he had to youngsters across eastern Canada.

Marmer's responsibilities include pre-teen and teen programming for students in grades 5 to 8 (Kadima) and grades 9 to 12 (USY). ECRUSY (online at ecrusy.org) holds at least four regional conventions and Shabbatons each year and also sends teens to USY's international convention every December.

Local programs such as snow tubing and movie nights usually include a social action or Israel awareness aspect, Andy Pascoe, chair of USCJ's eastern Canada youth commission, told *The CJN*.

ECRUSY extends east to Halifax, but active chapters are concentrated in Ontario at USCJ-affiliated synagogues – three in Toronto, and one each in Hamilton, Kingston, London and Ottawa. Teens can join USY as individual members if their synagogue doesn't have an active chapter.

Marmer's predecessor, Rabbi Irit Printz, was director until last August. Having worked as interim director until formally starting as director Jan. 16, Marmer said his short-term goal is to ensure that the rest of the programming year runs smoothly.

A broader goal is "helping our teens find their own personal connection to Judaism."

The next regional convention runs Feb. 8 to 10 at Marmer's home shul, Shaar Shalom Synagogue in Thornhill, where he began attending programs as a young child.

Because he never went to Jewish day school, Marmer's involvement in the programs connected him to Jewish kids his age and solidified friendships with them, he said.

"It also gave me more of an opportunity to learn about the Jewish religion and Jewish culture... I think that aside from my bar mitzvah, the first time I read Torah was in USY, and actually my first aliyah before I had my bar mitzvah was part of a USY convention. It solidified my connection very early on, I think."

As well, he honed his leadership skills in the organization, eventually becoming USY's international communications vice-president.

For the last 2-1/2 years, Marmer served as youth coordinator at Shaar Shalom. Concurrently, he was also a staff adviser for ECRUSY at regional and international USY events.

As well, he was a Kadima adviser in London, when he attended the University of Western Ontario for a year before transferring to York.

Marmer said he likes to think USY programs "provide a safe space for teens to feel comfortable to express themselves. Nowadays, especially, teens are hit with so many different challenges in their lives."

Part of his work with youngsters, including summer day camp experience, has included a focus on anti-bullying "and trying to encourage kids to support their fellow teens and fellow youth."

In a USCJ press release, Pascoe said that Marmer "brings tremendous enthusiasm, terrific experience and a great track record of success in working with young people."

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JNF telethon set

Compiled by CJN Staff

Jewish National Fund (JNF) kicks off its annual Tu b'Shvat – new year for the trees – telethon Feb. 3 to raise funds for the Kissufim Forest and recreation area in the Negev in southern Israel.

The funds will be used this year to redevelop the forest, which has been damaged by Hamas rocket fire, and thus encourage Israelis to enjoy the outdoors again and restore some psychological calm in an otherwise turbulent part of the country.

Southern Israel is often on the front lines during conflicts, and the effects from the stress may linger long after the rockets have ceased.

"While things may be calm on the surface in these communities, the trauma inflicted on residents can run deep and take its toll on parents and children," JNF executive director Lance Davis says.

The telethon, which reaches out to more than 5,000 homes in the GTA, takes place during the day on Sunday and on subsequent evenings from Feb. 4 to 8.

It is held at the JNF Toronto office, 1000 Finch Ave. W. More than 50 student and adult volunteers per shift are expected to take to the phones after a specialized training session. Volunteers are still welcome.

For more information, contact Toby York at 416-638-7200, ext. 123, or toby.york@jnf.ca

Winnipegger admits to antisemitic posters

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A failed candidate for Winnipeg city council has admitted to local media outlets that he was behind a series of posters titled "$hitler's List," which many have described as antisemitic.

In the posters, which first appeared in downtown Winnipeg just before Rosh Hashanah, the writer, Gordon Warren, was critical of Winnipeg's Jewish mayor, Sam Katz.

The flyers also included a list of names of mostly Jewish businesspeople in Manitoba's capital who either have business ties to Katz or are connected to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, which is under construction here and was the brainchild of the late Jewish media mogul Israel Asper.

Warren ran for office unsuccessfully in the 2010 election. In an interview he gave at the time, he said he was running to "end waste and corruption at city hall."

He criticized Katz and city council for "entrusting our water and sewage treatment to Veolia, a French-based multinational conglomerate with an abysmal health and safety record and a notorious reputation that includes bribery of public officials, illegal political contributions, kickbacks, price-fixing and fraudulent accounting."

He added that he was committed to working against "ethically challenged people."

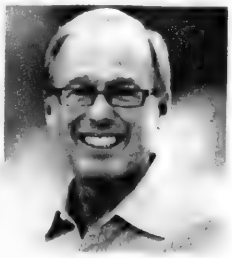
When asked if there was anything he would like to change in the city, Warren responded that "if Mayor Katz has taught Winnipeggers anything, it is that private interests must be kept separate from public interests."

He then referred to a number of city council decisions involving agreements with private companies.

"Whether it's Sam's dealings with Crocus, the MTS Centre cash giveaway to Mark Chipman, Sam's [Winnipeg] Goldeyes [baseball team] parking arrangement, the Asper stadium-mall-Bomber deal, or the more crucial secret water/waste management contract with Veolia, [city council] can't allow private, commercial interests to compromise Winnipeg's public interests ever again."

In his most recent e-mail to the news media, Warren said he put out the posters – a second batch appeared a couple of weeks after the first set were posted – because he felt he had no other choice, "as justice officials weren't willing to investigate a controversial land swap deal involving a city fire hall, and local Jewish and Zionist media" weren't accurately reporting what was going on.

"There was no one willing to do anything about it," Warren said.



Mayor Sam Katz was the focus of $hitler's List posters.

He compiled the names of Katz's business associates using Google. He claims he didn't realize most of the names on the list were Jewish until after the posters started appearing in public.

He also claims to have been shocked at the response to them. In a letter he sent anonymously a couple of months ago to Winnipeg's *Jewish Post and News*, he denied being antisemitic.

"$hitler's List" was supposed to be a take off on "Schindler's List," he wrote, referring to the Holocaust-themed book and Hollywood film of the same name.

Police announced last month that their investigation determined the posters broke no laws.

Katz was not available to comment on Warren's statements, but in a September interview, he said that he was "extremely saddened and disheartened" by the posters, and he had "faith the people of Winnipeg will not support such malice."

Warren, who is currently unemployed, conceded he was "pushing the envelope" with the posters and can understand why people might be offended by them.

He also said he's upset the posters took attention away from the issues he was trying to highlight.

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The Officers and Directors of
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join in conveying heartfelt condolences on the passing of

Rabbi Martin Penn ז"ל

Martin Penn, who served as the long-time National Director of Soviet Jewry at the Canadian Jewish Congress, was synonymous with the struggle to liberate Soviet Jewry.

Canada became an international leader in that heroic effort largely due to Martin Penn's passionate and determined guidance, and many former Refusniks credited Martin for their eventual release and liberation.

The strength Rabbi Penn demonstrated in dealing with the difficult health challenges that confronted him over the last decade was an inspiration to many and he will be sorely missed.

ברוך זכרו יהי

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Hamilton Jewish Federation hires new CEO

Abigail Cukier
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — The president of the Hamilton Jewish Federation said the organization had no choice but to hire its new CEO.

"Barb Babij was so superior in most of the criteria. We had to have her," Larry Szpirglas said. "She has great organizational skills, strong administration skills. She is taking the time to reach out to leadership in our community and is doing a wonderful job in that respect.

"She will be a strong professional presence and provide exemplary leadership in our community."

Babij came on board in November. Before that, she was a consultant in organizational development in Fort Erie, Ont. She is a CPA in New York state and a dual citizen of the United States and Canada, where she's lived since 1992.

"I wanted to be part of a larger Jewish community. I wanted to be able to give back to the community and do it in a Jewish way. This was a perfect fit," said Babij of her decision to join the Hamilton federation.

Other than living in Dundas for one year in the early 1990s, Babij is new to Hamilton, which is home to about 5,000 Jews.

"This is an extremely welcoming community. The best part of my job so far is, hands down, the people. They are so open and doing amazing things," said Babij, citing the PR committee, which strives to educate the broader community on Jewish issues, and the nationally recognized Holocaust education committee.

Babij believes the Hamilton federation needs to be more transparent.

"We need to do a better job educating people about our organization. Unless the federation is seen as part of the community, it's not going to do what it needs to do," she said.

"It's all about being able to help people in the community, in Hamilton and in Israel."

Babij says her first priority has been to get acquainted with the community. "I am listening and trying to understand where the community feels the path forward goes and how to get there."

Barb Babij

Babij replaces longtime federation CEO Gerald Fisher, who stepped down last summer for health reasons.

JCC move to open Saturday mornings questioned

Rabbis say it sends wrong message to young people

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Winnipeg Council of Rabbis says the city's Rady Jewish Community Centre is sending the wrong message to young people about Jewish observance with its recent decision to open on Saturday mornings.

The rabbis – Alan Green (Shaarey Zedek Synagogue), Larry Lander (Congregation Etz Chayim), Neal Rose (the Simkin Centre) and Ari Ellis (Herzlia Adas-Yeshurun Synagogue) – responded to the JCC's mid-December move with a Jan. 9 letter on the front page of the city's *Jewish Post and News*.

The rabbis said that they understand what prompted the decision to open at 8 a.m. instead of noon on Shabbat, as was the previous practice.

"We appreciate the obligation to serve the needs of Rady Centre members, many of whom are not Jewish, and the vast majority of whom are not Sabbath observant," they said. "We also appreciate that the decision to open Rady Centre facilities on Shabbat morning will have little if any impact on synagogue attendance on Shabbat morning."

Their objection, they said, is rooted in "the symbolism of this change," since the centre had "originally refrained from… opening on Shabbat" and later "from opening on Shabbat morning," which, they said, "signalled a laudable intent on the part of the community at least to acknowledge the ideal of Shabbat observance."

Rabbi Ari Ellis, right, with Herzlia Adas-Yeshurun Synagogue president Earl Hershfield

They added that this intent was "praiseworthy… given that neither the administration nor the membership of the Rady Centre is oriented in a particularly Shabbasdik direction."

The rabbis said that such "decisions not only affect the current generation of Winnipeg Jews, but also, our generations yet unborn… How much further down this road is it prudent for us, as a community, to travel? And what kind of message are we currently sending to our young people, about the incorporation of Jewish values into their lives?"

Rabbi Ellis, whose congregation is Orthodox, told *The CJN* that the troubling JCC move raises the questions of "how important is Shabbat observance in our community and what kind of community do we want?"

In response to the rabbis' letter, JCC executive director Gayle Waxman noted that the majority of JCCs in North America are open Saturday mornings. "Most Canadian JCCs, including those in Toronto, Montreal and Calgary, are open Saturday mornings," she said.

Waxman said the JCC made the decision after extensive research and much consultation over a long period of time.

"We recognize that there are those who may not support this decision, and we respect that," she said. "We feel it's important to maintain a respectful dialogue within the community where all viewpoints are expressed."

She added that the majority of the feedback has been positive, from both Jewish and non-Jewish members.

In a statement on the centre's website, JCC president Eric Sawyer wrote, "I know that many members have indicated that they would like to work out on Saturday mornings, and I am pleased that we are able to respond to this request."

He added that "as is the current practice, there will be no exchange of money on Saturdays. Payment for any programs or services will need to be made prior to Shabbat."

With files from JTA

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
Director of Fundraising
Hillel Lodge Long-term Care Foundation

Reporting to the Hillel Lodge LTCF Chair and Board of Directors, the incumbent will be responsible for developing and managing fundraising operations for the Lodge.
The position is full-time and involves some evenings and Sundays.

Responsibilities:
- Directs the fundraising operations of the Lodge.
- Oversees and manages established fundraising programs and events of the Lodge, both capital and operating.
- Develops creative approaches and messages to encourage additional donations and build the LTCF brand, develops ongoing relationships with existing and potential contributors, and develops close relationships with the Residents and their families.
- Builds a prominent profile for the LTCF in the Jewish, general and health care communities.
- Works closely with the LTCF Board and leadership in determining messages and developing strategies.
- Creates and implements the annual LTCF budget.

Qualifications:
- Excellent interpersonal and organizational skills, as well as leadership and management skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work with a volunteer board.
- Superior verbal and written communication skills.
- Flexible with regard to work schedule.
- Demonstrated background in fundraising, financial planning, development, communications, or equivalent. Preference will be given to candidates who have a certified fundraising designation.
- Educational courses taken should include fundraising methods, planned giving, and public relations.
- Administrative background and experience should include most current computer skills and office procedures, to produce reports and materials.
- Familiarity with our Ottawa Jewish community is an asset.
- Knowledge of the not-for-profit and long-term care sector is an asset.

Send a cover letter and resumé, **by Friday, March 15, 2013**, to:
Eric Weiner, Chair Hillel Lodge LTCF
c/o The Bess and Moe Greenberg Family Hillel Lodge
10 Nadolny Sachs Private, Ottawa, ON K2A 4G7
613-728-3900, ext.118 sss@hillel-ltc.com

Hillel Lodge
OTTAWA'S JEWISH HOME FOR THE AGED

Panel analyzes Israeli elections for students

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

While the votes were being cast and counted in the Israeli elections last week, Toronto students listened to a panel of three political scientists to learn more about the shifting Israeli political landscape.

University of Toronto Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein

The Jan. 22 panel at the Hillel Wolfond Centre, moderated by Meron Kali, a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto, consisted of Jeffrey Kopstein, director of the Centre for Jewish Studies and professor of political science at U of T, Oded Haklai, political studies professor at Queen's University, and Renan Levine, assistant professor of political science at U of T.

The event was planned by Hillel interns who wanted to provide their fellow students with a chance to discuss and understand Israel's democracy.

"Israel finds its way into the media on a daily basis and this panel gave us the opportunity to help people navigate the sometimes murky waters that comprise Israeli political media coverage," said Talia Rotman, Israel engagement co-ordinator at Hillel of Greater Toronto.

The panellists explained the differences between the Canadian electoral system and the Israeli one. The entire Israeli region is basically one big riding, Levine said. And although parties in Canada don't always win a majority, it still happens, whereas in Israel, no government has ever won 61 seats, enough to make a majority. That's why you see parties combining together in blocs if they want to pass any laws, he explained.

"The most competition tends to be within one bloc," Levine said. "The right-wing parties are just competing with other right-wing parties."

The panellists pointed out that this Israeli election was different from its predecessors: unlike previous ones, it did not primarily focus on the Arab-Israeli issue. "A strange thing happened – that issue was hardly discussed at all," Kopstein said. "This was the first '*Seinfeld*' election – it appears to be an election about nothing."

He said the reason the Arab-Israeli issue did not play as much of a role in the election, and was not focused on by the candidates as much as previous years, is that many Israelis have lost hope for the peace process.

"Two-thirds of Israelis still favour a two-state solution," Kopstein told the group of about 40 students, "but way fewer believe it's possible."

Instead, domestic issues – like the role of religion and state, military service requirements, the skewed allocation of resources, the education system – were brought to the foreground, Haklai said. "The centre and left focused their campaign on these issues. Attacking [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu wasn't a priority."

While Kopstein said these social issues have always played a role in Israeli elections, this time they had a different tone. "I recall social issues coming up [in the past], but it was always in the context of 'we should be stronger so we can beat our enemies,'" he said. "The basic consensus is that [the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian issues] are not solvable, so it's just a waste of time."

A change – what many analysts say is a hardening – in the American-Israeli relationship with regard to security also played a role. "They didn't want to go too far because you've got to think about how it's going to play out in Washington, D.C.," Levine said.

New UdeM course studies Quebec Jews

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A small group of Université de Montréal (UdeM) students from disciplines as diverse as political science, anthropology and education began studies Jan. 22 on a subject of common interest: the Jews of Quebec.

The UdeM's theology and science of religions department has launched a course, the first of its kind at a francophone university, that asks the question: Who are the Jews of Quebec?

Taking the form of a multidisciplinary seminar, the course was limited to 15 students. They can earn three credits by the time it concludes in May.

"Culture et experience juives au Québec," as it is titled, was created and is being taught by Jean Duhaime, a theology professor specializing in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Judaism, with his colleague Alain Gignac, whose sphere is Christianity's New Testament.

The professors believe the Jews of Quebec are often misunderstood, and they hope this course will promote greater openness to the community and dialogue with its members.

They start from the premise that Jewish identity is varied and complex, with religious, cultural and philosophical elements, and that Jewish communities interact with and participate in the evolution of the societies they live in, Quebec being no exception.

The course examines how Jews have fared in this province, particularly within the francophone context. The students are looking at the origins and composition of the province's Jewish communities (the plural is used) today, and how they fit into Quebec's vision of *vivre ensemble*.

Guest lecturers are University of Ottawa history professor Pierre Anctil, an expert on the Quebec Jewish community, in particular its Yiddish culture; Yolande Cohen, a Université du Québec à Montréal history professor with expertise on Sephardim; former Canadian Jewish Congress Quebec president Victor Goldbloom, the province's first Jewish cabinet minister; the UdeM's Marie McAndrew, a professor of intercultural education and the Canada Research Chair in Ethnic Studies; Samuel Mercier, a graduate literature student who is doing his doctorate on Mordecai Richler; and Chantal Ringuet, who has done post-doctoral research in Canadian Jewish studies and is the author of *A la découverte du Montréal yiddish*."

All of these lectures are open to the public.

"We sometimes think that Jews are recent immigrants," said Duhaime, a veteran of interfaith dialogue. He wants to set his students straight by reminding them that "the first Jews arrived with the British troops in the 18th century."

He does not shrink from facing the antisemitism that pervaded Quebec's elite and political class, especially before World War II. But the current atmosphere, he believes, is a desire for rapprochement, despite the opposition to Israeli policies among some Quebecers.

"We still strongly associate [Jews] with the anglophone community, but about 40 per cent of them are francophones, of which a good part come from the Maghreb," Gignac noted. "They are very open to the Quebec reality and are more and more fostering exchange and integration initiatives."

His 15 years of Christian-Jewish dialogue, Duhaime said, "has permitted me to appreciate a little more [the community's] diversity and dynamic contribution to Quebec society.

"In the context of today's religious and cultural pluralism, it seemed to me useful to deepen and to share this experience."

He adds, "It must not be forgotten that the Jewish and Christian cultures have a common base, at least in the sacred texts. We share the same book which Christians call the Old Testament and Jews the Tanach or Hebrew Bible."

Students are expected to produce a research paper to be delivered orally toward the end of the course, as well as submitted in written form.

The upcoming public lectures scheduled so far are: Feb. 5, Yolande Cohen; Feb. 19, Pierre Anctil; and March 12, Marie McAndrew, all at 4 p.m. at the UdeM's Pavillon Marguerite d'Youville, 2375 Côte Ste. Catherine Rd.

Cohen will speak about Jewish immigration from North Africa to Canada, particularly Quebec, in the 1960s following the end of European colonization. The arrival of these Sephardi Jews, mostly Moroccans, she argues, profoundly changed the Montreal Jewish community.

She will look at the Sephardi community's evolution and the challenges it faces today, contrasting its situation with the community in France.

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When Orthodox scholarship is neither

When first referred to Prof. Martin Lockshin's book review ("A book for the thoughtful, 'skeptical' Orthodox," Jan. 10), I was curious. Works by Orthodox authors that tackle difficult theological issues, ask tough questions, and reconcile differences between Orthodoxy and modern scholarship are always of interest to Jews who straddle both worlds. Such works are often a kiddush HaShem, because they demonstrate how Orthodoxy and scholarship are compatible. Orthodox scholars such as Rabbi David Berger, Rabbi Lawrence Schiffman, Prof. Menachem Kellner, and yes, Rabbi Martin Lockshin, admirably synthesize devout personal religiosity with academic rigour. With a title touting a book that would be helpful to such a "skeptical" Orthodox Jew, I read on.

Guest Voice

Rabbi N. Daniel Korobkin

But about halfway through the article, something was seriously wrong. The book, *Torah from Heaven*, by former Orthodox rabbi Norman Solomon, was ostensibly about how to reconcile traditional Judaism's claim that the Torah scroll we read in synagogue contains the same text given by God to Moses at Mount Sinai, in light of scholarship of the last two centuries that argues the text has been altered over time.

But the article began to stray off topic. Rabbi Lockshin quoted a passage from the book citing a 20th-century Israeli chief rabbi who had interpreted a talmudic passage literally and as a result rejected modern medicine. But wait: the Talmud is a rabbinic commentary to the Torah, written centuries after it was canonized. What in the world did a modern rabbi's fundamentalist interpretation of the Talmud have to do with Bible criticism?

I quickly realized that Rabbi Solomon's work was much broader than the subject of Bible criticism. And 150 pages into the book (the reader is left guessing for some time what it's actually *about*), I discovered that the author actually has three problems with Orthodox theology: (a) the integrity of the written Torah text; (b) the claim that the rabbinic oral tradition is an accurate explanation of the written biblical text (hence the passage about the Talmud); and (c) the Bible contains certain values and teachings that run counter to modern morality, such as the command to wage war with idolatrous nations and the ban on homosexuality. This flawed morality, argues the author, proves that the Bible is not the real word of God.

Rabbi Solomon is a product of both traditional Orthodox yeshivot and the university. After spending years as an Orthodox pulpit rabbi, he retired and went into academia. (I know all this because the author first presents his autobiographical "orientation." He wants the reader to sympathize with his conflicts, and, I suspect, he wants to impress Orthodox skeptics that he's one of the guys.)

Rabbi Solomon then spends the bulk of the book regurgitating what he's learned of Bible criticism from the university, as well as what he remembers of traditional Torah commentary from the yeshiva. Along the way, he takes swipes at much of traditional Torah literature, from rejecting the entire corpus of Kabbalah as being fanciful and outlandish to attacking one of the greatest rabbinic minds of the 20th-century, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, for overemphasizing the halachic nature of the Torah. Clearly, a man with "issues."

Reading page after page of this disputation with tradition, I was hoping that at some point he would find a way to neatly reconcile his Orthodox faith with all the presented challenges. He had, after all, raised many valid questions that deserved careful and methodical analysis.

But alas, this was not to be. In the last section of the book, where the great "reconciliation" is offered, an entire chapter is titled, "What is Truth?" Rabbi Solomon therein suggests that despite the utter falsehood of the Bible's historical and moral claims, despite his contention that it isn't really the word of God dictated to Moses, the Bible could still be "true" in some other sense. Now, this may pass as profundity in some circles, but for me it brought back memories of former U.S. president Bill Clinton's attempt to define what "is" is. The Bible's claim to be the word of God, presented to real Jews at a real Mount Sinai three millennia ago, is either true or false. Make up your mind.

But Rabbi Solomon feels that there's a way to parse the gap between truth and falsehood by suggesting that the Bible, when read as a "myth," (i.e., "tangible formulations of abstract ideas") is true, even though its "historical claims" are false. To arrive at the end of a book claiming serious biblical scholarship and have it end with poetic esotericism and philosophical waxing was not only anti-climatic, it was downright frustrating. Scholarship this isn't.

I am left confused by Rabbi Lockshin's review. To his credit, nowhere does Rabbi Solomon claim to reconcile his Orthodoxy with his newfound belief in the Torah as myth. Indeed, after examining the stated creed of the movement for Reform Judaism, one concludes that Rabbi Solomon has become a Reform Jew. And that's fine; people change all the time, and he wouldn't be the first Orthodox Jew to leave the fold and become "enlightened" (although he is about two centuries late). But why Rabbi Lockshin feels this book is appropriate for Orthodox Jews with questions is utterly perplexing. This is not a book that will reconcile your Orthodoxy with modern scholarship. It rather tells you to reject everything you learned in yeshiva or seminary as utter drivel, and to reject those Orthodox rabbis whose lack of wisdom prevents them from seeing the truth.

Fortunately, there is a plethora of real scholarship, written by Orthodox scholars, that proves Rabbi Solomon wrong. It is quite possible and laudable to reconcile one's Orthodoxy with one's intellectual skepticism, and it is a project to which I and other rabbis and scholars have dedicated our lives. As my colleague in this endeavour, I hope that Rabbi Lockshin will reconsider his unqualified endorsement of Rabbi Solomon's book.

Rabbi Korobkin is senior rabbi at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation.

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Reena in the News

Reena

Bathurst Bowlerama + Reena = a Winning Team

Members of the Reena team that made it to the Nationals of the last Special Olympics World Games:

Front row (l to r) Emmanuel Attencio and Hyla Rubenstein
Back row (l to r) Victor Henry, Larry Weinstein, Coach David Gosling and Lewis Rosenberg

For the last 23 years, Reena has been utilizing Bathurst Bowlerama to run its Special Olympics Bowling League. Every Wednesday night, individuals meet at the alley to chat with their friends, have a bite to eat and practice their skills. The bowling league has always found the alley to be a safe space where each individual can be themselves.

Over the years, ownership of the location has changed many times, but each new owner has continued the keen interest and strong support Reena has enjoyed at Bathurst Bowlerama. The bowling alley staff are always friendly and welcoming, and they have made an effort to become part of the Reena family. When our Reena Bowlers walk into the alley, they immediately feel part of the team as the bowling alley staff are there to joke with them, laugh with them and ensure that they have a fun time! The athletes have developed strong relationships with the staff to the point where they have developed their own hand signals to communicate with one another.

There is no doubt that this very positive spirit has paid a large part in the many successes our Special Olympics Bowling League has enjoyed over the years. We want to take this opportunity to thank the management and Wednesday night staff at Bathurst Bowlerama for being fun, energetic and most of all supportive to each and every one of our athletes.

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שישאר בינינו

גידי קורן וחברים

הבחירות

לפני חודש כתבתי כאן: "נראה שלפני קיומן, הבחירות בישראל כבר הוכרעו, כי למפלגות הימין יש רוב מכריע- כמובן לא לבדן אלא בסיוע המפלגות הדתיות-חרדיות שהולכות עם כל אחד, בתנאי שידאג שהמגזר שלהן ימשיך לא לעבוד ולא לשרת בצבא".

למותר לציין שהתמלאתי שמחה גדולה לגלות שטעיתי בגדול! מסתבר שלחמשת מילין הישראלים הבוחרים הגיעו מים עד נפש, ומפלס הגועל נפש שלהם מהמפלגות ששלטו במדינה גרם להם לבחור באלטרנטיבה צעירה, מתונה, מודרנית ומתקדמת.

המהפך עצום בגודלו, משום שהימין הפסיד את שליטתו והוא איננו מייצג כרגע יותר מחצי מהאוכלוסיה בישראל.

הבוחר הישראלי אמר לנתניהו: נפשנו נקעה ממך ומשתמך איווט ליברמן. מעניין שהבוחרים שלחו מסר דומה גם למפלגת העבודה, על ששכחה את המגזר הקיבוצי, את עיירות הפיתוח ואת המסר המיוחד השמאלני שלהם. במדינה מתוקנת היו צריכים נתניהו ויחימוביץ להתפטר, אבל ישראל רחוקה מזה מיליון שנות אור.

ההתנהלות של יאיר לפיד מאז הבחירות מכובדת ואחראית, ואם צירופו לממשלה יביא להישארותה של ש"ס באופוזיציה- אין לי ספק שזה יגרום קורת רוח ונחת למיליוני ישראלים ששמעו את הרב עובדיה מאיים שאם יחייבו את תלמידי ישיבות ללכת לצבא, הוא ואנשיו "יירדו מן הארץ."

אבל שישאר בינינו.

AMOUR

הסרט "אהבה" של הבמאי האוסטרי מייקל הנקה, מביא למסך שני שחקנים צרפתיים מעולים בגיל שמונים לחייהם, לתאר את ימיהם האחרונים והדעיכה בעקבות האירוע המוחי של הגיבורה.

זהו אחד הסרטים השלמים ביותר שנראו בשנים האחרונות. הבמאי מראה את המציאות ללא כחל וסרק, בצורה נקיה וכנה והמושג אהבה מקבל משמעויות שלא חשבנו עליה בעבר. הסרט זכה עד כה בכל פרס אפשרי ולמרות היותו אירופאי,הוא מועמד לארבעה פרסי אוסקר, כולל הסרט והשחקנית הטובים ביותר. הוא יהיה ללא ספק הזוכה הוודאי בפרס האוסקר לסרט הזר.

למרות שהנושא נשמע לרבים מיכם בלתי אפשרי- אני ממליץ בחום לראות את "אהבה"- הוא יספר לכם משהו שאתם חייבים לדעת על החיים שלכם.

עשר בסולם קורן.

QUARTET

כמעט באותו נושא- קבוצת גימלאים בבית זקנים למוזיקאים מכינים קונצרט צדקה לגייס כספים למוסד שלהם שנמצא בסכנת סגירה. הבמאי של הסרט הוא לא אחר מדאסטין הופמן, והקומדיה מנסה לגעת בנו בחמלה ובחוש הומור, אבל לא נעים להגיד- לטעמי חאישי הסרט די מזייף וקיצ'י. ראו והזהרתם. שש בסולם קורן.

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Inventing words to demonize Israel

My View

Lawrence Hart

Just when it seems that every conceivable strategy for demonizing Israel has been exploited, along comes a new vehicle that's every bit as toxic as what's already out there, perhaps even more so.

Wrapped in an intentionally complex and confusing vernacular that's impossible for anyone but its staunchest adherents to fully understand, this new-fangled language of incitement and vilification appears to be rooted in two separate, though sometimes intersecting, terms: "homonationalism" and "pinkwashing."

Though both of these constructs began to creep into the English language after 9/11, with particular linkage to dynamics within gay political culture in the United States, their more recent application has been directed, with much greater venom, toward Israel.

It's difficult to find any definition of these words that is not cloaked in the most absurd of jargon. One of the simpler descriptions is contained in promotional material for an upcoming conference sponsored by the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at the City University of New York (CUNY). Homonationalism, according to this source, "occurs when sub-sectors of specific gay communities achieve legal parity with heterosexuals and then embrace racial and religious supremacy ideologies." Pinkwashing is "using rights protections for one group (in this case gay and lesbian people) to conceal rights abuses against another group."

In relation to Israel, the insinuation is that the state's protection of gay rights, and its marketing of particularly Tel Aviv as a gay-friendly destination, is nothing more than a callous ploy to conceal persistent violations of human rights for Palestinians and divert attention from the "occupation" of Palestinian lands.

Two of the major proponents of this latest verbiage to malign Israel are CUNY professor Sarah Schulman and Jasbir Puar, associate professor of gender studies at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Puar was at McMaster University recently delivering a lecture titled "Ecologies of Sensation, Sensational Ecologies: Sex and Disability in the Israeli Occupation of Palestine." First, as expected, she accosted her audience with an array of unsubstantiated allegations against Israel and its people. Then, using pinkwashing as her fulcrum, she waded into an even more warped and appalling diatribe, accusing Israelis of systematized pronatalism (the policy of encouraging higher birthrates to ensure population growth), the promotion of eugenics and selective abortion, and sanctioned neglect of physically and mentally disabled children.

What was alarming, though plain to see, is that under the guise of purported "scholarship," and by craftily applying layers of unnecessary complexity to what essentially boils down to the base language of hateful propaganda, Puar has helped to open an as yet under-explored, but nonetheless deeply troubling, vista. If unchecked, it will no doubt expand in scope as it strives to discredit not only Israel's enviable record of protecting and promoting gay rights, but also its more widespread contributions in so many other areas as well, both domestically and globally.

It's clear that in Puar's perspective, there is little that Israel does that is not designed merely as a distraction from its alleged – though in her opinion deliberate and brutal – oppression of Palestinians. Her linguistic manipulations, which speak to a perfidy and an inversion of reality that have no place in honest discourse, need to be robustly challenged.

Scrolling through the scrolls

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

Announced with great fanfare late last year, Google, along with the custodians of the Dead Sea Scrolls, have photographed, digitized and released online what has been called the most important archeological find of the 20th century. Now that the dust has settled on the project (actually projects), here is a guide for viewing the scrolls – and why you really need to visit two sites in order to get the full picture.

Although it may not be immediately apparent from the publicity or the various websites, the Dead Sea Scrolls are actually overseen by two Israeli institutions. As the excellent Wikipedia entry explains: "Apart from the first seven scrolls, which are entrusted to the Israel Museum, the majority of the fragments found by archeologists and Bedouin are property of the Israel Antiquities Authority... Both [digitized web] sites were developed with co-operation with Google Israel R&D centre."

STOP 1: The Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Project at the Israel Museum

The Israeli Museum has digitized five of its scrolls: The Temple Scroll, The War Scroll, The Community Rule Scroll, The Commentary on Habakkuk and The Great Isaiah Scroll. Each scroll is introduced by videos featuring Adolfo Roitman, a curator with dramatic flair. Here's what Roitman says as he says standing in the vault containing The Great Isaiah Scroll: "You are in a very special place. Right now you are at the Holy of Holies of the Shrine of the Book where the Dead Sea Scrolls are kept. Let's see. Come with me."

The actual digitization is magnificent. You can zoom in to examine the lettering and every crease, tear and sinew in the parchment. Navigation is smooth and intuitive. The Great Isaiah Scroll even has context-sensitive English translation. Click on a line in the parchment and the English appears alongside.

The site itself is trilingual: English, Hebrew and (a surprise to me) Chinese. **[http://bit.ly/scrolls4]**

STOP 2: The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library at the Israel Antiquities Authority

This is my favourite site. Before you get the scrolls themselves, there is a marvellous, detailed (yet not overly scholarly) explanation about the history of the texts, their discovery and conservation, and equally impressive, an overview of how the digitization process was done. As for the scrolls, you can look over featured gems such as The Ten Commandments, The Minor Prophets, Psalms and a pair of tfillin.

Don't miss the incredible "Explore the Archive" section that allows you to search for such keywords as "Genesis" or browse by content (scripture, poetical/ liturgical texts, etc.), language (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Nabatean, Latin and Arabic) or site of discovery. Sometimes you'll just look at a tiny fragment, but that only underlines the incredible work the researchers have done to preserve and identify all these treasures. This project will be completed in 2016.

The site is bilingual: English and Hebrew with Arabic "coming soon." **[http://bit.ly/scrolls5]**

I will leave the final word about this remarkable project to Shuka Dorfman, director of the Israel Antiquities Authority: "Only five conservators worldwide are authorized to handle the Dead Sea Scrolls. Now, everyone can 'touch' the scrolls on-screen around the globe." **[http://bit.ly/scrolls7]**

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A canopy of love and commitment

Rabbi Mark Fishman

"The whole nation trembled... and they stood under the mountain. And Mount Sinai was completely enveloped in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire... and the whole mountain trembled exceedingly" (Exodus 19:16-18).

It sounds scary. Yet the kabbalistic interpretation of this verse transforms a moment of fear and trembling into a sacred marriage of love and commitment.

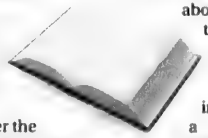
When the Bible reports that the "whole nation... stood under the mountain," Rashi comments, "The Almighty held the mountain over them like a canopy," threatening them with death if they would not accept the Commandments. The *Zohar*, however, interprets that the mountain was not held over them as a canopy of coercion, but rather as a canopy of commitment, a chupah of love and marriage.

This idea even affects how we pray our different Amidot on Shabbat. The evening Amidah evokes the Shabbat of Creation, citing the Biblical verses, "And the heavens and the earth and all of their hosts were completed."

It's the woman-bride who is endowed with the major spark of the Divine creativity, since she nurtures the fetus in her womb and actually gives birth to the child. The Kabbalat Shabbat Friday evening prayer features the Shchinah, the feminine aspect of the Divine. The *Eshet Chayil* (literally, Woman of Valor) Shabbat evening song actually refers to the Shchinah, and in the *Lecha Dodi* chant, we go out to greet the Shabbat bride.

Moreover, in the Shabbat evening *Amidah*, we ask that "All of Israel who sanctify Your Name shall rest in Her [vah]," using a feminine pronoun, and the leader of the Sabbath table first slices the bottom challah (of two challot), which likewise symbolizes the woman. No wonder the betrothal ceremony opens with the bride representing God and encompassing the groom!

Rabbinic Reflections



The morning *Amidah* evokes the Sabbath of Revelation, describing the glory of Moses as he descended from Mount Sinai. In the act of Revelation, it was the masculine aspect of God that was dominant, the God groom who chose His bride Israel and gave her His contract of marriage. Therefore, in the Sabbath morning *Amidah*, we ask that "all of Israel who sanctify Your Name shall rest in Him [vo]," using the male pronoun. Accordingly, the upper challah symbolizing the male is sliced first. And so it's traditionally the male who gives the ring – as well as the marriage contract – to his bride.

The concluding Sabbath afternoon *Amidah* pictures the Sabbath of Redemption, when "You [God] are one and Your Name is one. This can only come about when the masculine and feminine aspects of the Divine, when God and His bride Israel, act in concert together to bring about the perfection of the world. In this *Amidah*, we ask that "all of Israel who sanctify your Name shall rest in them [vam]," using a plural pronoun, and the leader of the third meal slices both challot together.

The parallel to the wedding celebration is the *yihud* (marital home), where bride and groom live together as one in harmony and equality, with neither dominating the other.

So, a passage of fear is really a song of love.

Rabbi Mark Fishman is assistant rabbi of Congregation Beth Tikvah in Montreal.

It's necessary to express grief

Over the years it has been my sad duty to officiate at many funerals. I have met with families in their moments of deepest grief. I have witnessed many approaches to sorrow. From this broad experience, certain basic ideas and concepts have emerged.

In the first place, I have learned that it is good and necessary for a person to express grief. This sounds simple enough. But there is a tendency in our age to be ashamed of showing our feelings. When we call upon a friend who has sustained a loss, we try to talk about everything except the reality of death. Death is uncomfortable. It disturbs us; we want as little anxiety as possible.

We may not accept all the teachings of modern psychology, but this much is certainly true: when we repress our natural emotions, we create abnormal reactions. Often these emerge later in life as physical pain or mental distress.

Secondly, there is a widespread tendency to say what is improper to a person who is mourning.

Out of mistaken goodwill, we say that time is a great healer, or that God works in mysterious ways, or that love will come again.

These well-meant platitudes leave the mourner confused and disconcerted. After all, the sorrow is genuine and real, and the mourner needs to feel and express it.

The Talmud advises that the comforters should not utter words of consolation until the mourner speaks.

Bookmarks

Bernard Baskin

In the third place, it is necessary to respond to the challenge of life, to pick up the threads of daily existence once again. Unwisely, some mourners withdraw into a realm of exaggerated grief and excessive mourning. They wrap around themselves the gloomy garments of extended sorrow, rather than face the truth that life must go on.

Shakespeare wrote "Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead; excessive grief the enemy of the living."

Rabbi Jacob Rudin left us these thoughtful words, "To ask of death that it never come is futile, but it is not futility to pray that when death does come, it may takes us from a world, one corner of which is a little better because we were there."

Wisdom would suggest that this is the true purpose of the shivah period. After a period of acute sorrow, we are brought back slowly to ongoing problems. Life is a gift, and to die emotionally or spiritually with the loss of a loved one is to compound or double the loss.

Finally, in contemplating the life of a loved one, the values that really matter and persist are character, integrity, reputation and family relationships.

A good character is the fruit of personal exertion. We don't inherit it from our parents. It doesn't come to us automatically because of where we live, or how much formal education we possess, or the nature of our work, or the size of our income.

After our time on Earth, we carry nothing away with us except the memory of our character, our good deeds and our good name.

Netivot HaTorah

The Netivot HaTorah Day School Board of Directors, Parents and Staff are deeply saddened by the passing of

Mrs. Judith Rubinstein ז"ל

Beloved mother of Eli & Renee Rubinstein, members of our Board of Trustees

May her legacy continue to inspire her family, friends and community.

"המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים"
May G-d comfort you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Mrs. Shawna Magence, *President* — Dr. Reuven Stern, *Head of School*

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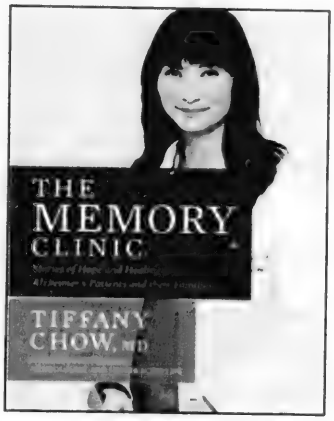
Baycrest doctor writes Alzheimer memoir

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter



Dr. Tiffany Chow, a behavioural neurologist in the Sam and Ida Ross Memory Clinic at Baycrest, has her own story to tell about Alzheimer's disease.

In her recent book, *The Memory Clinic, Stories of Hope and Healing for Alzheimer's Patients and Their Families*, (published by Penguin Group Canada) Chow said that she only recently figured out that her grandmother in Hawaii died of Alzheimer's, but without the typical memory loss symptoms.

Her grandmother died of a brain hemorrhage in 1995, but Chow said it was only after years of clinical training and experience with Alzheimer's patients that she recognized the details of her grandmother's illness were consistent with Alzheimer's.

Chow began to wonder if she, too, could ward off the effects of Alzheimer's by building up her own cognitive reserve, just like her grandmother did.

"I tried to discover how my grandmother kept her Alzheimer's asymptomatic. What did she do, or not do?"

Chow, 46, a married stepmother of two boys, 7 and 8, said she didn't go into medicine wanting to work with Alzheimer's patients, "but realized I enjoyed being in close contact with patients and their families.

"I'm in on a more intimate side of people's lives. I also have a soft spot for older couples. I like seeing how their marriages succeed, and I love the way they care for each other. I often see a connection, even when there is no talking. I get to observe beautiful moments."

Chow said her literary agent, who urged her to write the book, found it fascinating "that a young, lively person like me enjoyed working with older people."

She wanted Chow to write a personal book that talks about her resolve to lessen her risk for the disease – she balances her career, with family, regular exercise and healthy eating – and about the life lessons she learns from her patients and their families.

The book, which is written for the layperson, has two distinct messages, Chow said. "First is for the caregiver. Pace yourself and receive help gracefully.

"At the end of the day, the caregiver has done a good job if the patient is pain-free, safe, and having some enjoyable moments. Burnout comes when the caregiver thinks they are not doing enough."

Chow said she learns a lot from the caregivers, and their stories are told throughout the book.

"They are the experts on each individual person. Part of what I do is make them feel empowered," Chow said. "They are an important role on our team. We help set them up for success."

There is less stress when everyone works together, she said. Social networking does the most good.

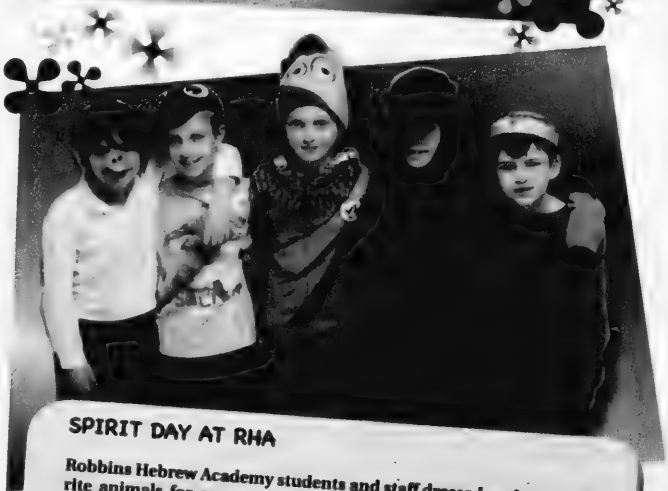
The book's second message, Chow said, is prevention. "What [changes] can you make to your lifestyle that are sustainable for you to do now and for the rest of your life? Ask yourself, 'What should I start and what should I stop?'"

She includes chapters on thinking before you eat, managing stress, and physical activity and the body-mind connection. "I follow the idea of moderation. I like red meat, and although I'm very mindful, I'm not perfect."

SNUGGLY READERS: Students from nursery to Grade 2 and their parents at Associated Hebrew Schools recently put on their pyjamas and came to school for the annual Snuggle Up and Read program. They were treated to stories told by authors Marilyn Wagman and Cheryl Thornton, as well as a variety of interactive literacy activities. Pictured are nursery student Sadie Goldberg and her mom, Robyn.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

In celebration of Tu b'Shvat, Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 1 students proudly display their new T-shirt knapsacks. The students were led by the school's shimshinim, Adi Novak and Re'em Korine, in an environmentally friendly project of turning old T-shirts into new bags.



SPIRIT DAY AT RHA

Robbins Hebrew Academy students and staff dressed as their favourite animals for a recent spirit day organized by student council. From left are Grade 3 students Hobie Bernovsky, Amit Altman, Koby Gottlieb, Harley Shapiro and Benny Barish.

Don't miss our annual Education Feature

LIVE & LEARN

February 28, 2013 ISSUE

Deadline for Advertising Fri. Feb. 8th

Mazel Tov

מזל טוב

Happy 91st birthday Avrom Gross. Best wishes from all of your friends.

Happy 65th Anniversary Harry & Florence Solomon. Love, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov! Happy 90th to Irving Ungerman, with the energy of an 18-year-old! Best wishes and much love. Your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov Melissa & Josh on your engagement! Summer 2013 wedding planned! Love, Mom, Shosh, Shel, Melanie, Ashley and Joshy!

Happy 92nd birthday to Dotty Aiken. Keep them coming! All our love from your children and grandchildren.

Happy 88th birthday to Sadie Katz who celebrated with family and friends in Florida. A great mom, bubbie and big bubbie!

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

What's New

Deadline reminder: Feb. 4 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 14 and Feb. 11 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 21. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 289; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Jan. 31

MEMORY AND AGING

Dr. Morris Moscovitch discusses "Memory, Aging and the Brain," 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue.

ONE FAMILY HIKE

Learn about the One Family Fund's Road to Jerusalem Hike (Oct. 13-17), tonight at Beth Torah Congregation, 7:30 p.m. or **Feb. 6,** Holy Blossom, 7:30 p.m. RSVP Jennifer@onefamilyfund.ca.

Saturday, Feb. 2

TOT SHABBAT

City Shul offers a Shabbat program for children ages 1 to 5, with a parent. Services start at 10 a.m., tot Shabbat at 11 a.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St.

READING THE BIBLE

Visiting scholar **Rabbi Harvey Meirovich** discusses "The Hertz Chumash: Fighting for Jewish Integrity," at Beth Tzedec Synagogue, Shabbat morning. **Feb. 4,** "Etz Hayim: Defining Conservative Judaism for a New Century," at 7:30 p.m.

COMEDY NIGHT

Comedian **David Kilimnick** and the BAYT's improv group, The Shtickmen perform at Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto, 613 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Tickets $25 at the door. www.bayt.ca.

Sunday, Feb. 3

CINEMA PROSECCO

The film *Ebrei a Roma (Jewish in Rome)* will be shown in celebration of the Italian-Jewish Friendship Garden at Canada House in Jerusalem. Brunch at noon, film screening at 1 p.m., Corus Entertainment Centre, 25 Dockside Dr. $90. RSVP **Liana Shlien,** 416-635-5491.

WORLD WIDE WRAP

Beth Emeth Brotherhood celebrates World Wide Wrap at 8 a.m., breakfast and discussion following services. Call 416-633-3838 to register.

Monday, Feb. 4

PAUL GODFREY

Paul Godfrey speaks to Temple Sinai young adults about leadership and community, 7:30 p.m., 1450 Don Mills Rd. Suite 500. To register, call **Hayley** 416-487-4161 or hayley@templesinai.net.

WHAT'S REFORM JUDAISM?

Rabbi Micah Streiffer discusses the history, beliefs and future of Reform Judaism, tonight, **Feb. 18, Feb. 25,** 7:30 p.m., Temple Kol Ami, 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill. 905-709-2620.

BETH TZEDEC HAVERIM

Henry Silver discusses visiting young cancer patients in Kenya, 1:30 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Tuesday, Feb. 5

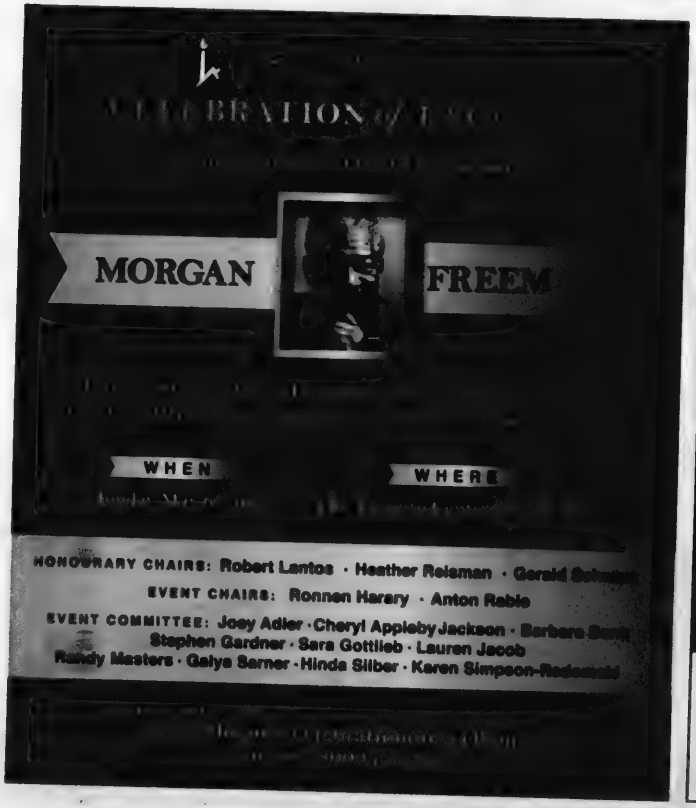
RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND

Rabbi Yissocher Frand delivers a lecture on "Re-kindling the Spirit, Putting More Passion in our Yiddishkeit," 8 p.m., Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto Congregation.

USER FRIENDLY JUDAISM

Rabbi Miriam Margles discusses "Feeling at Home in

Continued on page 25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Continued from page 24

the Synagogue," tonight and **March 5,** 7 p.m., Eastminster Boardroom, 310 Danforth Ave. (Jackman entrance). info@djctoronto.com.

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

The movie *A Mighty Heart* is shown at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 2 p.m. $5.

Wednesday, Feb. 6

NEW TO TWO

A program for babies and toddlers (up to age 2) and an adult is offered at Shaar Shalom, Wednesdays 10 a.m. Call 905-889-4975 to register.

HEREDITARY CANCERS

Dr. Ellen Warner discusses hereditary breast and ovarian cancer and **Dr. Steven Gallinger** discusses hereditary gastrointestinal cancers, 8 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue.

PAUL PENNA OPEN HOUSE

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School holds an open house at 10 a.m. Call **Sheri Rapp**, 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca.

MONEY MATTERS

Patricia Lovett-Reid discusses "Money Matters," Beth Sholom Synagogue 7 p.m. $10. Call **Naomi**, 416-783-6103 or naomi@bethshalom.net.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich holds a lunch and learn at the offices of Torkin Manes, 151 Yonge St., noon. 416-783-6103 or email naomi@bethsholom.net.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Eternal Torah vs. The New Testament," 8 p.m., Beth Torah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Feb. 7

JEWISH LGBT SPEED DATING

Kulanu Toronto holds a LGBT speed-dating night, The Vic, 580 Church St. Registration at 7 p.m. RSVP by Jan. 31, lgbtqjews@gmail.com.

LEMBA JEWS OF ZIMBABWE

Modreck Zvakavapano Maeresera discusses Zimbabwe's Lemba Jewish community, in a satellite broadcast from New York, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. $10/$15.

BROADWAY TO HOLLYWOOD

Sheldon Glass discusses "Jewish Artists and Moguls from Broadway to Hollywood," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

Other News

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

VENDORS WANTED

Vendors wanted for a March 3 market, 15 Hove St. Proceeds to B'nai Brith programs and Uptown Chabad. Call **Sandy** 416-631-8261 or sandygord@gmail.com.

FREE HEBREW COURSE

Beth Emeth Synagogue offers a free Hebrew reading course starting Feb. 10, 9:15 a.m. Call 416-633-3838.

MELTON COURSE

Mitch Parker teaches a course on "Loners and Outsiders in the Tanach," Holy Blossom Temple, starting April 18. Call 416-789-7400.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group. Starts Jan. 31, 7 p.m.

Parenting the Child with ADHD: A 4-session group. Call for pre-group assessment. Starts Feb. 4, 7 p.m.

Living with Teens, A 6-session group for parents. Starts Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group. Starts Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m. at 35 Madison Ave. or Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women who want to make changes in their lives. Starts Feb. 6, 7 p.m.

Successful Step-parenting: A 6-session group for couples in blended families. Starts Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Barber, hairdresser, Jan. 31, 9:30 a.m. Casino Rama, Feb. 13. Membership registration now open for 2013.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Feb. 5., **Judith Cohen** discusses "Music in the Lives of Crypto-Jews in Portugal," 10 a.m.; Feb. 7, **Polina Phillips** discusses "Falls Prevention in the Winter," 1:30 p.m.

Wagman Centre Entertainers are in rehearsal for their new production and looking for men who love to sing, dance and entertain. Call **J. Ross**, 416-733-0580.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155, **Michael Mandel** discusses "Jewish Toronto as Reflected in the Yiddish Press 1935-1953," Jan. 31, 1:30 p.m. Positive aging group discussion series with **Phyllis Fien** starts March 5.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Concert with Judy and David on Family Day, Feb. 18. Call ext. 4235.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Purim Carnival and Circus Show, Feb. 24, 10:30 a.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Opera with **Iain Scott** runs Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Jan. 31, *Don Giovanni*. Feb. 7, *Aida*.

Red Cross babysitters course, Feb. 10, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., for children 11 and older.

Film lectures with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Art Appreciation with **Osnat Lippa,** "The Impressionists," Feb. 12-March 5.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Woody Allen**, Mondays until Feb.11, 7-9 p.m.

Songwriting workshop with **Kobi Hass**, Jan. 31-April 4, 7-9 p.m. For relative beginners and experienced songwriters. Call ext. 0 or music@mnjcc.org.

Jewish Immigrant Writing in America, with **Sharoni Sibony,** Feb. 7-28, 7 p.m., Ext. 154.

How-to Purim. Learn blessings, stories and recipes for the holiday. Feb. 10, 9:30 a.m., Ext. 277.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers, Feb. 25- April 29.

Register now for the MNJCC Theatre Lab, March 7-May 30. Develop skills while rehearsing pieces from new Jewish theatre.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Paintings by **Irit Epstein** on display in the gallery until Feb. 18.

Awakening the Voice, Sounding the Soul: Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Jan. 23-June 26, 7:30-9 p.m., twice monthly. $10 drop-in or $80 for the series. Info: music@mnjcc.org.

The Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

"Jewish Parenting" with **Rabbi Chezi Zionce**, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Book club with **Nick Maes,** Feb. 21, March 21, 7:30 p.m.

Learn CPR and basic first aid, Feb. 3 or March 17, 1-3 p.m.

Bingo, Jan. 31, 1 p.m.;

Glee Club meets Jan. 28-April 15, 7:30 p.m.

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Rabbi was a pioneer in the Soviet Jewry movement

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Rabbi Martin Penn, whose eloquent advocacy for Soviet Jewish emigration inspired many Montrealers to work for the cause in the 1970s and '80s, is remembered for his courage and perseverance.

He died on Jan. 21, his 63rd birthday, after a long illness.

Rabbi Penn's exceptional oratorical skills and dynamic activism were cut short in 1994 after he suffered a devastating stroke at age 44. Initially, he was unable to speak, walk or even read.

Over the years, he battled to regain some of his abilities.

Despite his diminished speech and mobility, Rabbi Penn continued the rabbinical career he embarked upon at the relatively late age of 40. At his death, he was co-rabbi of Congregation Shomrim Laboker in Montreal, where he had served since 1991.

He had previously been the director of Canadian Jewish Congress's Canadian committee for Soviet Jewry and head of its international affairs department.

At the standing-room only funeral, Rabbi Mordecai Zeitz recalled how his charismatic friend of more than 35 years passionately spoke out for the freedom of Soviet Jewry in front of the Soviet consulate on du Musée Avenue time and time again, leading throngs of demonstrators.

"The slogan 'Let my people go' is synonymous with Marty Penn," Rabbi Zeitz said.

Rabbi Penn's activism went back to the earliest days of the movement – "when this issue was not on the establishment's agenda" – as a leader of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. After studying at McGill University, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, specializing in 20th-century European Jewry.

Rabbi Penn visited the Soviet Union several times in the 1970s and '80s, and was one of the first foreigners to meet Jews in its central Asian region, Rabbi Zeitz said. On one trip to Russia, he was assaulted on the street and returned home visibly injured.

He was also a founder of the Canadian Parliamentary Group for Soviet Jewry, to which the majority of members of Parliament belonged in the '80s.

Rabbi Zeitz noted that his friend later turned his attention to helping Ethiopian Jews emigrate to Israel, the welfare of Jews in eastern Europe and the fight for justice for Jews from Arab lands.

He placed Rabbi Penn among the "giants" of those who worked doggedly for the good of "the forgotten Jews" of the world. In 2000, Rabbi Penn received the inaugural Alan Rose Human Rights Award from CJC.

Shimon Fogel, chief executive officer of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, knew Rabbi Penn, who was older, all his life and worked with him at CJC for some years.

Fogel said the leadership role Canada played internationally in the Soviet Jewry movement can be attributed in large part to Rabbi Penn's efforts.

"Marty was an icon… He is the one figure who was ever-present and had a huge influence on the direction the movement took."

Rabbi Zeitz lauded Rabbi Penn's stoicism over the last 18 years of his life as he dealt with disability and chronic illness. In 2010, Rabbi Penn began treatment for multiple myeloma, a blood cancer for which there is no cure.

"He would say, 'Why, why, why?' and then, 'What can you do?' He meant why was I prevented from fulfilling my mission?" Rabbi Zeitz recalled.

Despite his limited speech, Rabbi Penn continued to be a gifted communicator and educator, both at his shul and to medical students, whom he taught about his condition, relying on his hands and facial expressions to fill the verbal gaps.

Shomrim Laboker's other co-rabbi, Yonah Rosner, who was in Israel, sent the message that his colleague was "a doer, a man of action and conviction."

Rabbi Martin Penn

He called Rabbi Penn "a profile in courage" for his determination to return to the shul after the stroke and participate to the fullest extent possible.

"The *balabotim* [regular worshippers] would help him put on his tallit and open his siddur for him," he said, illustrating the respect that was accorded Rabbi Penn.

Among Rabbi Penn's volunteer work was helping establish in 1992 a local support group for Migdal Ohr, a charitable organization that helps underprivileged children and immigrants in Israel.

Rabbi Zeitz also remembered his friend's private side – his sense of humour, his antics and practical jokes before his illness. He loved all kinds of music and was present at John Lennon and Yoko Ono's famous "bed-in" at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in 1969.

Fogel said that on his frequent trips to Israel, he still hears from former Refuseniks like Natan Sharansky and Yuli Edelstein how central a figure Rabbi Penn was in their lives, and how much they attribute their liberation and success in Israeli public life to him.

"Marty was able to capture people's imaginations and motivate them. That is quite a legacy," Fogel said.

Rabbi Penn is survived by his son Jeremy, his parents Leon and Florence Penn, his siblings Roslyn and Harold, and their families.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Joe Krakowsky	Jan 10/13	38 Aristan Drive
Patricia Kingston	Jan 11/13	5444 Yonge Street
Sally Plant	Jan 11/13	120 Promenade Circle
Molly Skurecki	Jan 12/13	718 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Charlotte Wolfe	Jan 11/13	31 Leacrest Street
Evy Casselman	Jan 12/13	3800 Yonge Street
Donny Pichosky	Jan 9/13	10 Prue Avenue
Rochelle Wise	Jan 9/13	10 Prue Avenue
Judith Deber	Jan 12/13	525 Chaplin Crescent
Norman Aurlick	Jan 13/13	164 Cottingham Street
Buddy Stone	Jan 14/13	12 Rean Drive
Klara Nadler	Jan 13/13	2 Covington Place
Esther Ruth Levin	Jan 14/13	875 Palmerston Avenue
Bruce Bishins	Jan 16/13	3847 Landings Drive
Helen Zisman	Jan 17/13	3 Tillplain Road
Sam (Tooty) Freeman	Jan 16/13	
Anna Elek	Jan 18/13	484 Avenue Road
Molly Lewkowicz	Jan 17/13	77 Willowbrook Road
Monica Sadler	Jan 17/13	20 Wickstead Way
Ida Gould	Jan 17/13	60 Tilson Road

HEBREW BASIC

Joan Schenkel	Jan 13/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Chaim Weinberg	Jan 19/13	100 Canyon Avenue

Funeral director was 'compassionate'

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Greg Gates, general manager of Benjamin's Park Memorial Chapel, who died suddenly on Jan. 11 at age 60, will be remembered as a guardian of the Jewish tradition.

Gates, who is not Jewish, began working at Benjamin's 40 years ago as a junior funeral director. He died of a heart attack on his way home from work. He lived in Barrie with his wife of 38 years, Joan, and their son, Gary, 20.

Michael Benjamin, president of the funeral chapel, said Gates was so familiar with Jewish traditions that people frequently mistook him for being Jewish and sometimes even thought he was a rabbi.

"He was compassionate, caring, loyal, and dedicated to the families. He comes from the 'old school' and this was his calling."

Greg Gates

Benjamin said Gates' funeral was in Sarnia, where Gates was from. More than 30 staff members, former Benjamin's employees and some rabbis attended. "He really touched people."

Rabbi Philip Scheim, spiritual leader of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, wrote on Benjamin's website that he was privileged to know Gates for more than 30 years.

"For families in their hours of grief, for colleagues and clergy working with him, he was invariably the right man in the right place at the right time. He combined sensitivity with competency, understanding and efficiency," Rabbi Scheim wrote.

"His gentle, yet authoritative voice provided comfort and direction in numerous circumstances. I add my name to the long list of those who will miss him greatly."

Howard Mammon, executive director of Toronto Hebrew Memorial Parks, wrote on the website that they often worked together during difficult circumstances. "His professionalism, sensitivity and care for the families we both served were exemplary," Mammon said.

Mammon, who met with Gates a few hours before his death, said that he "appreciated his insights on various issues affecting the bereavement sector."

Joan Gates said in an interview that her husband was passionate about his own family and about the Benjamin's family.

"We were married for 15 years before our 'miracle' baby was born, and Greg was the perfect father. Anyone who knew him knew about Gary."

Gates said that her husband was a happy man. "He loved his work and he loved us. He didn't need anything else," she said.

"I take comfort that he left his mark. When we had Gary, my first call was from a rabbi to congratulate us, and when Greg died, [one of the first calls] was from a rabbi."

When her husband was on call and people would call in the middle of the night, she said, "he was kind and compassionate. He would put them at ease, and he told them he was always there. They often called back just to talk a little more."

Besides his wife and son, Gates leaves his brother and sister-in-law John and Heather.

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FEBRUARY 28TH ISSUE

Antisemitic rhetoric of Greek neo-Nazi party hardening

JTA

ATHENS — The Greek neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn said a visit to Greece by American Jewish Committee leader David Harris is meant to ensure further "Jewish influence over Greek political issues" and safeguard the interests of "international loan sharks."

Harris, the executive director of the AJC, is leading a Jewish delegation to the region that is meeting with several Greek leaders, including Prime Minister Antonis Samaras. During the meetings, Harris expressed his "concern and solidarity for Greece during the crisis."

The statement from Golden Dawn, posted on the party's website Jan. 24, slammed the Greek government for giving Harris high-level access. "Just from the meetings, one can understand the influence of international Judaism on the Greek political scene," the statement said. "The political leadership will once again express its total subjugation to the whims of the 'chosen' people."

It also derided Harris.

"The only solidarity of this gentleman is to his compatriots – the international loan sharks, who are humiliating the Greek people. His concern most likely is related to the inability of Greece to make the payments of the predatory interest rates of the vile loans," it said. "We do not need the crocodile tears of a Jew."

Golden Dawn swept into the Greek parliament with 19 lawmakers in last year's elections, campaigning on an anti-austerity, anti-immigrant platform, preying on the fears of Greeks who have seen the country flooded with immigrants amid a terrible recession. Greek and international Jewish groups repeatedly have condemned Golden Dawn as racist and antisemitic.

Its leader, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, uses the Heil Hitler salute and has denied the existence of gas chambers at Nazi death camps during World War II. Another lawmaker read a passage from the antisemitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

The attack on Harris and a separate article titled *Absolute Evil* that was published on the party's website Jan. 25 appeared to be a hardening of Golden Dawn's antisemitic rhetoric, apparently in anger over pressure from Jewish groups to get the Greek government to reign in the party. The statement said that blaming Golden Dawn for Greece's woes constituted an attempt to divert attention from the real culprits for Greece's financial crisis.

"They are none other than those who possess most of the international wealth. The people behind the international loan sharks," the statement said. "Everyone knows they belong to a certain race, which presents itself as a victim, while in reality it is the perpetrator. Everyone knows that they are none other than those pulling the strings behind the marionettes. They are the absolute evil for mankind."

The second statement ended with a threat.

"The time will come when the nationalists of the Golden Dawn will take revenge like the horsemen of the storm, and all of them, being the absolute evil, will pay!"

The increasing violence in Greece has been the subject of fierce condemnation by the European Jewish community. On Jan. 22, the head of the European Jewish Congress, Moshe Kantor, said the "racist" killing of an immigrant in Athens was a result of Greece tolerating the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party.

In related news, Martin Schulz, the president of the European Parliament, said the continent's Jews are living in fear.

"Yes, Jews are living in fear in Europe. Yes, there are threats," Schulz said. "But, ladies and gentlemen – why are we not [living in 1929]? Because there is a European Parliament. Because there are common European institutions. Because a consequence was taken after the Second World War – after its deepest point of civilization represented by Auschwitz."

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Major explosion rocks Iranian nuclear plant

Yoel Goldman and Yifa Yaakov
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israeli intelligence officials have confirmed that a major explosion has rocked an Iranian nuclear facility, according to a report Monday in the *Times* of London.

The British daily cited officials in Tel Aviv who said the blast occurred last week, as originally reported on wnd.com.

Iran isn't believed to have evacuated the area around the Fordo plant, according to the Israeli sources, who said an investigation into the blast was ongoing.

"We are still in the preliminary stages of understanding what happened and how significant it is," one Israeli official told the London *Times*.

He didn't know if the explosion was "sabotage or accident" and refused to comment on reports that Israeli aircraft were seen nearby at the time of the blast.

On Sunday, two senior Iranian officials dismissed reports of the explosion. The deputy head of the Iranian Atomic Energy Agency said there had been no explosion at the facility whatsoever, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported, while the chair of the Iranian parliament's committee for foreign policy and national security said rumours of the blast were "western-made propaganda" and "baseless lies" meant to affect talks on Iran's nuclear program.

The original wnd.com report on Friday claimed that a blast deep within Fordo Jan. 21 "destroyed much of the installation and trapped about 240 personnel deep underground," citing information from a former intelligence officer who it said used to work with the Islamic regime's Ministry of Intelligence and National Security.

The article said the blast "shook facilities within a radius of three miles," that Iranian security forces had "enforced a no-traffic radius of 15 miles," that the Tehran-Qom highway was shut down for several hours after the blast, and that, "as of [last] Wednesday afternoon [Jan. 23], rescue workers had failed to reach the trapped personnel." It said U.S. officials were aware of the explosion.

Iran insists its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, but that claim has been rejected by much of the international community. The regime's consistent refusal to allow international inspectors into the Fordo nuclear facility has frustrated western powers and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Meanwhile, an Iranian diplomat who defected in Norway in 2010 warned Israel last Friday that if Iran got the bomb, it would use it against the Jewish state.

In an interview with Israel's Channel 2 TV, Mohammad Reza Heydari, the former Iranian consul in Oslo who resigned and obtained political asylum there three years ago, said that "If Iran is given more time, it will acquire the knowledge necessary to build a nuclear bomb within a year." Asked whether it would use the bomb against Israel, he said: "If Iran gets to the point where it has an atomic bomb, it will certainly use it, against Israel or any other [enemy] country."

Mohammad Reza Heydari

Heydari, who defected soon after he was asked to identify his son in photos taken during protests that followed the 2009 vote that re-elected Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, said Tehran was aiming to develop two or three bombs and sees nuclear weapons as "insurance" to guarantee its survival.

Regime leaders "believe that when they acquire a nuclear bomb, [others] will start to behave toward them as they do toward North Korea," Heydari said.

Heydari, who also served as an diplomat in Georgia and Germany, said he knew of civilian planes from South America arriving with no passengers but with weapons and material for the nuclear program. He spoke of uranium purchased for and transported to Iran by Venezuela.

In related news, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called Sunday on the Muslim world to unite to eradicate Zionism, which he called "corrupt, uncultured and murderous." Ahmadinejad spoke in Tehran to the 26th International Islamic Unity Conference, which coincided with International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

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Yair Lapid wins big

Continued from page 1

3. But his Likud party is a big loser

Likud held 27 seats in the last Knesset. Now it will have only 20 – out of the 31-strong incoming Likud-Beiteinu faction. Brace for lots of bitterness in Likud. Lots of recriminations. The partnership with Avigdor Lieberman meant that Netanyahu heads the biggest faction, so that's good for him. But Likud lost right-wing votes to Naftali Bennett's Jewish Home and Yisrael Beiteinu lost Russian votes to Yesh Atid.

4. Yair Lapid is a resounding success

At its height, Yosef (Tommy) Lapid's secular Shinui party managed 15 Knesset seats. In his first foray into politics, son Yair has outstripped that achievement, with a gentler, more gracious approach. He's the power broker now. Netanyahu can barely cobble together a coalition without him, and doesn't want to. But voters took a gamble on Lapid, and he could turn out to be a disaster. We'll see how effectively he can stand up for his principles, notably his insistence on achieving universal conscription, and how well he can manoeuvre among the experienced political sharks. It's hard to imagine that many Israelis who think of themselves as coming from the centre or centre-right of the spectrum would have backed a Yesh Atid that was allied with centre-left and left-wing parties, but many such voters clearly did opt for his independent party. His repeated declarations that he was not hostile to haredi Jews, however much derided by commentators and doubted by the haredim themselves, may well have boosted him too. He also wisely steered well away from his Machiavellian family friend Ehud Olmert.

5. There may actually be an Israeli political centre

Lapid's party has taken 19 seats from all over the spectrum, with a canny mix of candidates and an inclusive approach that evidently resonated with much of the electorate. It's easy to be cynical about centrist parties, but Yesh Atid is not a collection of political opportunists in search of a new home. Rather it's a group of fresh, diverse talents with plenty of experience in the real world who are now turning their attention to politics. Their lack of parliamentary expertise plainly didn't matter to the voters. If anything, it was an advantage. Look how badly the experienced and egotistical Livni performed, with her assembly of too-familiar faces.

6. Labor's Shelly Yachimovich has strictly limited appeal

The "revitalized" Labor party under social justice champion Shelly Yachimovich fared only two seats better than the tired old Labor party under security expert Ehud Barak four years ago. Many Israelis care a great deal about economic and social inequalities, but they wanted a party inside the coalition to champion them, and she had ruled out a partnership with Netanyahu. Other potential Labor voters felt the lack of compelling policies from Yachimovich on peace and security. The hard-core peaceniks went to Meretz, while Lapid, with ex-Shin Bet chief Yaakov Peri at his side, may well have attracted many of the Yitzhak Rabin-style Labor hawks. Livni took some Labor votes, too. Yachimovich is vowing to lead a "fighting" opposition, but she first has to fight to retain the party leadership. Nobody saw her as a credible prime ministerial alternative to Netanyahu. That's a dismal truth for the longtime party of government.

7. Naftali Bennett can fly higher

So elevated were the expectations in Jewish Home that a final result of 12 seats was seen by some in the party as a disappointment. It's anything but. In barely two months, Bennett lifted a party that won just three seats in 2009 and quadrupled its Knesset strength. Voters seeking change were torn between Bennett and Lapid. Young voters were torn between Bennett and Lapid. Even many secular, not particularly right-wing voters were torn between Bennett and Lapid. Bennett remains a man with a mission – to infuse his stream of Orthodox Judaism into secular Zionism. He isn't done yet.

8. We remain a very divided nation

The weeks of intense coalition-building negotiations we likely now face might be seen as reflecting an unwieldy electoral system that is again putting a dozen parties into a 120-seat parliament. But ours, in turn, is an unwieldy, sectoral public, with its mix of Jews, Arabs, radical righties, radical lefties, the haredi, the fiercely secular and all manner of other folks. Netanyahu's next task is arduous – to put together and maintain a government that can represent the domestic interests of a wide proportion of our divided electorate and steer Israel effectively through the complexities of an unpredictable, threatening region.

Within hours of the polling booths closing, both he and Lapid were articulating a desire for a wide government. Lapid specified that it should be a grouping of "moderate" parties. Now we wait to see what he meant by that vision and whether he and the prime minister, spurred by a fascinating election outcome, can find the common ground to implement it.

Timesofisrael.com

Voting with the neighbourhood

Vivn Sarah Press
CJN Israel Bureau

Israelis in the Tel Aviv area patiently await their turn to vote last week.
(Israel Sun photo)

TEL AVIV — The weather for the 2013 Israeli elections couldn't have been more perfect. It was a beautiful sunny day, and with much of the country off work, there was a relaxed feeling of cheerfulness in the air.

As I walked over to the community centre near my apartment to cast my ballot, the whole neighbourhood seemed to be up and about. Everyone seemed in high spirits. No one was rushing.

Pundits would later explain that the perfect winter day influenced the highest voter turnout in 10 years.

I got to the polling station early, as we had plans to enjoy the national day off with friends. The whole neighbourhood seemed to have similar plans, and I got stuck waiting in line behind a gaggle of neighbours.

And whereas lines in Israel usually don't work, there was no jostling or butting in. Amazingly, everyone waited patiently.

It wasn't until the moment that I stood behind the divider looking at the ballot tickets that I made my decision. Before that, I knew I would vote, but I just didn't know for whom. With a field of 32 contending parties and no single party that represented all my wishes for the country, I fell into the much-talked-about "undecided" category.

And then, with my civil duty done, I gathered up my family and we headed off to the northwest section of Yarkon Park to meet friends. The park was packed.

Israelis across the country took to the outdoors – many going to national parks and the beach, as well as municipal parks to enjoy the extra day off.

Sprawled out on a picnic blanket and sampling lots of cakes and fruit slices, we spoke a bit about politics – we're Israelis, how could we not? – and about the overall feeling of indecisiveness and hope for change.

Fast forward through lunch at a local shwarma stand, everyone coming to play at our place, supper, bath, bedtime for the kids and then the wait for the 10 p.m. newscast. Even though many Israelis – me included – were apprehensive about seeing the results repeat themselves from the last election, we all tuned in to hear the exit polls.

"I wasn't so excited going in to the election. I was quite discouraged, in fact, with all the attention to the right-wing parties and the extremism being touted as moderate. It was scary and really made me not want to pay attention to politics this time around," Ziva Haller Rubenstein, an arts consultant and mother of two in Modi'in, told *The CJN*.

"So, when the poll results were being announced, I was still not so excited, thinking the predictions would play out and we'd be stuck with the right wing and struggling. After Yesh Atid won 19 seats – and after the right and left blocs were somehow more equalized – I'm definitely more hopeful for the future of this country and for families like mine who want to live peacefully with others, with the environment and with Judaism."

That feeling of hope quickly took over my social media circles, with people Tweeting and posting on Facebook their thoughts on the exit polls.

In Israel, everyone can claim to be a winner, because there are so many parties and no one champion. My peers who supported Likud announced satisfaction with the results. My peers who voted for Yesh Atid were hopeful. My peers who chose Hatnua, Meretz, and Jewish Home also announced victory. So did voters from nearly all the other parties – save for Kadima, which crashed and burned.

"I am happier with the results than I expected to be," said journalist Abigail Leichman, from Ma'ale Adumim, who took a long morning walk outside before hosting her grandchildren for the afternoon. "I think that Likud and Yesh Atid have the potential to bring together disparate factions and to forward a lot of good initiatives for Israel's social, economic and security future – assuming they can form an effective coalition. I do think the results signal a big change. We see traditionally strong vote-getters such as Labor and Shas becoming more marginalized, and we see more native English-speakers stepping up to positions of authority and power. To me, this is a good trend, because North Americans might be able to introduce a saner brand of politics to Israel and also are better equipped to discuss, in English, issues of great national importance with the leaders of governments worldwide."

Copy editor Surie Ackerman, of Jerusalem, said her first thought upon seeing the exit polls was that the government wouldn't be able to hold a coalition together and presumed another round of elections was not far off. She says she's trying to stay hopeful that social issues – and not security – will be the new governments priorities.

"I'm pleased by the presumed shift in emphasis away from defence and security to more domestic issues. I think, however, that a lot of our economic inequality problems stem as much from a lack of solidarity and empathy for each other – reflected as greed at the top of the business pyramid – as from macro-economic problems or decisions. Attitudes like that are much harder to fix," she said.

"Israel proved to itself and to the world that there are significant voices from within that clearly reject the status quo and its bellicose agenda predicated on fear and the threat of military action. The election results hold the promise of a coalition that can lead Israel on a renewed course of engagement with core social issues that continue to fester, while simultaneously addressing Israel's international issues through a multitude of perspectives that will provide a greater system of checks and balances than that which existed under [Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's current term," said Danny Labin, a children's media producer who lives in Tel Aviv.

The new government will include 52 new members of Knesset. There are also 27 female parliamentarians.

"I think what swayed me to vote for Yair Lapid was his centrist but social-focused approach. And that included women's roles in making change in this country," said Haller Rubinstein. "Lapid allowed for women – accomplished and impressive women, too – to take prominent and leadership positions in effecting that change."

"I am very pleased to see that aside from veterans such as Tzipi Livni, Limor Livnat and Shelly Yachimovitch, we have rising stars such as Tzipi Hotovely [Likud] and Ayelet Shaked [Jewish Home]. I will be interested to see how much influence they are able to wield in the 19th Knesset," said Leichman.

With the elections done and coalition talks underway, everyone around me seems to have an opinion about which ministerial position should go to who and whether Likud will form a government with or without the haredi parties.

One thing that is a constant – at least for now – is that feeling of hope.

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Stand up for asylum seekers in Israel

Naomi Lightman, A. Daniel Roth and Leora Smith with members of Right Now
Special to The CJN

Many of us gathered in our homes on Dec. 6 to light the menorah in honour of Chanukah. In Tel Aviv's Levinsky Park, a different sort of Chanukah gathering took place.

There, hundreds of Jewish Israelis joined prominent politicians to light the menorah amid picket signs reading, "Sudanese, go back to Sudan." Looking on were non-Jewish African asylum seekers, many of whom are homeless and living in Levinsky Park. While significant segments of Israeli public opinion have turned violently against African asylum seekers, very little has been heard about this in North America. We'd like to start that conversation.

We are a group of young Canadian Jews, taught from childhood that the core values of Judaism include fighting injustice, seeking truth and building peace. Many of us came of age as the Canadian Jewish community took a leading role in the Save Darfur movement.

We planned rallies, started national coalitions and spoke alongside members of Parliament and Holocaust survivors against Sudan's genocidal regime. Canadian Jewish Congress, UJA and many others joined as allies, invoking the legacy of the Shoah and proudly reminding us of Israel's role in sheltering Darfuri refugees.

Today, some Jewish Israelis and members of Knesset (MKs) are mistreating these very refugees. While others, brave Israeli citizens and journalists, have spoken out against their actions, our North American community has remained unacceptably silent. We understand that Israeli society faces numerous domestic challenges, and that there is a hesitancy to be seen as meddling in internal Israeli politics. But, when it comes to the treatment of refugees, a topic so personal to so many of us, we must face this unfortunate reality head on – and we must face it together as a community.

Approximately 60,000 non-Jewish African refugees and asylum seekers live in Israel, and around 85 per cent of them come from Eritrea and Sudan. Most asylum seekers from these countries are not permitted to work, to access health services, or even to apply for refugee status.

The Coalition Against Racism in Israel reported that recorded racist incidents in Israel doubled between 2010 and 2011. Much of this racism has been incited by radical government officials and directed toward non-Jewish Africans.

Eli Yishai, Israel's interior minister, publicly stated that asylum seekers make Tel Aviv a "garbage can." Last May, MK Miri Regev spoke to a large crowd, calling African migrants a "cancer in our body." Following her speech, some in the crowd attacked African people and destroyed and looted African-owned stores. A month earlier, Molotov cocktails were thrown at apartments housing African migrants, including one that housed a daycare.

African asylum seekers repeatedly speak of the dangers they face at home and their desire for a fair process to seek refuge in Israel. Yet, many Israeli officials refuse to hear these refugees, instead branding them "economic migrants." The gross human rights violations perpetrated by the Sudanese and Eritrean governments are internationally known. Canada accepts 96 per cent of Eritrean refugee claimants and 95 per cent of those from Sudan.

Refugees demonstrate their plight at a rally in Tel Aviv in 2012. The sign reads: "We seek sanctuary until the dictatorship in Ethiopia falls." *[Israel Sun photo]*

Israel is a small country, and there are real challenges to accepting and accommodating refugees. En route, many refugees pass through Egypt, where they are extorted by human smugglers, held for ransom and tortured. Egypt must do better, but Israel also must do its part.

Sweden, with a population comparable to Israel's, has a quota to accept 1,900 refugees each year as citizens. Since 1948, Israel has accepted fewer than 200. Prisons with a capacity for over 10,000 people are being built in the Negev to detain African asylum seekers, and some MKs have publicly stated their intention to "round up" Africans – including children, and genocide survivors – and detain them until they leave.

These are not "fringe" ideas, but actions supported by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself.

As a state established by the Jewish People, who profoundly understand what it means to be refugees and to be rejected with the words "none is too many," we must speak out against Israel's unethical actions. We must take a stand against this racism by supporting the various dissenting voices within the media, the political sphere and relief organizations on the ground. Rather than making excuses for the street violence and official mistreatment faced by many African asylum seekers in Israel, we must uphold the core values that bind us together as Jews. Now is the time to say with a united voice that we support an Israel that acts righteously to save lives and provide protection for vulnerable peoples.

Right Now is a coalition of North Americans advocating for asylum seekers in Israel. Learn more by visiting the websites of Israeli organizations Hotline for Migrant Workers and the African Refugee Development Centre. Please consider signing Right Now's petition at http://chn.ge/Tfp3N0

A. Daniel Roth was born and raised in Toronto and is currently a Tel Aviv-based writer, photographer and educator.

Naomi Lightman is a PhD Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

Leora Smith lives in Toronto and works in the fields of human rights and civic engagement.

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Israel Briefs

Palestinians threaten lawsuit

The Palestinian Authority has threatened to take Israel to the International Criminal Court (ICC) over plans to build Jewish housing on a controversial land corridor near Jerusalem. PA Foreign Minister Riad Malki said at a United Nations Security Council meeting on the Middle East that the Palestinians would turn to the court if Israel follows through with plans to build 3,000 housing units in the area known as E-1, located between Jerusalem and Ma'aleh Adumim. The Palestinians contend the land is necessary to form their state. Israel announced plans to build on the E-1 land after the Palestinian Authority won upgraded non-member state status in the UN General Assembly. With it, the PA became eligible to apply to join the court. The ICC prosecutes major human rights violations, including charges of genocide and war crimes.

Appelfeld on Booker shortlist

Israeli author Aharon Appelfeld was named to the shortlist for the Mann Booker International Prize for lifetime achievement. Appelfeld, 80, was among 10 authors from around the world who were shortlisted for the fiction prize in 2013. The winner will be announced in May. Appelfeld writes fiction in Hebrew, a language he learned in his teens after escaping a German concentration camp, joining the Soviet army and living in a displaced persons camp in Italy before arriving in pre-state Israel in 1946. Most of his work focuses on Jewish life in Europe before, during and after the war.

Britain criticizes human rights

The British Foreign Office included Israel as "a country of concern" in a report on human rights violators. Israel appeared in a quarterly report on human rights and democracy issued Jan. 24 regarding 28 countries accused of human rights violations. The report cites last year's Gaza war and other recent violence on the border, as well as settlement expansion and Israel's withholding of Palestinian tax revenues. It also criticized the Palestinian Authority for not effectively controlling protests, but said Israel also was culpable for withholding money used to pay Palestinian police. The part of the report dealing with human rights violations in Iran was half as long as the part about Israel.

Files from JTA

Social media's advocacy power – and its limits

Michael Snow
Israel Campus Beat

At the height of Israel's Operation Pillar of Defence last November, pro-Israel students on campuses across America felt the need to act, and to act fast.

At the University of Michigan, students from the group I-LEAD, which focuses on leadership, education, advocacy and dialogue, decided to hold a pro-Israel rally.

To attract a substantial turnout in a short time, group leaders took to their social-media accounts. According to Barak Kaufman, the president of I-LEAD, student organizers inundated their networks, including "Facebook, Greek life and academic email list-serves, and any other list-serve we could access."

In just three hours on a Friday afternoon, I-LEAD organizers were able to draw more than 175 students who supported Israel to the rally. The rally was deemed a success and included songs, prayers, candlelighting and a general swell of camaraderie and support. The rally revealed a strong pro-Israel community on a campus traditionally considered antagonistic to the Jewish state.

Word of the impromptu rally's success spread through posts and pictures on social-media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and the rally was duplicated on other campuses. "*Channel 2 News* in Israel shared a picture from our event on their Facebook page," Kaufman said. "The photo got literally thousands of likes and comments from Israelis. It was extremely moving."

Reflecting on the event's success, Kaufman said, "Without social media, none of it would have been possible."

This kind of activism unites people with a shared cause, allowing community members to feel connected or empowered to take action, said Erin Fox, assistant director of new media for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). "Through social media we are able to build and engage with our community in a way that was never possible before."

As more people get news and information through sites such as Twitter and Facebook, Israel activists must update their advocacy techniques for the nascent digital age. It does not take an advanced marketing degree to recognize that social media is a platform Israel activists cannot afford to ignore.

While students at the University of Michigan used social media to promote a real-life event, sites such as Twitter and Facebook have become arenas of Israel advocacy unto themselves. According to Aaron Marcus, the Northeast campus co-ordinator for the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), Twitter and Facebook are crucial fronts in a holistic campaign on Israel's behalf. "When I talk on campuses, one of the things I always say is Israel is engaged in two wars – a physical one, against enemies who seek its material destruction and a war of public relations," Marcus said.

Increasingly, this public relations war is waged through Tweets, Facebook statuses and memes. Student activists are indispensable soldiers in the war against those seeking to delegitimize Israel. "American students live on social-media platforms; it is where they communicate with friends, share ideas, promote issues and organically create an image or brand of themselves," Seth Kroll, the video and new media co-ordinator for the David Project, shared.

How does social-media advocacy compare to its real-world counterpart? Can a post on a site such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or Google+ have the same impact as a speaker on campus or tabling with materials in university student centres?

Sometimes virtual messages communicated through social media have the potential to reach countless more people than any real-life program or speaker. David Bernstein, the executive director of the David Project, said that a video produced at an advocacy seminar for college students got 15,000 views in its first week. "If you think about that," he said, "there's no program that you can do on any college campus that would get 15,000 people. It would have to be held in the basketball arena to fit them. You're able to get to more students through this type of media than you ever could in any traditional setting."

Students held a pro-Israel rally at the University of Michigan during Israel's Operation Pillar of Defence.

Marcus similarly shared: "ZOA makes sure that facts about Israel are out there and accessible to anyone with a computer, iPad or smartphone. This way, we are able to instantly put that information right into people's hands."

College Israel activists in particular used social media to spread pro-Israel messages and reports during and after Operation Pillar of Defence. One popular trend involved Facebook users changing their profile pictures to a red square, a nod to the "red alert" siren that indicates incoming rocket fire from Gaza. In places like Sderot, the siren gives Israeli civilians approximately 15 seconds to find shelter.

For those in the know, switching a profile picture to the red square can be a meaningful gesture, symbolizing allegiance and sympathy with Israelis in danger. But Marcus cautioned against overestimating the impact of social media. It is tempting and self-congratulatory to think that retweeting a message from Israeli ambassador the United States, Michael Oren, or changing your profile picture to a red square, will change the opinions of your friends or followers. "Changing your profile picture to a red square isn't going to do anything to refute claims of apartheid," he said.

While advocacy through social media is decidedly convenient and accessible, some deride it as "slacktivism" and armchair advocacy. Social-media messages often entail a cyclical "preaching to the choir" effect when Facebook and Twitter posts are "liked" or retweeted by those who already agree with such messages. Facebook is even organized to show you postings by the profiles and accounts you most often visit. Thus, social media does not necessarily reach those important sectors of the campus community who don't already support Israel.

Although this may be one downside to social media, Talia Rotman, Israel engagement co-ordinator for Hillel of Greater Toronto, said it can lead to conversations and thus awareness of issues. For example, while making your Facebook profile picture a solid red square to represent solidarity with Israel wouldn't mean anything to someone who wasn't aware of the campaign, they might ask what the picture meant, and that could spark a discussion.

Additionally, she said, social media has been particularly valuable for maintaining communication among Israeli engagement interns at the various universities and colleges in Toronto, thus ensuring they are sending strong, consistent messages.

Effective Israel advocacy on campus in 2013 and beyond must embrace the potential of social media, but Facebook statuses will not do the work by themselves. To be most effective, Israel advocacy must be a fluid process, taking shape through both personal and virtual connections and campaigns, to develop within the community strong support for Israel.

– With files from The CJN

Israel Campus Beat is a student-written online publication that covers campus Israel trends and events.

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CINEPLEX DECISION LEAVES ISRAELI FILM FESTIVALS SCRAMBLING FOR NEW HOMES

The Israeli film festivals in both Montreal and Toronto are seeking new permanent homes after Cineplex Entertainment advised them they could no longer use the theatres in both cities where they have been for eight and five years respectively.

Although the Montreal festival has already found a new venue – in Cinema Guzzo instead of the AMC Forum where it had been previously – the organizer of the Montreal fest suggested Cineplex's decision may spell curtains for the festivals.

"Since Cineplex owns so many cinemas in both Montreal and Toronto, their decision could mean that the festival in both cities is over," said **Marie Pregent**. "It isn't easy to find a place with a high-quality screen that is well located. It's almost impossible to find a place that we can afford."

While the Montreal fest runs in April, the Toronto fest is in October, so organizers in Toronto still have considerable time to find a new venue as a replacement for its previous location in the Sheppard Grande Cinema at Yonge Street and Sheppard Avenue.

Both festivals were founded by Tel Aviv businessman **Eran Bester**, who described Cineplex's emailed notification to him as "shocking and very disappointing." The company explained it had done an assessment of its "long-term relationships with certain film festivals" and determined not to renew the arrangement with the Israeli Film Festival. Cineplex declined to provide any further details to festival organizers.

In an email exchange with *The CJN*, Cineplex spokesperson **Mike Langdon** said the company's decision not to renew the annual arrangement was "a business decision and a result of challenges working with the organizer."

While Langdon would not divulge if arrangements with any other film festival had also been terminated, he said Cineplex "is a proud supporter of many Jewish and Israeli festivals and charities, including the Toronto Jewish Film Festival, Jewish Windsor Film Festival, Walk with Israel, the Canadian Friends of Israel Museum and the Simon Wiesenthal Center."

He also noted that **Ellis Jacob**, the company's president and CEO, co-chaired the 2012 Jewish National Fund Negev Gala dinner in Toronto, which helped to raise $5.1 million for a botanical garden in Akko, Israel.

The festivals in both cities paid the standard market rates for the theatres, Pregent said, adding that she and Bester remained mystified by Cineplex's decision.

"In Toronto we had six sold-out screenings in the 400-seat auditorium. That makes quite a lot of people eating popcorn. And in Montreal, when we get 3,000 people in a week, they're also eating popcorn and candy and they're parking downstairs. My perception is that I would be very happy to have those extra people in my cinema. I can't see how that's bad for business."

• • •

Names in the News: Toronto violinist **Zachary Ebin** and pianist **Maria Dolnycky** are performing an upcoming concert of **Bach**, **Mozart**, **Beethoven**, **Clara Schumann** and **Kreisler**. Ebin has performed extensively in Canada, the United States and Israel and is a PhD candidate at Toronto's York University, where he has served as teaching assistant to Jacques Israelievitch. He is also a Torah reader at Beth Lida Synagogue, Forest Hill. $20, $15. KUMF Art Gallery, 2118-A Bloor St. W., 2nd floor (east of Runnymede). Sunday, Feb. 3, 3 p.m. 416-621-9287, www.mariadolnycky.com

• • •

Arts in Brief

• The Iraqi Jewish Association presents a free screening of the award-winning documentary *Wanted: The Joseph Esses Story*, about a Jewish man who escaped from Syria in 1950. Director **Michelle Kahn** and the film's subject (her grandfather) are expected to be in attendance. Sephardic Kehila Centre, 7026 Bathurst St., Thornhill. Wednesday, Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m.

• In the latest lecture with film clips in his series on the films of **Woody Allen**, critic **Kevin Courrier** discusses *Zelig*, *Manhattan*, *Stardust Memories*, *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy*, *Broadway Danny Rose*, *Purple Rose of Cairo*, *Hannah and Her Sisters* and *Crimes and Misdemeanors*. $12, $6 for students. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Feb. 4, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• **Sharoni Sibony** presents a series of talks on Jewish Immigrant Writing in America, discussing such writers as **Mary Antin**, **Abraham Cahan**, **Anzia Yezierska**, **David Bezmozgis** and **Gary Shteyngart**. $105; MNjcc members $85. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursdays, Feb. 7 to 28, 7 to 8:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

• **Eleanor Wachtel**, host of CBC's *Writers & Company*, recently interviewed French filmmaker **Claude Lanzmann**, best known for his 1985 landmark documentary *Shoah*. The program was scheduled for broadcast on Jan. 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, and is also available for listening via the website www.cbc.ca/writersandcompany.

• • •

At the Galleries: *Rising Beyond the Body* is an exhibition of paintings by **Irit Epstein** that examines "adaptation in a changing world." At the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery through Feb. 18.

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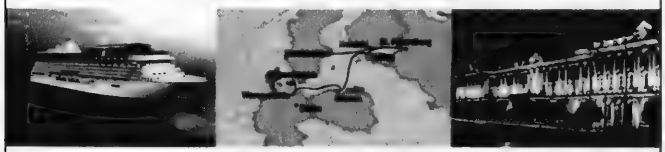

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Gabi Epstein to play Tzitel in *Fiddler on the Roof*

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Toronto actor Gabi Epstein will be performing the role of Tzitel in *Fiddler on the Roof* at Stage West Theatre Restaurant from Feb. 14 to April 21.

Although Epstein sang songs from *Fiddler* in Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's *To Life*, for which she received a Dora Award nomination, it is the first time she has been in the musical based on Sholem Aleichem stories.

"Tzitel is the eldest daughter of Tevye and Golda's five daughters," says Epstein. "The whole show talks about tradition and going with the times and moving on with new traditions. [Tzitel] is the first one in the family to break tradition by not having a match arranged for her by a matchmaker, but actually marrying for love. Tzitel breaks down the barrier for the rest of the family."

This is Epstein's debut at Stage West but she's no stranger to the theatre having been catching shows there for years. "It is this classic dinner theatre, so you get a really unique theatre experience," she says. "There aren't many dinner theatres around at all in Canada."

She thinks the reason why *Fiddler* has remained such an important show for so many years is that although it uses

Gabi Epstein

Judaism and the culture of Judaism, the issues are heart and home issues families in all cultures deal with.

Epstein hopes audiences leave Stage West humming the tunes from Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick's score, including crowd favourites such as *If I Were a Rich Man*, *Sunrise, Sunset*, *Matchmaker* and *Tradition*.

"There really aren't that many musicals where you walk away humming the tunes. What I love about the show is the music it is so beautiful," she says.

Continued on page 33

How Judaism shaped Steven Spielberg's films

Robert Gluck
JNS.org

Steven Spielberg's films, including his latest, *Lincoln*, continue to reflect his Jewish upbringing.

According to Lester Friedman, author of *The Jewish Image in American Film*, *American Jewish Filmmakers* and *Citizen Spielberg*, there is more to Spielberg than meets the eye.

"It's indisputable he's the most successful filmmaker in American history, but he's much more than that," Friedman said. "His Jewish background is omnipresent. It cuts both ways."

Friedman explained that Spielberg's parents "lived in predominantly Christian areas" and that Spielberg "was the subject of antisemitism, everything from swastikas on the windows to rolling a penny down the aisle in class and students saying 'go get it Jew-boy.'

"He was concerned about hiding his Judaism," Friedman said. "His early films stayed far away from it. He doesn't confront it until *An American Tail*, where [the main character] Fievel is the name of his grandfather. He confronts it in the most crucial and important way in two films, *Schindler's List*, in which he makes the archetypal Holocaust film, and 12 years later with *Munich*."

In 1994, inspired by his experience making *Schindler's List*, Spielberg established the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation to gather video testimonies from survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. While most of those who gave testimony were Jews, the foundation also interviewed homosexual survivors, Jehovah's Witness survivors, liberators and liberation witnesses, political prisoners, rescuers and aid providers, Gypsy survivors and others.

Nigel Morris, the author of *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg*, said that some critics "carelessly dismiss him as a children's director or maker of escapist fantasies.

"They resent his enormous success, mistakenly focus on what they label as manipulation or sentimentality, or confuse him with George Lucas and naively blame either director or both for the blockbuster tendency that destroyed the freedom and creativity of early 1970s Hollywood, as if that were not an economic inevitability," Morris said.

Spielberg has his finger on the heartbeat of a historic dilemma.

Morris agrees with Friedman that Spielberg had little desire to embrace his Jewish ethnic identity or faith until he was profoundly affected by making *Schindler's List* while in his late 40s.

"The characteristic 'God light,' as the director has called it, [which] is central to both Spielberg's visual style and the deeper meaning of his work… flows from his earliest memory of being pushed in a stroller through a Cincinnati synagogue aged just six months. The candles and dazzling reflections in candelabra became entwined with the awe of larger-than-life figures when he first saw a movie in a theatre, creating the quasi-religious wonder that is repeatedly associated with spectacle, and particularly film, through all his output."

Morris said Spielberg, as a child, was displaced to various strange new locations across the United States as his father changed jobs, suffering bullying and antisemitism. One of Spielberg's coping strategies was to seek popularity by casting his oppressors in the movies he made outside school hours.

"Spielberg was quoted as saying that being 'Jewish and wimpy made me part of a major minority,'" Morris said. "This helped the fledgling director empathize with the civil rights cause and arguably led to his much later adoption of two African-American children, as well as the interest in black culture manifested seriously and respectfully in several of his films.

"Spielberg partly established the context, and tone, for many of the attacks that were made as much against him as the film," said Morris. "When he imperiously declared, 'If it takes my name to get people to see *Schindler's List*, so be it,' he suggested the project might not have been viable without him and implied higher aspirations than 'mere' entertainment. Certainly, a black-and-white film, over three hours long and without major stars, seemed unlikely to appeal to youthful blockbuster audiences, 60 per cent of whom were unaware of the Holocaust." According to Morris, Schindler's redemption paralleled Spielberg's transformation from shallow crowd-pleaser to serious Jewish artist.

"Promotion and interviews stressed his return to ethnic roots and newfound faith," Morris said. "Spielberg repeatedly spoke of his own antisemitic experiences, thereby identifying himself, descended from German Jews, with Holocaust victims. Equating seriousness, solemnity and quality, industry names finally recognized Spielberg, bestowing Academy Awards at the exact time that media coverage was distancing him from Hollywood entertainment values."

With *Lincoln*, Hollywood has another popular film, but Spielberg has more. He has his finger on the heartbeat of a historic American dilemma – with applications to modern times – by dealing with president Abraham Lincoln's moral question of whether to prolong the Civil War to get an important amendment passed.

Perhaps columnist Clarence Page best answered Spielberg's (and Lincoln's) question in the *Chicago Tribune* when he wrote, "Democratic governance of a large, diverse republic requires compromises. You can't always get what you want, but we can work together across partisan lines to get what we need."

Leading cabaret performer

Continued from page 32

"My favourite part about being Jewish is the traditions that I continue to celebrate with my family, and so I just hope that people walk away feeling pride in their family and feeling a sense of their community around them, and that they are proud of the traditions they have and know that change is possible, and open their eyes to it."

In addition to *To Life*, Epstein has performed in *The Sound of Music*, *Perfect Wedding*, *Blood Brothers*, *Dani Girl*, *I Love You Because*, *Edge* and *Toy Story the Musical*.

She's been making a mark for herself as one of Toronto's leading cabaret performers and recently made her New York City cabaret debut at the legendary Don't Tell Mama, in her one-woman show *A Gabaret, Cabar'EH, Tales of a Canadian in New York*, which the *Times Square Chronicles* named the top cabaret of 2012.

Epstein, who teaches singing when not performing, has also released a CD, *Show Off*, which is available on iTunes and her website, www.gabiepstein.com.

Epstein is the daughter of author Kathy Kacer, and her brother, Jake, is also an actor, currently starring in *Spiderman* on Broadway.

Stage West's *Fiddler* is performed by an all-Canadian cast, with George Masswohl as Tevye. The show is directed and choreographed by Max Reimer, and the musical director is Anthony Bastianon.

For tickets, call the Stage West box office at 905-238-0042 or visit www.stagewest.com.

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Eastern Europe's lost years

[Reviewed by Norman Ravvin]

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, the myriad of challenges dealt with by occupying forces in Poland included the flow of Jewish refugees from one side of the occupied zone to the other. In the spring of 1947, the U.S. Army European Command closed its zone to any further displaced persons.

Jannet Flanner, reporting in the *New Yorker* in June of that year, allowed that since Jews "were the only national group still flowing into our DP [displaced persons] camps in large number, they were the most affected."

Key political and cultural developments after the war are the focus of Anne Applebaum's *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-1956* (Signal).

Scenarios like that of postwar refugees, the effort on the part of Jews to resettle in Eastern Europe and, ultimately, the rise of authoritarian communism are little understood in the West. Events associated with the wartime simply obliterate them, making Applebaum's depiction of a troubling decade all the more satisfying.

Applebaum opens with a portrait of the ethnic transfers that took place with the realigning of Poland's borders, motivated both by Stalin's wishes in the East and the urge on the part of the victors to incorporate western lands into the revived Polish state. In conquered Germany, the devastation of war had, under Soviet occupation, the added impact of mass rape and pillage enacted on civilians by the Red Army.

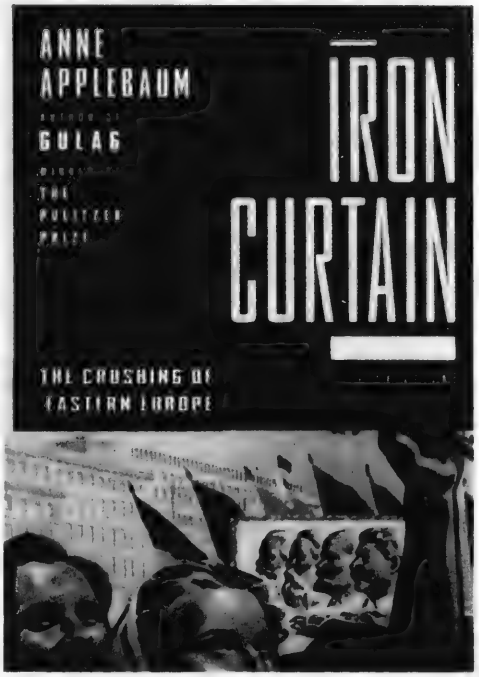
Applebaum writes movingly of the spontaneous reappearance of free civil society in Poland and Hungary. Youth volunteered en masse to aid in the massive rebuilding project required by the destruction of Warsaw. Women's organizations initiated welfare programs, while in Warsaw both the YMCA and Catholic charities undertook to recreate a stable social life. Polska YMCA organized "parties, concerts, camps, clubs, sports, and discussion groups of a kind that could be found nowhere else."

With the increasing involvement of Soviet government representatives and police organizations in Eastern Bloc redevelopment, such undertakings were gradually suppressed. At the same time, Soviet interference in elections, support for Communist parties and increasing repression of dissent limited the range of organizations available to postwar citizens. The Catholic Church came in for special minding, with its organizational power newly viewed as a threat to the nascent Communist social order. In Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyski took a moderate approach to this oppression, while in Hungary, Cardinal József Mindszenty's outspoken criticism of the increasing centralization of power in the hands of Communists led to his arrest, torture and imprisonment.

Daily life fell prey to the all-too-prevalent surveillance of secret police and informers, while Marxist-Leninist economic policies made it increasingly impossible to survive as a small businessman or tradesperson.

In the aftermath of the events of the Holocaust, these developments had specific meaning for Eastern Europe's drastically damaged Jewish communities. As many as 70,000 Jews left Poland for Palestine in the first few years following the end of the war. The bulk of emigrating Jews were anti-Communist, while "a disproportionate number" who stayed either had "high expectations of a Communist regime" or had "jobs in the Communist state apparatus."

Applebaum dispenses with what she calls the "mythology" of substantial Jewish involvement in either the state or security apparatus in Poland. It is true, however, that a number of prominent leaders in Hungary's Communist regime were Jews, a development that regimes throughout the East viewed as an impediment to gaining wider popularity among the mainstream population.



In the period called "High Stalinism," which ended with the leader's death in March 1953, common reasons for arrest tended to follow "Stalin's own obsessions of the time." One might be dubbed a "right-deviationist," a "Titoist," a "cosmopolitan" or "Zionist."

Jews, Applebaum tells us, had "come to the forefront of Stalinist paranoia following the establishment of the State of Israel," leading to a broad attack on Soviet Jews, as well as those in Soviet client states. With Stalin, his underlings in Poland, Hungary and East Germany believed that the persecution of Jewish Communists – scapegoating Soviet style – would "be welcomed by everyone else."

Applebaum draws an intriguing portrait of the early efforts by Eastern Europeans to buck the weight of Soviet power, including short-lived street marches in 1953 East Berlin, and a groundswell of independent-mindedness, which followed an ill-considered Warsaw Youth Festival in 1955. With the influx of leftist representatives and delegates from western Europe, postwar Poles got their first look at how free westerners dressed, talked and acted. The shock of recognition is remembered by Maciej Rosalak, who was a child at the time: "Grey, sad, poorly dressed people living among ruins and the rubble of streets were suddenly replaced by what seemed to be a different species. The newcomers smiled instead of listening to the static on Radio Free Europe like our parents, and they sang instead of whispering. Warsaw children ran among them and collected autographs in special notebooks."

Such notebooks may now reside in the backs of drawers or in shoeboxes, artifacts of a faraway, almost forgotten time. Applebaum's *Iron Curtain* offers readers a glimpse of life "among ruins," and an understanding of what became of Eastern Europe under the Russians.

Norman Ravvin's recent books include the novel, The Joyful Child, *and* Failure's Opposite: Listening to A.M. Klein, *co-edited with Sherry Simon. He is at work on a novel set partly in Poland.*

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Levine to join Canadian Davis Cup team

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

MIAMI — It's the dream of every professional tennis player to play for his nation's Davis Cup national team, and Ottawa-born Jesse Levine has taken bold steps to make this dream come true.

Levine, who has lived in Boca Raton, Fla., since age 13 and played tennis as an American through last November, applied in December to the International Tennis Federation to be allowed to play for the Canadian Davis Cup team.

Under International Tennis Federation rules, Levine will have to wait 90 days for his application to be accepted, so he won't be eligible to play the Davis Cup tie versus Spain from Feb. 1 to 3 in Vancouver. However, he will practise with the Canadian Davis Cup team.

"I am excited to play for my home country Canada, even if I can't play in February," said the 25-year-old Levine on a phone conference call with reporters from the Auckland, N.Z., tournament that he is playing. Levine is Canada's second-highest-ranked singles player (at No. 104) and will play for Canada at its tie in April.

Jesse Levine

"We are pleased that Jesse will play for Canada," said Tennis Canada president Michael Downey. "Jesse will strengthen our Davis Cup team as our second-ranked singles player. Being a lefty and having the experience of playing tough against top players adds depth to our roster."

"This is a wonderful opportunity not only because I want so much to play Davis Cup, but now I may have an opportunity of being in the Olympics as well. I am at heart a Canadian. I love the Ottawa Senators hockey team, I know the other Canadians since I played them in the junior level and everything feels right," added Levine.

He was also elated to learn that he would become the first Jewish player to play on the Canadian Davis Cup team since Derek Segal, also from Ottawa, did it in 1988. With Toronto native Sharon Fichman likely to play in the 2013 Fed Cup, the two are set to become the first Jewish man and woman to play Davis and Fed Cups in the same year since Mike Belkin (Montreal) and Vicky Berner (Vancouver) did it in 1968.

"It means a lot to be the first Jewish player on Davis Cup for Canada in so many years. I went to a Hebrew day school in Ottawa, feel proudly Jewish and look forward to play soon," Levine said.

Since turning pro in 2007, Levine has been invited several times by Canadian Davis Cup coach Martin Laurendeau to join the team, but he had declined until last December, feeling loyal to the United States Tennis Association (USTA), which funded his coaching and training since he moved to Florida in 2000.

"The USTA has given me so many opportunities with wild cards into tournaments [and] practising with the Davis Cup team that I felt for so long that my prospects should remain with the U.S.A. But I wanted to play Davis Cup and so it made sense to play for Canada," he said.

As a youth, Levine took tennis lessons at the Ottawa Athletic Club and attended school at Hillel Academy. He was all set to improve his tennis locally. But the family doctor found that Jesse's younger brother, Daniel, had colitis, so a few weeks following Jesse's bar mitzvah at Agudath Israel Congregation in Ottawa, the family moved to Boca Raton.

Because Levine's father is American, Levine had the option of joining either the American or Canadian Davis Cup teams. Ironically, the move to Florida turned out to be a blessing for Jesse as well. Levine continued to hone his tennis game by going to the Chris Evert Tennis Academy and later to the Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy.

Living in a city with a year-round climate ideally suited for a tennis pro, Levine has blossomed as a well-rounded player. Winning a scholarship at University of Florida, Levine won 24 matches as a freshman in 2007 before turning pro. However, the odds of Levine earning a berth on the American Davis Cup have always been slim. Even with the retirement of Andy Roddick last November, there are currently six Americans ranked ahead of him for only two singles players to join doubles team Bob and Mike Bryan on the four-player U.S. Davis Cup team.

By contrast, Canadian coach Laurendeau prefers to have three singles players on his Davis Cup team to join doubles specialist Daniel Nestor. Levine would then be assured of a berth on the Canadian Davis Cup team in April, even if his ranking falls below that of current third-ranked Canadian Vasek Pospisil, ranked No. 125 by the ATP.

Levine's fortunes continue to rise. After finishing in the quarter-finals at the Auckland tournament, he is currently ranked among the top 100 in the world.

Italian teams honour Jewish coach

JTA

MILAN — Italian soccer players expressed their opposition to racism by honouring a Jewish coach who was killed in the Holocaust.

At an Italian Cup quarter-finals match in Milan recently, team members of the Milan Inter team and Bologna donned T-shirts bearing the slogan "No to Racism" and the portrait of Arpad Weisz, a Hungarian Jew who coached both teams in the 1930s. Weisz was deported and killed in Auschwitz in 1944.

Officials, including the mayors of Milan and Bologna, Jewish community representatives and the Hungarian consul, attended a ceremony before the match at which the teams exchanged jerseys bearing Weisz's name and the number 18.

A plaque honouring Weisz was dedicated at Milan's stadium one year ago.

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430 LEASING
431 LANDSCAPING/LAWNCARE
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433 LESSONS
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450 PAINTING/WALLPAPERING
452 PARTY SERVICES
455 PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO
460 PLUMBING
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481 SEWING
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493 TAILORING/ALTERATIONS
495 TILING
498 TRAINING
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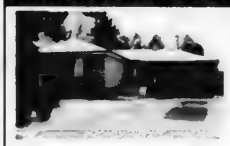

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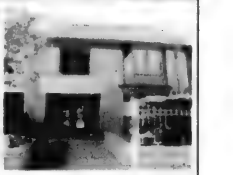

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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Globetrotter now helps disabled Canadians online

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

Jeffrey Bernstein has helped communities around the globe – the 27-year-old political science grad has been everywhere from Uruguay to South Sudan and Israel. Now he's ready to bring his skills to help his own community in Canada.

Bernstein is the co-founder of synapsABILITY, an organization that hopes to provide a digital space for Canadians with disabilities and their families. "We're trying to build an online social platform for the support networks that care for people with developmental and physical disabilities in Canada," he said.

The project is a very personal one for Bernstein, whose autistic brother, Alan, was the inspiration behind the organization. "He's an incredible guy… He does a lot in the community. He's very, very, very involved with the Jewish community, and he's sort of found a home for himself over the years there, in various synagogues and organizations."

The idea behind synapsABILITY, which is still in its early stages, is to provide a new tool for people with disabilities and their networks (families, friends, social workers, educators, doctors, employers, etc.) that allows them to connect with each other and learn from their experiences.

"The population in Canada with disabilities and the people who support them is a big, growing and powerful network that hasn't necessarily found its voice in the way that many advocates would like it to," the Toronto native said. "But this is something that we're hoping to eventually change.

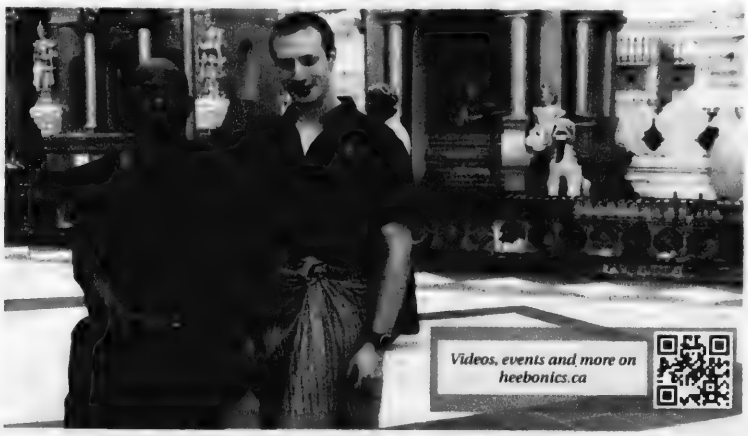
"I've been trying to find a way back to my community in a sense," Bernstein added, "and find something that I could connect with here, locally. Something that would be meaningful work and hits close to home."

He said a lot of people ask him why he's become a social entrepreneur when his background is in politics and public affairs. But according to Bernstein, the two career paths aren't so far apart: both allow him to work with social justice, which is something he's always been passionate about.

Bernstein has been volunteering since he was a kid. He was heavily involved with the Jewish youth groups Kadima and United Synagogue Youth, where he was able to get a first taste of helping out people in need. "The social action component was kind of that big driver," he said.

He enrolled at the University of Toronto for his undergraduate degree and chose to spend his third year studying at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Bernstein focused on Middle Eastern politics during his time there and said it was his first introduction to independent research.

"That was definitely one of my defining moments for growth, I'd say. Obviously, living in a different country, as familiar as Israel might be to Jews, it's still very different," he said. "But going as a 20-year-old, there's a lot that you sort of absorb and learn."



As part of his work, Jeffrey Bernstein travelled to Myanmar to look for counterfeit medicine. He is seen here with a monk who was studying at the Shwedagon Pagoda, a famous Buddhist temple.

He said he came back to Toronto with a newfound energy. After wrapping up his undergrad degree at U of T, Bernstein worked at a think-tank in Washington, D.C., for six months and volunteered with the Barack Obama campaign.

"Just being in D.C. as a political scientist – it's the Mecca of this universe for anyone who wants to study that, who wants to work in international policy, international affairs," he said. "It was amazing. I was very lucky to have that break."

While he waited to hear back from master's programs, Bernstein did some travelling. He returned to Israel and stayed there for three months, but this time he volunteered at an organization called Peace Players International. He described it as a project that uses "basketball as a model for bridging the divides between… parties in conflict."

Bernstein added that he got to see a different side of the country that he didn't get to see while on his Birthright trip or even during his year abroad at Hebrew U.

He returned from his trip and started pursuing his master's degree at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa. During that time, he also landed a job working as a human rights adviser to Canadian Senator Roméo Dallaire. There, he was responsible for managing the senator's international relationships and doing things like writing speeches and op-eds.

It's safe to say Bernstein has done some exciting things over the last few years. But one of his most thrilling experiences happened just a few months ago when he landed a gig at a startup organization that does consultancy work in international policy and research. It might not sound like an interesting job, but it's the one that led him on a hunt for counterfeit medicine in South Sudan and Myanmar.

"My boss had spent a lot of time in [unusual] places," he said, citing Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria as examples.

"He would always notice that in market places there would be medicine that either looked suspicious or was unlabelled, or it was sort of lumped in."

Over the summer, Bernstein spent a month in South Sudan and a month in Myanmar investigating counterfeit medicine issues. He said being in South Sudan was an eye-opening experience. "I've travelled a lot, I've been to a lot of places… But [South Sudan is] unlike any country I've ever seen or you could imagine. It's almost like being in the beginning of time, in a sense. There's only a few kilometres of paved roads there. There's very, very little infrastructure. Brick and mortar buildings… there's a few, but it's not sort of the norm."

All of his experiences have helped him become a social entrepreneur. Bernstein said any young person can launch a company nowadays. It's about having an idea and surrounding yourself with motivated people.

You don't have to drop everything you're doing in order to have an entrepreneurial experience, he added. Sometimes it's just a matter of learning or volunteering in an area you're passionate about. He said that young generations are now shaping many fields, including marketing, technology and advertising.

"There's incredible change that's happening in that world, being driven by people who are not any older than us," he said. "In fact, many are much younger."

To connect with Bernstein about opportunities with synapsABILITY, or to learn more about his Generation Y-mentorship project, send him a tweet at @JeffMBernstein.

DOWNLOAD A FREE QR APP @ 2dscan.com

It may be you, not your boss

Dear Ella,

I've been working in the same company for almost five years. I like my job and the people I work with. I hate my boss, and I think he hates me. He doesn't treat me like he treats the other employees in my department, and there's blatant favouritism, which makes for a very uncomfortable environment.

For example, he never says good morning to me, and a smile is out of the question. I get chastised if I'm even one minute late, yet I've seen others come in late and he doesn't say a word. He never chit-chats with me like he does with my colleagues. Sometimes I feel like a leper in this place. The other employees are very cordial and nice to me, and we all get along great until "he" walks into the room. Then everyone starts sucking up to him, and it feeds his ego.

Ask Ella

By Ella Burakowski

I feel it's unfair, but this is a secure, paying job and I have a lot of bills to pay. I don't have the luxury of leaving just because of a personality conflict. I don't know if it's a sexist thing or a jealousy thing. I don't really want to complain about him to the head of the company, because that will just make things worse.

What should I do?

Hate My Boss

Dear Hate My Boss,

Since you spend most of your day at work, contentment in the workplace is important. Usually a problem with a boss is much more than just a personality conflict.

Perhaps you need to look at the bigger picture – look at yourself. Does your performance match your colleagues and, therefore, allow for you to have the extra perks? Do you work as diligently, ethically and efficiently as other employees? Are you clear, open, reliable and trustworthy? Does your self-interest trump your concern for others? Are you respectful, or do you roll your eyes or sigh when you are not happy?

Don't just gloss over these questions. You'd best think about them long and hard, and be very honest with yourself if you really want to find a solution.

Even if you honestly don't feel like you're guilty of any of these, others' perceptions may be different than your own.

Of course, it's possible that it's as simple as your boss just doesn't like you, but that's unlikely to happen for no reason, and I assume he had something to do with hiring you?

If you want to improve your situation, you'll need to change your attitude first. Make up your mind to give it all you've got and be the best you can be. Walk in on time, or even a little early, with a smile on your face. Look your boss in the eye and say good morning first. Work harder and smarter. Anticipate what he and your team need and stay on top of it. Don't kvetch and complain. Be proactive and put the good of the company before your own gain.

If you truly give it all you've got and still have a problem with your boss, you have nothing to lose by requesting a private meeting and confronting him. Maybe there is something you're missing, but prepare yourself to hear things you may not be aware of, or may not like.

Most problems can be fixed with hard work and honesty. Good luck.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN. *e-mail: ellacjn@gmail.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

HONEY MUSTARD, BROCCOLI & APPLE SALAD

Salad

- 2 bunches broccoli w/ stems
- 1/2 c roasted, salted shelled sunflower seeds
- 1 Fuji apple, cored, sliced thin
- 1/4 c arugula leaves

Dressing

- 3 tbls whole grain mustard
- 2 tbls honey
- 2 tbls olive oil
- 2 tbls vinegar (any kind)
- Salt, pepper to taste

Cut florets off broccoli; thinly slice stems. Microwave or steam florets/stems a couple of minutes until hard raw crunch is cooked from broccoli. Rinse with cold water. Set aside.
In large bowl, combine mustard, honey, olive oil, vinegar, few pinches of salt and pepper. Whisk vigorously until thoroughly combined. Add broccoli, sunflower seeds, sliced apple, and arugula to bowl. Toss until well coated. Chill about 30 min. Serve cold. Best served the day it is made.

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

French academic and author Shmuel Trigano, who talks about antisemitism in France.

How family and friends recently honoured the memory of filmmaker Jacques Bensimon, president of the National Film Board of Canada from 2001 to 2006, who died of cancer late last year after completing his autobiographical book.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Are Muslim immigrants a threat to western countries? *Globe and Mail* columnist Doug Saunders says that they are no more a threat to western countries than earlier waves of Catholic and Jewish newcomers were in their day.

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa writes a personal letter to Yair Lapid.

Canada's continuing role in discouraging Hungarian Roma from seeking asylum here and how a Hungarian-Jewish filmmaker is capturing increasing antisemitic and anti-Roma activity in Budapest.

Museum tells the story of Romania's Jews.

The art of listening, again and again

It was a replay of a common interaction. I was telling my daughter a story from my past and she responded with, "I know, I know, you've told me that before."

I realized what a common occurrence this sort of interaction is and explained to her, "Even if you have heard the story before, remember that it's important to listen again because I may not remember that I told the story before and the telling of the story may have as much significance for me as it might have for you."

Senior Side of Life

Michael Gordon

I then realized how often in my geriatric practice one of the complaints by families is how often their loved one tells them the same thing over and over. They use that symptom as evidence of cognitive decline – the inability to recall what was said previously. This symptom, although common and often indicative of cognitive functional decline, is also a manifestation of the common human propensity to focus on the narrative of one's life and to recount it as part of one's process of self-identity and validation. But, what is the separation between the normal attribute of recounting the narrative of one's life and the pathology of cognitive impairment that fails to recognize the recent repetition of that story to a loved one?

The telling of stories is important. In normal relationships and conversations, we spend much effort recounting life events to others. The propensity to be repetitive is universal, as anyone in a long-standing relationship will admit. If the topics of conversation between spouses are tracked over time, we would probably find the same topics repeated in one form or another, topics related to work, interpersonal conflicts and important decisions, and about significant family members. A prohibition on the repetition of topics to be discussed would likely result in little communication.

For instance, any member of a couple usually knows the political views of the other partner. When the topic comes up in a social setting, they often patiently listen to their partner express their views to presumably a new audience (although this is not always the case) with rare rude interruptions such as: "We have heard your views before. If you do not have a new one, just stop talking."

The challenge for those facing the extremes of repetition in a loved one who is experiencing cognitive impairment is what to do. Family members usually learn to avoid interrupting the recounting of an event with: "You told me already" or "I know," as this may cause conflict with a denial that the conversation has taken place.

In the context of normal aging, family members may find that the retelling of one's life narrative frequently occurs. This is one way we validate our lives, which is important as the past becomes increasingly important compared to the limited options for the future. This human need to tell our narratives is reflected in the interest by many in writing autobiographies and memoirs and in reading them. Being patient with our narrative-telling loved ones is important to them and ultimately to us.

The best recommendation I can make about this inevitable process is to find ways to be patient with your loved one and accept that even though you have heard the story before, acknowledging it and expressing an interest in it is helpful and even therapeutic to both of you.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest. His latest book is Late-Stage Dementia, Promoting Comfort, Compassion and Care. His previous book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his memoir, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

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This Week

National

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Kashruth Council drops appeal in labour case.
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To Your Health

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Netanyahu asked to form government

Israel's President Shimon Peres, right, last Saturday night officially asked Benjamin Netanyahu, left, to form the next government. Netanyahu vowed to try to build a wide unity coalition. *Please see related stories on pages 8 and 29.* *[Israel Sun photo]*

Israel's water worries are over

A water desalination plant near Hadera. *[Flash90 photo]*

Ron Friedman
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — After years of constantly being urged to conserve water, Israel's National Water Authority announced Jan. 29 that Israelis no longer need to fear droughts and that the country's water worries are essentially over.

The solution for the longstanding problem comes not from the clouds, which have provided generous amounts of rainfall this winter, but primarily from desalination technology that can transform seawater into something you can drink.

"Already we are desalinating 25 per cent of our consumable water with the aid of three active plants. And with two more in the works, we will increase that amount to 50 per cent. The drought that has plagued us in recent years is definitely over," said Avner Hermoni, CEO of Derech Hayam desalination.

"Sea of Galilee water levels are no longer an issue," added Danny Sofer, a regional director for the national Mekorot water company. He said that water from the northern lake now makes up only 10 per cent of Israel's sources.

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Mishpatim
Candlelighting: 5:20
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Greater Toronto Area

Tiny Israel soars high in space research – please see page 30

CANADA

Hebrew U Asteroid

MONTREAL — An asteroid co-discovered nine years ago by three amateur astronomers – a Jewish ex-Montrealer named David E. Levy and his wife, Wendee, who now live in Arizona, as well as Torontonian Tom Glinos – has been named in honour of Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Levy had wanted to name an asteroid after the school since completing a PhD in English there in 2010. His thesis explored the link between the night sky and the works of Shakespeare and other early modern writers. The International Astronomical Union rejected the name Hebrewuniversity as too long, but accepted Hebrewu this past fall. Formerly called Asteroid 271,763, it's located in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

WORLD

Yom Kippur Vote

SYDNEY, Australia — Australia scheduled its national elections for Yom Kippur. Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced the Sept. 14 date last week. With the Yom Kippur date, more Australian Jews are expected to vote by mail or at pre-poll booths, as Sabbath observers do now because Australian elections are held on Saturdays. Voting is mandatory in Australia. Those who don't vote are fined. Joshua Frydenberg, the only Jewish lawmaker for the opposition Liberal Party, said he was disappointed, but Peter Wertheim, head of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, said, "It is not a major issue for us." Federal elections have not clashed with Yom Kippur since the Australian Electoral Commission began logging election dates, Fairfax Media reported. Australia has a Jewish population of 110,000.

Toulouse Arrests

PARIS — French police arrested two men in connection with an attack last year on a Jewish school in Toulouse. The men, 28 and 30, were arrested Jan. 29 in Toulouse and taken to Paris for questioning, the news agency *AFP* reported. They reportedly were friends of Mohammed Merah, who killed three Jewish children and a rabbi at the Ozar Hatorah school in Toulouse last March 19. Merah was killed three days later in a police raid on his home. Before attacking the school, he killed three French soldiers. The arrested men had been placed under surveillance about two weeks ago. They could be held for up to four days without being charged under France's anti-terrorism laws.

Former Liberal Candidate Settles Lawsuit

WINNIPEG — Former federal Liberal candidate Lesley Hughes has settled a defamation lawsuit against Canadian Jewish Congress, B'nai Brith Canada, federal cabinet minister Peter Kent and four officials of the Jewish groups.

Lesley Hughes

The freelance journalist and broadcaster filed the suit in 2009, alleging that the defendants accused her of being antisemitic for an article she wrote about the 9/11 attacks. It examined claims Israeli businesses in New York City's World Trade Center vacated the facility a week before the attack and that German intelligence warned their U.S., Israeli and Russian counterparts of the looming operation.

When Hughes ran as a Liberal candidate in the 2008 election in Winnipeg's Kildonan-St. Paul, the article surfaced. She was accused of antisemitism and then-Liberal leader Stéphane Dion revoked her candidacy.

Hughes issued a joint statement Dec. 1 with Kent and the two Jewish groups.

"Canadian Jewish Congress, B'nai Brith Canada, and Peter Kent accept that Ms. Hughes does not condone the use of antisemitic conspiracy theories by racist groups to support antisemitism of any nature," it said. "They therefore acknowledge and agree that Ms. Hughes is not an antisemite." Hughes' website says she's planning to release an ebook in 2013 about her experiences.

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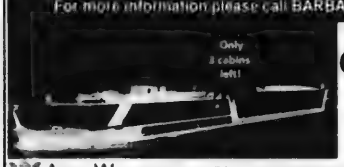

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Canada slammed on Nazi war crimes file

Country gets failing grade

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Canada's record in bringing Nazi war criminals to justice has earned the country yet another failing grade, according to a report by the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Israel office.

Canada joined Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Australia and Austria with an "F-2: Failure in practice" mark, states *Worldwide Investigation and Prosecution of Nazi War Criminals*, the centre's annual report.

The mark refers to "countries in which there are no legal obstacles to the investigation and prosecution of suspected Nazi war criminals, but whose efforts (or lack thereof) have resulted in complete failure… primarily due to the absence of political will to proceed."

Canada has been given failing grades for several years. According to data compiled in the report, Canada has not filed a single new case since 2003-04 and there have been no new convictions in four years. Efraim Zuroff, author of the report, said Canada's grade should improve next year, as the report will take into account the recent decision of the federal cabinet to strip Helmut Oberlander of his citizenship. Oberlander was a translator in a Nazi killing squad.

Zuroff said there are currently 1,138 investigations underway in 10 countries. A very small number will ever reach trial, perhaps 10 to 15, he suggested.

The report found that in the year up to March 31, 2012, 10 individuals were convicted on charges related to Nazi war crimes, including Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, a guard at the Sobibor death camp.

During the period under review, cases were initiated against six suspects, five in Italy and one in Spain. Germany, Italy and the United States were the only countries to receive an "A" grade, while Spain, along with Hungary and Serbia, were given "B."

The report noted that in the 18 years since Canada shifted to the civil remedies of denaturalization and deportation, 21 cases have been initiated, of which 10 could be considered successes.

Continued on page 12

Efraim Zuroff

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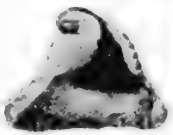
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The usual bad theatre

From the editor's desk...

It is likely true that no area in the Middle East is being more closely watched presently by governments around the world and their myriad security forces than Syria. Even more than Mali where French soldiers recently put their boots on the ground to fight Al Qaeda Islamists, Syria – one of the historic crossroads joining Europe to Africa and Asia – has become a daily chaos of intra-Muslim cruelty, bloodletting and proxy war.

More than 60,000 Syrians have been killed in the past two years, mostly at the hands of other Syrians and mostly under the direction of Syria's own ruler, Bashar Assad.

The Soviets have invested in his regime. Their fleet docks at the Syrian Mediterranean port of Latakia. But it is the Iranians who keep Assad in the ruler's palace. Tehran has essentially taken over the defence of the Syrian regime.

The fighting in Syria can therefore be seen at various levels: pro-Assad versus anti-Assad; Sunni Muslim versus Shia Muslim; pro-Saudi versus pro-Irani; Al Qaeda Islamists versus Khameni Islamists and so on. And it can also be described as breathtakingly cruel. Neither woman nor child has been spared from the enemy's bloodlust.

The United Nations and even the Arab League have condemned the Assad-inspired slaughter of Syrian civilians. But no outside force has intervened to try to stop it. Nor will they, because to do so risks engaging Iran and possibly, Russia too.

The chaos in Syria, however, has not been confined to Syria.

Like a river of hot, molten lava, it has spilled onto adjacent lands, scorching what it touches.

Syrians fleeing their homes have landed in large numbers in Jordan and Turkey. Neither country wants the refugees. Jordan has since closed its border to them.

Lebanese have fought Syrians. Indeed, some Lebanese are even fighting other Lebanese. Turks have fought Syrians. And the Iranians, of course, are fighting everyone inside Syria opposed to Bashar, their cynical, sinister satrap.

Shots, too, have been fired at Israel. Israel is concerned about errant or deliberate shooting across the border. It is also concerned about the possibility of attempted incursions by terrorists. Thus, the Jewish state is now building a re-fortified fence along its northern border.

But it is justifiably obsessed in ensuring that Syria's known cache of unconventional weapons not finds its way into the hands of Hezbollah, Iran's surrogate, or other anti-Israel forces.

In his column this week, Paul Michaels concisely describes Israel's obsession, "The most pressing security concern for Israel is the looming possibility that, as Syria's civil war rages, the country's chemical weapons could fall into the hands of rebel Sunni Islamic forces or be transferred to the Shia forces of Hezbollah that, under the guidance of Iran, support Damascus. Either way, Israel has made it clear that any attempt to transfer such deadly weapons would be a 'red line' and would be countered."

It was against this background that an aerial strike was conducted last week in Syria, allegedly by Israel, possibly against a convoy carrying anti-aircraft missiles to Hezbollah in Lebanon, or possibly against a research facility where non-conventional weapons were stored, or possibly against a warehouse of chemical weapons, or all of them, or some of them. As of this writing, the true details of the attack are not known.

Israel did not comment on the attack.

But every other nation in the region, it seems, has. And each one outdoes the other in parody, hypocrisy, obscenity and sheer charade.

Leading the race to the microphone was Hezbollah. One of its spokesmen called the strike "barbaric."

Egypt condemned the attack as being illegal. Resorting to the time-worn but phony call to pan-Arab loyalties – and totally disregarding the inter-Arab killing that is the prominent hallmark of current life in Syria – Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed Amr disingenuously said, "Such an assault on Arab land is entirely rejected and represents a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and international law."

Echoing the Egyptian foreign minister, the head of the Arab League, Nabil al-Arabi, called the strike a "glaring violation" of an Arab country's sovereignty.

And the quite petulant prime minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, berated Israel even as he goaded and mocked Syria for its passivity against the strike.

Although it was fiendishly sanctimonious, only Hezbollah's indignation was sincere.

Egypt, the Arab League and even the supremely priggish Turkish government were quite pleased with the result of the strike, whatever it was.

Their public reproach of Israel was bad theatre.

And, of course, that is part of the deep-seated, structural problem in the Middle East. Rather than speak truth to their own people and to the world, governments there always prefer to point an accusing finger at the Jewish state.

– MBD

SeeJN

PAYING RESPECTS:

NASA administrator Charles Bolden, centre, and U.S. Ambassador Dan Shapiro, standing at Bolden's left, last week visited the graves of Ilan and Asaf Ramon in the cemetery in Nahalal, a moshav in northern Israel. Feb. 1 marked 10 years since astronaut Ilan Ramon's death in the shuttle Columbia. His son, Asaf, died in a pilot-training accident in 2009. Borden was on a four-day visit to Israel at the invitation of the Israel Space Agency. Standing to the right of Bolden is Ariel Brikman, CEO of the Ramon Foundation. Please see the related story on page 30.

[Israel Sun photo]

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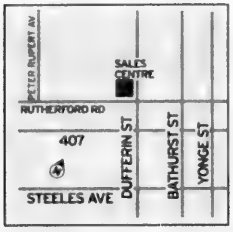

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Security still tops social issues: Israeli pundit

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Israelis who yearn for a kind of "normalcy" in which Israel is freed from "existential angst" are labouring under a "sweet illusion," says Israeli journalist and author Yossi Klein Halevi.

In an analysis of the outcome of Israel's recent general election, Klein Halevi said a growing number of Israelis, particularly younger ones, long to focus on everyday domestic concerns rather than on life-and-death security issues.

Yossi Klein Halevi

But because they live on "the edge of a volcano" in a politically unstable and volatile region, their longing for normality is unlikely to be fulfilled any time soon, he told an estimated 800 listeners in a keynote speech to the closing event of the UJA campaign at the Sheraton Centre last week.

It was announced that the campaign has raised $54 million so far from 16,700 gifts. A UJA spokersperson said a dollar goal for the campaign was not set, but that it's running $2 million ahead of last year at this time, and more donations are expected.

Last year's drive raised just over $57 million.

Klein Halevi, a senior fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem who made aliyah from the United States in 1982, said last month's election opened up a "new divide" between Israelis concerned mainly by socio-economic issues and Israelis preoccupied by an external agenda relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

As proof of his argument that security issues trump internal ones, he cited a widely reported incident on Jan. 30 in which the Israeli Air Force bombed a convoy in Syria trucking Russian-made surface-to-surface missiles to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Klein Halevi suggested that 2013 could well be the "year of decision" when Israel decides whether or not to use military means to stop Iran from building a militarized nuclear arsenal.

Yet Israel is also concerned by other unfolding developments in the Middle East, he noted.

Syria is imploding in a vicious civil war that already has claimed the lives of 60,000 Syrians and internally displaced two million Syrian citizens.

Egypt has been convulsed by instability since the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak's regime and its replacement by a Muslim Brotherhood government.

In a sombre reference to the increasingly tense period before the Six Day War, when Israel was suspended in a state of anxiety and uncertainty, Klein Halevi said Israelis face a similar moment of reckoning today.

Returning to Israel's election, he argued that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was the sole candidate who placed emphasis on foreign policy during the campaign.

He said Netanyahu has shifted toward the centre in an attempt to transform the Likud party into a pragmatic rather than an ideological right-wing party, but Likud hardliners have resisted his moves, placing the party out of step with the centre in Israel.

Klein Halevi said the political centre was generally reinvigorated by the election and now represents a majority of Israelis.

Although the middle-of-the-road Kadima party was crushed, winning only two Knesset seats as opposed to 28 in the 2009 election, Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid centrist party picked up a resounding 19 seats, making it the second-biggest parliamentary faction.

Yesh Atid's electoral success is significant, he observed. Israelis sent a message for change and signalled a desire for balance, realism and moderation from their political leaders.

They also seek an end to cultural wars and schisms, said Klein Halevi, who writes for the *New Republic* and whose first book, *Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist*, was an account of his disillusionment with Jewish militancy.

Declaring that Israel can no longer afford to maintain its current relationship with the haredi community, Klein Halevi said that haredi separatism from Israeli society is untenable.

Turning to the perennial Palestinian issue, he said that centrists such as himself are conflicted, knowing that a Palestinian state is both an existential need for Israel and a threat to its long-term security.

"We need to free ourselves from the moral burden of the occupation," he said, referring to Israel's 45-year presence in the West Bank, populated mainly by Palestinian Arabs.

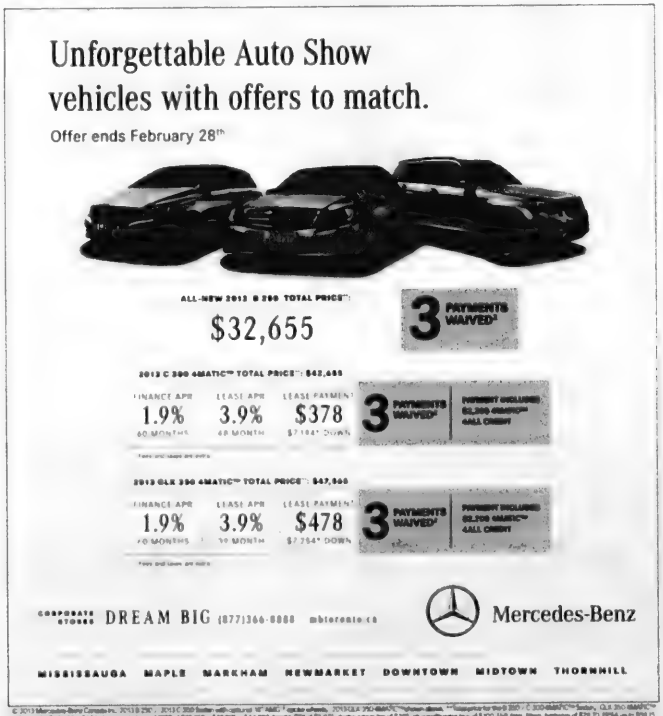
The looming demographic imperative, in which a minority of Jews may rule over a majority of Arabs in Israel and the West Bank one day, is one more reason why Israel should conclude its occupation, he said.

Most Israelis are prepared to make painful territorial concessions to achieve a two-state solution, Klein Halevi said.

They also think that government spending in West Bank settlements should be cut substantially and that a building freeze should be imposed in settlements outside major settlement blocs Israel intends to keep, he said.

Centrist Israelis, however, fear that concessions won't yield a real peace dividend, nor do they believe there is a Palestinian partner willing to engage Israel in a genuine peace process, he added.

Israeli centrists want to be doves, but reality forces them to be hawks, he lamented.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BAKING BREAD: More than 70 young adults gathered Jan. 31 to bake 500 challahs at the Challah for Chesed 500 event organized by The House, a meeting place and educational hub for young Jewish professionals. The challahs were delivered the next day and shared with the residents at Baycrest.

Young professionals help at Out of the Cold

Vicky Tobianah
Special to the CJN

An elderly man goes through the clothing racks, looking at the frayed jeans and old sweaters. Nothing catches his eyes, so he moves past them to a row of shoes, and picks up a pair of brown leather shoes with black laces.

"Can I help you get a size?" asks the young woman behind the counter. He tries them on. She bends down to check if the shoe fits, placing her fingers at the tip of the shoe – it fits perfectly. He places the shoes in a box, but doesn't hand her any money – because this homeless man was "shopping" at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue's Out of the Cold program last week. The program serves meals to 100 homeless people once a week for two months, provides them with donated clothes and houses 30 homeless people one night a week.

Young Jewish volunteers from The House, Shirah Partnoy, left, and Leah Direnfeld, help bake desserts for the Out of the Cold program. *(Eldad Ben Hamo photo)*

Without programs like these, 52-year-old Matt Weymark would be sleeping on the streets of downtown Toronto, in -20 C weather, or worse. "There's a problem – there's no place to go," he said. "Most of us will be sleeping outside when these programs end. It's as easy as that."

He wasn't always homeless. Weymark worked as a drywall finisher for 27 years. Since he was self-employed, he wasn't eligible for unemployment insurance when he began struggling a few months ago, and he had his driver's licence suspended. He can't work if he can't drive – he needs to be able to transport his equipment to get the job done.

"I've always worked," he said, lifting his head and staring straight ahead. "I don't like charity."

But without savings and not much family, Weymark had no place to go. On Mondays, he eats and sleeps at Beth Emeth, on Tuesdays, at a church in town, and on it goes. He's hopeful that in May, when his court hearing comes around, he can get his licence back and start earning a living again.

The House, an educational hub and meeting place for Toronto's young Jewish professionals, last week joined Beth Emeth to add something sweet to the Out of the Cold program: dessert. Volunteers spent five hours baking chocolate chip cookies and banana bread, which they served, as a musician played in the background. "We often recognize people's needs, but this addresses their wants," said Coby Segal, tzedek and social action co-ordinator of The House. "We're here to serve people's dignity, which is just as important as their basic survival needs. We want to recreate that experience we've all had – on birthdays and anniversaries when you go out to celebrate – and give it to someone else."

This event was part of The House's Lend a Hand series, in which young professionals volunteer their time to give back to the community. For Chanukah, they made latkes and handed them out to homeless people in Toronto as their Latkes for Chesed program.

"It's not just learning, it's not just volunteering. It's synergy, it feels like both," said Rabbi David Pardo, Jewish educational director of The House. "It's an educational experience fused with meaning."

That's what draws the volunteers.

"It makes me feel good that even when sometimes you don't feel like you're making a visible difference, you are," said Allison Mason, who volunteers with The House. "You learn to give up your own comfort level and give to someone else."

And they wanted to give people living on the streets the chance to feel like those who have homes, even if it was just for one night.

As the volunteers served dessert to the guests, the musician started playing *Stand By Me* and one woman stood up. She clapped her hands and started dancing, shaking back and forth. She smiled, a wide, huge grin, the entire night.

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda's Out of the Cold program runs until Feb. 25. Large, warm adult clothing is needed. It can be dropped off at the synagogue office, 100 Elder St.

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Netanyahu's agenda

Last Thursday, the Central Elections Committee delivered the official results of the recent Israeli election to President Shimon Peres. Two days later, at the conclusion of Shabbat, after consulting with all the parties that won seats in the 19th Knesset, Peres formally asked Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to form the next government.

Under Israeli law, Netanyahu has 28 days from last Saturday night to assemble a coalition. If he fails to do so within the allotted time, the president may grant him a further 14 days to get it done.

Although our sages warned that since the destruction of the Second Temple, predictions are now the realm of fools and toddlers, it is probably safe to say that it is unlikely that Netanyahu will need the extension. He received the endorsement of six parties controlling 82 of the 120 seats in the Knesset.

But Netanyahu wants his new government to include members from more than those six parties. According to the *Times of Israel*, at the ceremony with President Peres Saturday night, he seeks to lead "the widest possible national unity government" and urged the party leaders who did not recommend him as prime minister to join him.

Netanyahu's remarks to the president deftly responded to the policy preferences urged by the Israeli electorate. His tone was conciliatory to political opponents and to Palestinian leaders.

He promised to tackle the pressing domestic issues "without tearing our people apart." In other words, his approach will be gradual rather than abrupt regarding such matters as haredi participation in the army, reducing the cost of living and introducing electoral reform.

He appealed directly to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. He pleaded with him "to come back to the negotiating table," saying that every day that passes without negotiations is a day wasted.

On matters of security, which Netanyahu characterized as his highest priority, he was urgent and firm. The security focus would be twofold: Iran and the instability unfolding throughout the region.

The boisterously campaigned but peacefully conducted election in Israel – like the 18 preceding ones – is the most eloquent refutation to the apartheid lie spread by haters of the Jewish state.

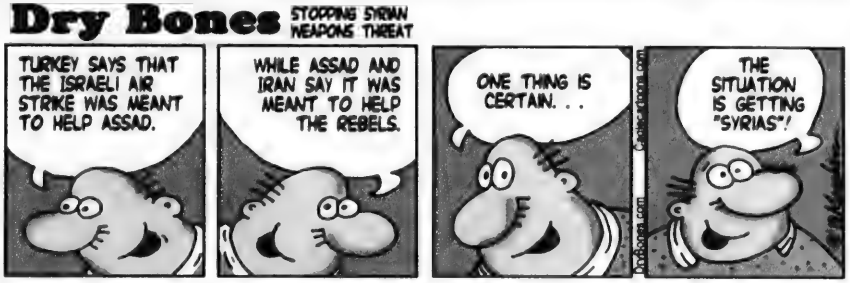
All Israeli citizens who are eligible voters had the right to cast ballots. Exactly 67.79 per cent did. Nearly 60 per cent of all eligible Arab Israelis did so, too. The three Arab parties won 9.3 per cent of the votes cast, translating to 11 members in the 19th Knesset.

We hope and pray the new Knesset will be a legislature of mutual respect and dignity and that the next Israeli government – yet to be formed – will be one of wisdom, courage and compassion.

And we hope no day in the search for peace will be wasted.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israeli president Chaim Herzog challenged U.S. Jewish leaders who criticized Israel's policy of beatings and curfews to quell rioting in the West Bank and Gaza. "The question I must ask is what do you see as the alternative?" he said after the American Jewish Congress and voices such as film director Woody Allen publicly and sharply criticized Israel.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We must help Syrians

The crisis in Syria remains a challenge for western powers. The United States and Russia must work together to resolve it. If the outside world intervenes militarily, it will be in the middle of a vast ethnic conflict. If it doesn't intervene, it will be caught in a humanitarian tragedy.

As Jews living in the post-Holocaust era, we ought to be sympathetic to the powerless in war-torn countries. Yes, even with enemies of Israel – as I once heard an Israeli army captain say to his troops in the Golan in the 1970s. Can you tell the difference between an Israeli baby crying out of hunger and/or pain and a distressed Syrian child? We know the answer, yet we do nothing to assist those innocent victims in Syria today. It's shameful what we close our eyes to. The world closed its eyes to us, our relatives in Europe during World War II. The Syrian crisis is a test of our character and values in the West, and yes, the Jewish community worldwide. Compassion is for those who need our assistance – the young, the elderly, the disabled – regardless where they may be. As Jews, we cannot allow the politics of a global event to dictate whether we provide assistance to a group that is being victimized. We must never forget our history of victimization.

Alan Levy
Brandon, Man.

• • •

Idea for Mideast peace

Using the continuity of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel during the last 2,000 years, it might be possible to convince the Palestinians that at no time did the Jews ever lose title to their homeland, the Land of Israel. Thus the Palestinians might lose the heart to continue the fight against Israel, as the basis for their fight seems to be the idea that Muslims do not let non-Muslims take over Muslim territory. But if the Land of Israel never was Muslim territory, then the possession of the Land of Israel might lose much of its relevance to Muslims. To those who think such a resolution is not possible, one must ask, has such a resolution ever been tried? A lot of other resolutions have been tried with little success. After all, when did the Jews ever surrender or abandon their homeland? Perhaps it's time for something apparently really unusual and different. What, after all, is there to lose with such an approach? It doesn't appear that lives have to be lost on either side with such an approach.

Larry Feldman
Toronto

• • •

Wants help discovering who he is

I am writing this letter out of some frustration that I feel about a situation that I consider unfair and hypocritical.

My maternal grandfather's name was Siegfried Weinberg. He was a German Jew who was born in Germany. I do not know much of his family, but I guess that the Weinbergs had been settled in Germany for many generations. He married a German non-Jew, and my mother and my uncle were born from that union. All was well until the Nazis came to power. So my grandfather took his family to the United States in October 1939 and then on to Canada. There was a lot of prejudice in Canada then, so my grandfather changed his name to avoid this prejudice.

My mother married a non-Jew, so I am one-fourth Jewish. I am proud of my Jewish ancestry. I am trying to learn about the Jewish faith, and I have a Talmud that I am trying to study. I know that under Jewish law, I am not a Jew. But I feel like a Jew. Most of my mother's family in Europe is gone, because they were exterminated. My mother was called names and spit on when she came to Canada because of who she was and that fact that she spoke only German and Yiddish. A lot of Jews will not give me the time of day because "I am not a Jew." I find this attitude unfair and hypocritical. I am just asking for some compassion and help in discovering who I am.

Robert Bateman
P.O. Box 4510
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Passivity not an option as far right rises again

Moshe Kantor
JTA

One of the seminal slogans of the 20th century was the historic refrain "Never again!" This cry that rose from the ashes of the Holocaust was meant to ensure that there would be no repeat of the greatest tragedy in modern European history.

The refrain remains hollow if it remains theoretical verbiage utilized during speeches and ceremonies but lacks any real intent and action.

In recent years, a seemingly long-dormant ideology returned to a semblance of power for the first time since the unconditional surrender of German forces on May 8, 1945. For the first time in well over six decades, political parties that require members to be of "Aryan origin," have full-armed and open-fisted salutes, have logos distinctly resembling the swastika and call for a census of Jews are back in Europe.

These elements are no longer consigned to the beer halls, isolated farm retreats or the margins of European political discourse. They are moving closer and closer to the mainstream.

In fact, this newfound political confidence is reflected in the street, where more and more Jews are being physically and verbally attacked in the open.

The Golden Dawn party in Greece, Jobbik in Hungary and Svoboda in Ukraine are just three examples of European political parties that have moved well beyond the historic far right and still unacceptable discourse of those like Le Pen's National Front in France and the Freedom Party in Austria.

We appear to be entering a new phase in European political history that has extremely worrying parallels with the past. Of course, many will argue that none of these parties currently have great power.

But at what point will their power be too much? It's a question that all decision-makers, opinion-shapers and law enforcement agencies in Europe must ask. Not in a theoretical sense, but in a very real practical sense.

Moshe Kantor

The Jewish people and other minorities who are in the direct line of fire from this maleficent hate have no doubts that this threshold already has passed, and it is having a very real practical effect on the streets. A recent survey found that 63 percent of Hungarians are willing to affirm their antisemitism with no shame.

On Jan. 27, the international community observed International Holocaust Remembrance Day to remember the victims of the Holocaust and learn its lessons. A few days prior, I visited the seat of European governance, the European Parliament, which was the joint recipient of the recent Nobel Prize for Peace, along with other European Union institutions. Along with many others, I lauded the Nobel for the European Union's commitment to peace and its success at unifying a continent that has known so much bloodshed.

However, as Europeans, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels and claim that a lack of war or conflict means that the European Union has succeeded in creating a harmonious and peaceful continent that can prevent future catastrophes.

As the number of Holocaust survivors begins to dwindle, many are witnessing something that would have been unbelievable to them only a few short years ago: the new groups, rapidly increasing in popularity, are emulating and co-opting the policies and ideology of those who murdered their families and brought to them untold suffering.

There are too many Europeans, especially those among its leadership, who remember the death and destruction that follows the Nazi ideology, and we, as Europeans, should do everything we can to rid ourselves of this force that again tries to lay a dark shadow on our continent.

We call on all public figures in Europe – media, cultural or academic – to use their platforms to assist the ridding of this disease. European politicians as a moral mass must adopt stricter legislation proscribing groups that promote hate, discrimination and racism from European political institutions. There must also be a demand for tougher enforcement and punishment, and the strengthening of education toward tolerance.

Some eight decades ago, the National Socialist movement caught many by surprise, and most did not fully comprehend or believe that it would be willing or able to fulfil its genocidal and destructive platform. Living with this dark history in our relatively recent lifetime, we have no similar excuses. We know what this ideology seeks, we know what this racist movement aspires to, and we cannot let it get a foothold again on our continent.

Just as eight decades ago, the Nazi ideology was able to take advantage of a financial recession, we also face similar economic challenges. This is when we must be at our most vigilant. We must beat back the advances of this ideology – not for the victims of the past, but for the possible victims in the future. If we do not, then "Never again!" will remain a hollow term utilized during speeches and ceremonies.

As the prominent Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer said, "Thou shalt not be a victim, thou shalt not be a perpetrator, but, above all, thou shalt not be a bystander."

Moshe Kantor is president of the European Jewish Congress and co-chairman of the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation.

Please see related story on page 26.

Venezuela reportedly spying on Jews

JTA

NEW YORK — Venezuela's secret service, SEBIN, is spying on the country's Jewish community, according to leaked documents said to be from the spy agency.

Last month, *Analisis24*, a right-leaning Argentine news website, released 50 documents attributed to the Venezuelan intelligence agency containing private information on prominent Venezuelan Jews, local Jewish organizations and Israeli diplomats in Latin America. The Anti-Defamation League, among others, believes the documents are authentic based on the wealth of detailed and private information included.

The papers include a dossier on Espacio Anna Frank, a coexistence group in Caracas, with clandestinely taken photos of its offices and private information on its personnel, including their home addresses, passport numbers and recent travel itineraries. It identifies the organization as a "strategic arm of the Israeli intelligence agency in the country," the Mossad, and as a front for "far right-wing Zionists" to recruit agents using "subversive socio-political influence."

Other documents say the local Jewish community has benefited from the "political and military interference" of the United States in the South American country's affairs and accuses certain Venezuelan Jews, such as journalist Abraham Belilty Bittan and former parliamentarian Paulina Gamus, of being foreign agents.

The ADL says the report is deeply troubling and is a further sign of the government of President Hugo Chavez's inveterate bias against Jews.

"It is chilling to read reports that the SEBIN received instructions to carry out clandestine surveillance operations against members of the Jewish community, as described in detail in documents leaked by the Argentinean website *Analisis24*," the ADL said Jan. 30 in a statement. "In a country where the government and some of its followers have publicly accused the Jewish community of disloyalty and where the community's institutions and houses of worship have been attacked, reports of this kind of surveillance add fuel to an already incendiary atmosphere inciting prejudice and hate."

Let's try a different kind of unity

At one time, the slogan for the Combined Jewish Appeal was "We are one."

That line struck me at the time as being, well, a bit disingenuous. Just for one example: the experiences of North American Jews over the past 100 years could not be more different from, say, those of Jews in the former Soviet Union. We lived in peace and democracy, they under hardship and dictatorship. We lived in a world that recognized the freedom to believe, or not, as you pleased. They lived in a world where to enter a place of worship could mean a quick trip to the gulag.

Jean M. Gerber

in Vancouver

If the slogan for the United States dollar is "*E pluribus unum*," "Out of the many, one," ours is the opposite: "Out of the one, many."

We delude ourselves if we keep saying "We are one" and then refuse to realize that we're not – not now, and not in the past.

Israeli Jews are not one. Israel is going through a grave internal crisis, including not only a growing rift between secular and *dati*, but also a battle between Orthodox-Zionist and haredi. Reading about the haredi "Mod[esty] Squad" attacking "immodest" Orthodox Jews on the street in Beit Shemesh makes you wonder if you're reading about Islamist extremism.

Israeli and Diaspora Jews? Israelis are more divided, more nuanced, while the organized Diaspora tends to be hardline, often ignoring other Israeli voices in the centre. As well, those of us in non-Orthodox congregations want our Judaism acknowledged and supported.

North American Jews are not one. What we call modern Orthodoxy has, in its approach to the role of secular education and the role of women, widened the gap between itself and the haredim. The latter see the study of Torah as the only meaningful way to live a Jewish life. Modern Orthodoxy finds itself under pressure, not to say attack, when it articulates its approaches to secular education, role of women, and the "outside" world in general.

We haven't been one since Emancipation in Europe, beginning with the French Revolution and continuing in North America, finally reaching eastward. And even before that, Jews in Europe had different experiences than Jews in Muslim lands.

Ancient Israel? After David and Solomon, it split into two kingdoms, Judah and northern Israel, who fought with each other and with each other's enemies. Go figure. The slogan would not have applied to them at all.

Certainly, Jews who, in the 13th century and beyond, argued that the works of Maimonides should be banned – with sad consequences – were not feeling at one with his philosophy. Jews who tried to get Chassidim arrested by Czarist police were not feeling at one.

Slogans such as "We are one" rely on a Jewish past where we all lived in harmony and goodwill, all prayed in the same shul, all observed the commandments in joy and song. It was a very comfortable past – and totally mythical.

How can we begin to make us one, when we're clearly many?

Why not start with the past? I quote Prof. Tina Loo of the University of British Columbia in *Canada's History* magazine (February/Marach 2013): "Although we use 'history' and 'the past' synonymously, they're totally different things. History isn't chronology or past events; it's *an interpretation, an argument* [my emphasis] about the past. That means it's inherently contentious. It will alienate and inspire – and we should expect and welcome that."

We can't expect to get the present right if we live with a past that's inaccurate. What is that wonderful saying? "The past is a different country. They do things differently there."

When I taught Jewish history, I tried very hard to make it uncertain. There was no inevitable outcome: "They tried to kill us, a miracle occurred, we were saved, let's eat." Jewish history, if it teaches us anything, tells us that we struggled as much among ourselves and between our respective communities as we did resisting the dangers of the outside world.

Now most of us are inside that world, once so forbidding. We have a chance, never before offered us, to enrich both worlds. If some reject that chance, they can certainly give the rest of us the opportunity.

Surely after all these millennia we can live without assuming we are one and respect our differences. It's a different kind of one-ness. Let's give it a try.

Death with dignity

There's a great deal of discussion in the media and cocktail circuit today about the legalization of assisted suicide. The prevalent terminology is "death with dignity."

Once again, we're faced with a moral issue whose parameters are clouded in nomenclature. How one phrases the debate seems especially poignant and persuasive. Is it suicide, or is it a form of murder? Or is it some form of choice that's bound up with a human right to self-determination. These extremes aren't invented for the sake of argument, but are indigenous to the realities of our lives and endings. Our beginnings are so joyous. What about the endings? They can be brutal, and many of us face them in a terrifying vacuum.

The first requirement however, is to avoid the superficial elements that seep into the debate. Many of the requirements for a patient's humane treatment at the end of life are already available. There are all sorts of patient care packages and hospice choices that make those last days or months less intrusive, less full of emergency procedures and hospital healing protocols. Choices are already embedded into our health-care system.

However, to my way of thinking, dying is not laced with dignity. The end of life of someone loved is hostile, painful, dreadful, foul, raw and repulsive. Death violates life, and, therefore, is violent, no matter how much we wish to view it as peaceful. The essence of life is gone and we know not where. We're left with a loss, an eternal emptiness, as the body dissolves into rotting matter. Where is the dignity?

Our tradition continually shouts: choose life. In all its facets, it reaches out for life-sustaining and supporting rituals, education and healing. When it comes to dying, the goal is to fight death, to try all manner of therapies, even to violate the Sabbath in order to heal. So how will Judaism face this new movement to allow patients and their families death choices at the end of a life?

I understand the problem. We now prolong life with all kinds of cures and lifestyles. Yet there are diseases and disabilities that cripple and crush us – some beyond belief and beyond our ability to suffer. Wouldn't it be better, and morally preferable, to allow someone to exit this world knowing that life will soon become intolerable?

How can I watch my wonderful, beautiful mother – my mother who took care of everyone – become a vegetable, a prisoner in her own bed. Yes, I know the horrors and indignities. I also know the impossibility of making the right choice, of assuming to know what to do. I know of the real abuses, of human weakness, of children and other heirs' temptations. The desire may be to inherit or to be free of a burden.

Norma Baumel Joseph

in Montreal

It's way too easy to clothe the argument in the moral high ground of "death with dignity." It's too easy to hide one's own thinking even from oneself. I wish I could do more for Mom. I wish I knew what to do. Three years ago, the doctors told us she had six months to live. I don't pretend to understand. I do know there's no dignity, and I don't pretend to be able to extract any.

Judaism teaches that we must give the dying the basics of life: water, food, that which is necessary to breathe. We don't have to perform extraordinary actions, but we may not starve the patient. On the other hand, we shouldn't prevent death from happening in its natural end of life pattern.

There's a talmudic story of a great rabbi who was dying. His students gathered round his bed, praying with such fervency that his soul could not depart. He suffered. His maid understood. She made a loud, shocking noise, and the prayers stopped. In that moment, his soul took flight. From that story, our legalists learn that we need to allow death to take place when it is time. We have both positions stated. No assisted suicide, but let death take its place. No extraordinary means necessary, but don't starve the person.

The Talmud doesn't pose the question as a moral one with dignity as the goal. Life is the goal. But death is the reality. It has its place. Just don't dignify it.

Arab parties will be shut out of coalition

The process of assembling a coalition government in Israel after a general election is fraught with surprises. One never knows which parties the premier will snub or invite into the cabinet. But one factor never changes.

As Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launches the horse trading that will ultimately determine the composition of Israel's next government, he will likely abide by tradition and refrain from asking any of the three Arab parties in the Knesset – Balad, Hadash and the United Arab List-Ta'al – to join forces with him, even though they hold a fairly respectable number of seats.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

In the time-honoured exercise of coalition building in Israel, every seat generally counts. Yet not a single Israeli prime minister, from David Ben-Gurion to Ariel Sharon, has ever invited an Arab party to sit in government.

Arab politicians have been asked to support this or that policy or initiative. Yitzhak Rabin, for example, relied on Arab parties to pass the second Oslo peace agreement in 1995. But he stopped short of bringing Arab parties into his cabinet, thereby condemning them to perpetual opposition and raising concerns that the Muslim and Christian Arab minority in Israel, comprising 20 per cent of Israel's population, would continue to be marginalized.

These ruminations spring to mind now that Israel's Jan. 22 election has come and gone.

As the election campaign unfolded, one of the issues that bubbled to the surface was whether voter turnout in the Arab community would dip below the all-time low of 53 per cent, which was registered in the 2009 election.

Analysts claimed that a majority of Arabs, worn down and disillusioned by the perception that their grievances are not treated seriously by Jewish decision-makers, would boycott the election.

Haneen Zoabi, an Arab member of the Knesset, spoke to this scenario when she said, "Arabs have stopped believing in the democratic tools at their disposal." What she meant was that Arab voters feel they cannot change the status quo.

Samah Salaime Egbariya, chair of Na'am, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the rights of Arab women in Israel, offered a similar explanation. Arabs, not having been fully integrated into Israeli society, might succumb to despair and stay at home on election day.

Fearing that a boycott would enhance Netanyahu's chances of winning another term, the Arab League's Palestine division issued an unprecedented appeal to Arabs urging them to vote.

Weighing in on this issue, Ahmad Tibi, an Arab Knesset member, told the *New York Times*: "In South Africa, people were killed struggling to have one person, one vote. In Israel, there is discrimination in every part of life – education, infrastructure, employment. In only one thing there is equal rights: the day of the election. One person, one vote. Those who are not participating are shooting their own legs."

As it happened, Tibi's fears were misplaced. Obliterating predictions that the Arab participation rate would sink to unprecedented depths, Arabs turned out in far greater numbers than anticipated, with 56 per cent deciding to vote. (By comparison, the Jewish voting rate was 70 per cent.)

In some Arab towns, particularly Kfar Kassem, Jaljulya and Sakhnin, the turnout was much higher than expected, topping the 70 per cent mark.

Compared to the 1999 election, when 75 per cent of Arab voters showed up to vote, the Arab turnout this year was unimpressive. In hand-wringing commentaries prior to the election, Arab parliamentarians and academics noted that Arabs might have won 20 seats and become the second largest bloc in the Knesset had a lot more voted.

As usual, most Arab voters cast their ballots for Arab parties, with the United Arab List-Ta'al, Hadash and Balad winning 11 Knesset seats, equalling their performance of four years ago.

Few Arabs supported Zionist parties, underscoring the scale of Arab alienation and disaffection from mainstream Israeli society. Nevertheless, a handful of Arabs ran on Jewish tickets. One such candidate, Ayoub Kara, a Druze from the town of Isfiya on Mount Carmel, represented the Likud–Beiteinu party list no less. In Netanyahu's last government, he served as minister for development of the Negev and the Galilee.

Kara, however, is an anomaly.

Arab members of the Knesset, representing a blend of religious, nationalist and communist parties, tend to focus on external issues, principally the Arab-Israeli conflict. When they deal with domestic matters, they usually espouse radical views that are clearly at odds with Jewish Israeli norms.

Zoabi and Tibi illustrate this thesis.

Zoabi (Balad) was a passenger aboard the Turkish ship Mavi Marmara, which was trying to break Israel's naval siege of the Gaza Strip. When it was intercepted by Israeli commandos in the Mediterranean Sea in May 2010, she was detained. Consequently, the Central Elections Committee banned her from running in last month's election. The order was overturned by the Supreme Court, and Zoabi regained her seat.

Haneen Zoabi

Zoabi got into trouble again in 2011 when she called for a third Palestinian uprising in the West Bank. In response, a Jewish MK recommended that she be stripped of her parliamentary immunity.

Tibi (United Arab List-Ta'al), the Knesset's deputy speaker, aroused the ire of some Jewish MKs last April when, on a trip to Ottawa, he called for a boycott of companies and products linked to Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Both Palestinian nationalists, Zoabi and Tibi are animated, in part, by a well-founded belief that Israel's 1.4 million Arab citizens, though equal under the law, are victims of widespread discrimination and racism.

Arabs in Israel are treated unfairly in the allocation of funds for health, education, housing and municipal services, as well as in employment opportunities. In the past, they have endured expropriation of their lands.

In a piece in New York City's *Jewish Week*, Robert Cherry, a member of the UJA-Federation of New York's Taskforce on Arab Citizens of Israel, addressed this issue head on. As he wrote, "Israel can claim to be a full democracy only so long as it treats its Arab minority fairly."

Conditions in the Arab sector have improved markedly since the 1960s. Military rule in Arab towns and villages has been abolished. The infant death rate has dropped significantly. The proportion of Arab students graduating from high school and university has marginally increased. Arabs have been appointed ambassadors in Israel's diplomatic corps, and an Arab justice sits on the Supreme Court. Israel is placing industrial parks in Arab municipalities in a bid to diversify their economies and create jobs.

But across the board, the gap between Jews and Arabs remains yawningly and depressingly wide. Even integrated and successful Arabs who profess loyalty to Israel cannot completely identify with the symbols and narratives of the Jewish state. According to the 2012 Israeli Democracy Index, 44 per cent of Arabs in Israel take pride in their Israeli citizenship, but 20 per cent are "not so proud" and 30 per cent are "not at all proud."

These figures, to some extent at least, explain why only 56 per cent of Israeli Arabs bothered to vote in January's election.

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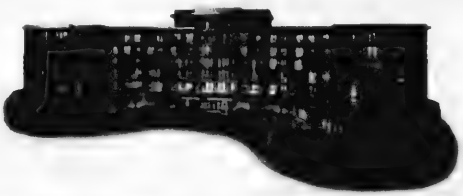

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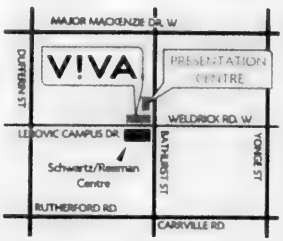

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U.S. has better record

Continued from page 3

Two of the 10 suspects left the country voluntarily, but "to date... not a single one of the eight persons who appealed against the decision has been deported and seven of the eight have since died in Canada." Six others died in the course of proceedings against them.

"I know Canadians hate being compared to Americans, but the fact is that the Nazi war criminals and collaborators (in the countries) are the same," Zuroff said. The United States has a much better record of deporting Nazi war criminals. From 2001 to March 31, 2012, the United States was responsible for 39 of the 99 convictions registered worldwide.

"The results achieved by the Americans clearly underscores the professional excellence and dedication of the (Justice Department) agency and the critical role played by political will in the prosecution of Holocaust perpetrators," the report states.

Zuroff said the centre's "most wanted" list includes several with ties to Canada. Ladislaus Csizsik-Csatary, who left Canada rather than face deportation, currently lives under house arrest in Hungary. He was charged on July 17, 2012, with torturing Jews in the Kosice, Slovakia, ghetto. Csizsik-Csatary served as a senior Hungarian police officer in Kosice, where he allegedly helped organize the deportation of 15,700 Jews to Auschwitz in the spring of 1944.

Another Canadian high on the list of most wanted is Vladimir Katriuk. Katriuk was stripped of his Canadian citizenship in 1999, but in 2007, a Federal Court reinstated it. The Wiesenthal Center says subsequent research by Swedish historian Per Anders Rudling implicates Katriuk personally in war crimes in Belarus. Zuroff said he has forwarded the new information to Canadian authorities but Rudling has not been contacted by Canadian prosecutors.

Contacted by *The CJN*, the Justice Department declined to comment on specific cases. However, department spokesperson Stephen Slesso stated, "Since 1987, the government of Canada has upheld its policy to ensure that this country does not become a safe haven for people involved in war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide... The government remains committed to identifying, preventing entry, locating, apprehending, prosecuting, detaining and removing those individuals who pose a safety and security risk or threat to Canada."

Zuroff, author of *Operation Last Chance*, acknowledged that little time remains to bring Nazi war criminals to justice. It may be that Canadian governments of all political persuasions "never considered this a priority," he said. "And it's possible the Jewish community lost interest and considers it an issue that's going nowhere."

That's an assertion that Shimon Fogel disputes. Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) said bringing Nazis to justice "is a priority for us. It has been for the last three decades."

CIJA did push for a fresh look at the Oberlander case, which led to the revocation of his citizenship, but it is aware of only two other suspects – Katriuk and Wasyl Odynsky – who could be subject to legal actions.

"It's not that the government is not willing to investigate cases. There are no cases," Fogel said. "I think the government is not just implicitly but explicitly committed to this."

"I don't think the government is hesitant or shy to do the right thing about alleged Nazi war criminals. The reality is that in 2013, and each year after, it becomes less likely to find people still living that fit in that category," he said.

Antisemitic graffiti found on yeshiva

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Antisemitic graffiti was found on a Toronto yeshiva late last week.

According to reports, Mishkan HaTorah Yeshiva at 3452 Bathurst St. was defaced some time overnight between Jan. 31 and Feb. 1. When students of the yeshiva arrived on the morning of Feb. 1, they found swastikas spray-painted all over the walls of the building.

It's the second time vandals have attacked the institution.

The school has asked the Toronto Police Service to increase security around the area. The incident is still under police investigation.

Minister for Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney issued a joint statement on Feb. 1 with Minister for Natural Resources Joe Oliver, the MP for the area, denouncing the act.

"We condemn, in the strongest possible terms, this act of hate against a respected educational institution. Any act of vandalism is deplorable, but vandalism directed against a specific religion or race is particularly loathsome and has no place in Canada, a peaceful, pluralistic nation that cherishes freedom of religion and the rule of law," they said.

"We hope that the bigoted cowards responsible for this act of intimidation are caught and punished. Our thoughts and prayers are with the students and staff of the Mishkan HaTorah Yeshiva, the Jewish community in Toronto, and everyone who has been affected by these cowardly acts."

Observant women too lace'em up to learn hockey

Rena Godfrey
Special to The CJN

The women's locker room at Baycrest Arena in Toronto is crowded with hockey bags and sticks.

There's a chatty excitement about as 13 women take off their street clothes, gear up in full hockey attire and hang their sheitels on hooks.

It's a Tuesday morning in January, the temperature is -13 Celsius outside and not much warmer in the rink, but that doesn't stop these determined women from coming out to learn to play hockey.

Channa Merkur plays hockey twice a week.

This is the third season for this all-women's group, a gathering of frum (observant Jews) and non-frum women, along with a token non-Jewish participant, who come together each week to participate in a hockey skills class run by the Avenue Road Hockey Association.

Although most of the women are mothers ranging in age from their 20s to 40s and come from different religious backgrounds, they share a common passion for hockey, as well as a desire to learn new skills, meet new people and have fun.

Their coach, Paulina Jakarsezian, a 22-year-old non-Jewish student who plays hockey for Ryerson University, enjoys working with the group because of their non-competitive and supportive nature.

"Skate, skate, skate, " she smiles in between blowing her whistle.

The puck passes back and forth between orange triangular cones. High fives can be heard above the swish of skates. One skater bumps into another, followed by a row of apologies. Someone falls on the ice, laughing as they hit the ground. Everyone cheers when they get up.

Frum women playing hockey in Toronto is not all that common. Channa Merkur, 40, and a mother of eight, first became interested in the sport while watching her boys play about four years ago.

Born and raised in England, Merkur didn't even know how to skate when she first approached Stacy Toban, the registrar of the Avenue Road Hockey Association, who also plays with this group. Merkur wanted to join an all-women's hockey group, but was disappointed when she learned that the coach was a man.

Merkur, however, is not one to give up easily and helped connect Toban with a female coach. Merkur also wanted to attract Orthodox Jewish women to the hockey program and sent out a message to an online social networking group (meetngreet@yahoo.com) that caters to more than 1,000 observant Jewish women in Toronto.

Six women enthusiastically responded, and although the group has more than doubled in size since then, Merkur wishes more frum women would join in on the fun.

After their first hockey class, Merkur and a friend fondly described their experience as "the best thing they ever did."

Merkur was especially happy to play hockey with people outside of her immediate community.

"It was fun, it was novel, it was outrageous. In my mind we introduced something new to the frum community, because we were breaking down negative frum stereotypes that I assume some secular people have," she said.

Many of the other women interviewed echoed Merkur's sentiment. They also talked about hockey being a much-needed break in their everyday lives.

Merkur agrees. " I consider my hockey time [to be] my sanity saver, my untouchable time."

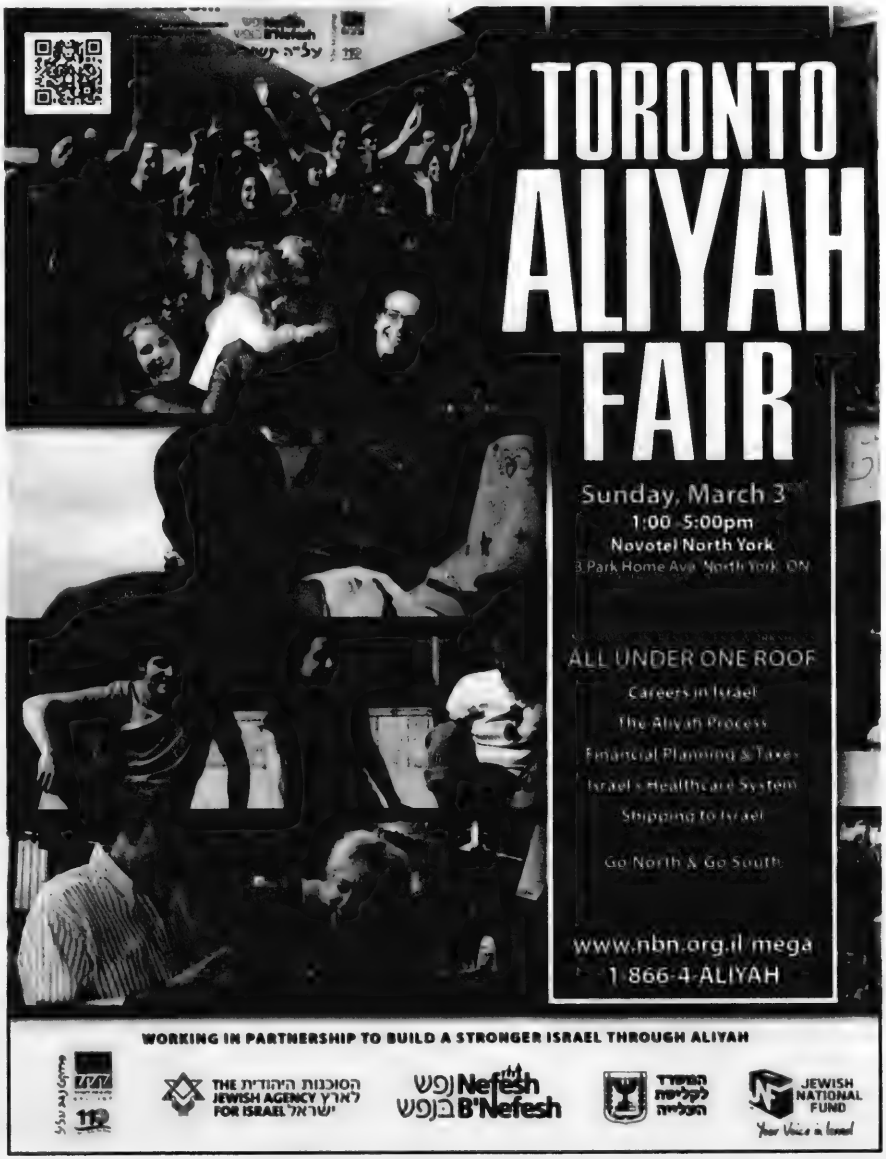
Lindy Wolff, 31, one of the frum participants, her bandana peeking out of her helmet, proudly shows off her hockey outfit once she's finished dressing. She is only in her third week of classes, but says her family is thrilled that she's playing.

Carole Freeman, 47, originally signed up for the exercise, but she especially loves the camaraderie and the feeling of being part of a group.

She also enjoys going out for lunch with all the girls sometimes after hockey, sharing their common stories about children, families and life.

A woman lacing up her hockey skates nearby agrees that playing hockey in this mixed environment has given her the opportunity to break out of her insular social circle.

"Because I grew up in a sheltered community, it's nice to know different people and learn about their different sides. When it comes to playing hockey, we talk about our kids, we talk about their schools, family vacations and kids that were up all night. We're really all the same."



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Kashruth Council drops appeal in labour case

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

TORONTO — The Kashruth Council of Canada has withdrawn its appeal to the Ontario Labour Relations Board of an order to pay 57 mashgichim $10,000 after it was found to have violated provincial employment standards.

On Aug. 16, a Ministry of Labour inspection found that during five months in 2011, the Kashruth Council, which oversees the COR kosher symbol, violated the Employment Standards Act (ESA) in its payment of 57 present and former mashgichim (kashrut supervisors) with respect to minimum wage, vacation time, work hours and public holidays.

The ministry ordered the council to pay about $10,000 in total to the mashgichim, which it did.

But last fall, the Kashruth Council alleged that the $10,000 was the result of "calculation errors" by ministry inspectors and that it intended to appeal the ruling. It also denied that it had strong-armed the 57 mashgichim to sign a settlement after accusations of coercion, based on leaked emails, were published on an anti-haredi blog.

Ultimately, 54 of the 57 mashgichim signed releases waiving their share of the $10,000 that was being held in trust by the Ministry of Labour. The remaining three, who were entitled to a total of $140.92, were paid in December, and the balance – more than $9,800 – was returned to the Kashruth Council.

"[The Kashruth Council] is not taking anything out of the pockets of any of our mashgichim," said spokesperson Richard Rabkin. "The funds are simply being returned by the ministry as is the normal course in matters such as these."

In light of the settlement, the council withdrew its appeal on Jan. 4.

"[T]he only matter... left from the audit were the compliance orders, [which] simply restate the requirements that the employer comply with... the ESA," Rabkin said.

But he added: "Because the Kashruth Council of Canada is compliant with the ESA, there was no reason to proceed to challenge the orders," Rabkin said after the money was returned.

The council bases this claim on the report of one ministry inspector in an earlier case who found that its compensation went above and beyond the ESA.

The agency employs some 100 mashgichim, most of them part time.

Allegations of labour irregularities first came to light in a November 2011 case concerning former mashgiach Morley Rand in which the Kashruth Council initially claimed mashgichim were holders of "religious office" and, therefore, not subject to the ESA.

However, the Ministry of Labour ruled against the Kashruth Council, saying that Rand was entitled to overtime. Final details of Rand's case are scheduled to be heard this spring.

Following the inspection and audit last August, the ministry demanded that the council bring its practices in line with the ESA by Sept. 21, 2012.

But the Kashruth Council, which is self-funded and receives no financial support from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said there would be no change to its pay policies.

"[O]ur executive met to discuss this very issue and voted that if our policies have been upheld by the Ministry of Labour... and our policy is more favourable for over 95 per cent of our mashgichim, then we should continue these practices," Rabkin said.

The Kashruth Council pays overtime for any shift longer than 10 hours, plus twice-yearly holiday bonuses, while the ESA calls for overtime to kick in after a 44-hour work week.

Since 2011, COR has continually asserted its support of front-line employees.

"Despite the challenges," Rabkin said in an earlier statement, referring to the possibility of future investigations, "[the Kashruth Council] will continue to do the right thing... we are confident that we will continue to successfully pass muster with the ministry."

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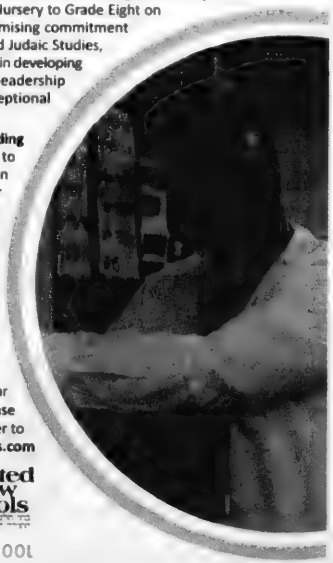

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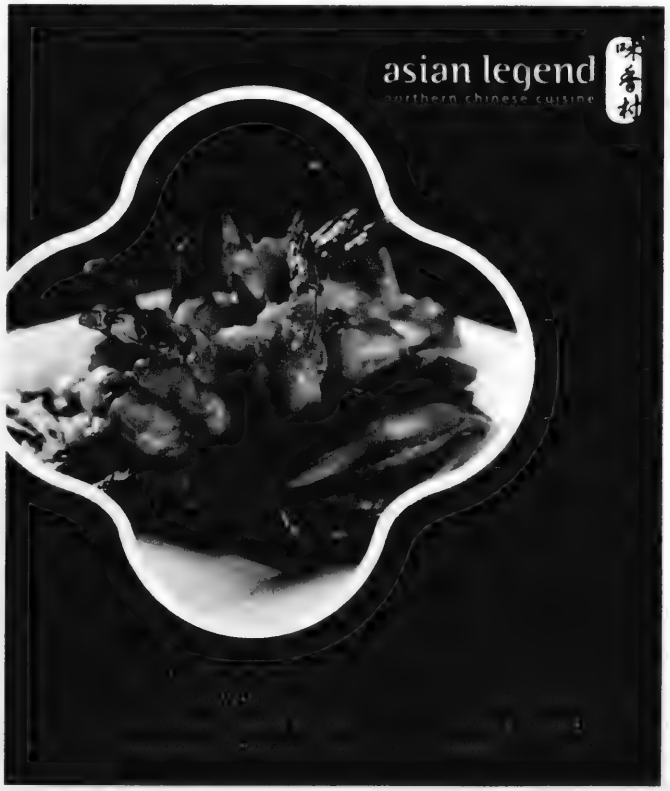

Charitable group helps with kids' medical costs

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Aaron's Apple, a charitable organization started by a child to help other children, funds the high costs of medication and treatment for families whose children suffer from chronic illnesses.

At the age of seven, Aaron Maresky was determined to make a difference in the lives of other children, while simultaneously battling his own chronic illness.

"I was taken to the hospital with terrible stomachaches, and I stayed in the hospital for two weeks," Aaron, now 11, said. "I had many, many needles and tubes put everywhere. Sometimes I was really sore and it was very scary. I missed three months of school and I lost 30 pounds.

Aaron Maresky and his mom, Mandy, co-founders of Aaron's Apple.

"The doctors told my parents that I had Crohn's disease, and I would require a very special medicine given to me by infusion every six to eight weeks. My medicine costs more than $40,000 every year," explained Aaron, co-founder of Aaron's Apple.

For many children suffering from chronic conditions such as Crohn's, ulcerative colitis, rheumatoid arthritis and pediatric cancer, the only option to ease their suffering comes in the form of high-priced medical treatments. Aaron's family had a plan that covered his medication, but he recognized the harsh reality that not everyone was so fortunate, and that many parents had no choice but to stand by helplessly and watch their child suffer.

"Every time Aaron went to the hospital, he would give a donation, in efforts to help make another child feel better. From this grew the charity called Aaron's Apple," said Aaron's mother, Mandy Maresky, co-founder of the charity.

Aaron's Apple will host its second annual Caring to the Core Gala on March 2, at The Warehouse Event Venue in Downsview Park, 35 Carl Hill Rd., where guests will enjoy New York-inspired cuisine and entertainment, including celebrity appearances and a silent auction.

"Aaron's Apple's tag line is, 'Take a bite and change a life.' New York is also known as the Big Apple. We want people to 'Take a bite out of the Big Apple' and change a life," Mandy said.

The charity is run solely by volunteers and works with the Hospital for Sick Children. "Everyone involved is dedicated to helping as many children and families as possible. Aaron's Apple has recently been approached by physicians of children suffering with cancer to assist with the costs of their chemotherapy treatments," Mandy said.

Having raised more than $220,000 to date, Aaron's Apple continues to help families cope with overwhelming medical costs. The inability to afford the required treatment for their child places enormous stress on them.

To purchase tickets for the gala, go to caringtothecore.com.

For more information about Aaron's Apple, go to www.aaronsapple.com.

Arab, Jewish panellists 'share frank opinions'

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

How can Canadian Arabs and Jews meet to mend historic divides? How can they reduce conflict and improve understanding between their communities? How can they counter hatred and promote human rights for those living here and in Israel?

These complex and pressing questions were addressed at a recent event sponsored by JSpaceCanada, a Jewish pro-peace group, and the Canadian Arab/Jewish Leadership Dialogue Group.

The program, titled "Courageous Conversations: Arab Jewish Relations in Canada," was held Jan. 24 at the Barbara Frum Library.

Moderated by journalist Ralph Benmergui, who identifies as a Jew born in an Arab country (Morocco), the discussion featured four representatives of the dialogue group.

The panellists included Raja Khouri and Karen Mock, the founders and co-chairs of the organization, and longtime members Maurice Green and Jareer Khouri.

Mock is the former executive director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada, Raja Khouri is president of the Canadian Arab Institute, Green is a labour, and human rights lawyer, and Jareer Khouri is a senior adviser to the attorney general.

From left, Maurice Green, Raja Khouri, Ralph Benmergui, Karen Mock and Jareer Khouri *(Cara Edell photo)*

The evening was part of an effort to promote peaceful dialogue, co-operation and a greater understanding of Arab and Jewish culture, politics and history. The dialogue group contends that neither community benefits from tensions, violent conflicts, public accusations and racist exchanges.

"It is important for progressive Jews and other Canadians to hear about our dialogue experience over the last several years. Our dialogue group presents a model for our mainstream communities to build relationships and positively relate to each other," Raja Khouri said.

"We share frank, honest and direct opinions," Jareer Khouri said. "For the Arab and Jewish communities to change their perspectives, both sides must have the courage to voice different opinions."

The dialogue group, founded in 2007, was created in response to the increasing hostility between Jewish and Arab communities, which was mainly demonstrated in conflicts on university campuses. Mock said the idea for the group was born when she was chair of the attorney general's Hate Crimes Community Working Group in 2006.

Raja Khouri, former president of the Canadian Arab Federation, and Bernie Farber, then executive director of the Canadian Jewish Congress, were both members of that committee. They began talking to each other to defuse conflict situations between their two communities and work out practical resolutions to meet both Arab and Jewish needs.

While the panellists agreed on the importance of being able to put themselves in each other's shoes, they also discussed the challenges of achieving understanding and respect for the other's point of view.

Raja Khouri said there's "a perceived orthodoxy" on each side and any person who speaks outside the orthodoxy is endangering themselves.

"I've been attacked by some in my own community, as have Jewish members whose opinions don't mirror the so-called mainstream. In terms of the honesty of the discussion, it takes a long time to get there, and it took us approximately two years to build the foundation of trust before branching out to others."

Jareer Khouri said most Canadian Arabs believe the Jewish community is "monochromatic" when it comes to Israel.

"We have to move away from the impression that no criticism of Israeli policy is possible in the Jewish community, and we must also dispel the impression that Arabs don't criticize events and policies in the Arab world."

Mock said reasonable criticism of Israeli government policy is not antisemitic. She also clarified the meaning of Zionism as "Jewish self-determination."

Green said the result of shared respect and trust each is "honest conversation through which people come to appreciate why you hold the views you do."

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Shul donates renowned chazzan's music collection

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Toronto's Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue has donated the bulk of Cantor Louis Danto's music collection to Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, which is home to one of the largest Jewish music collections in the United States.

The world-renowned cantor, who died in 2010, served the congregation for 25 years. He was known for his bel canto style of singing, a demanding 17th-century technique that he studied in Rome after World War II.

A native of Suwalki, Poland, Danto survived the war because he was sent to Minsk in 1939 at age 10 to study music on a scholarship. He and his fellow students were relocated when Germany invaded Russia.

Cantor Louis Danto

Over a five-decade career, Danto amassed a vast amount of sheet music, records, tapes, CDs and books. The cantor and his wife, Rouhama, donated the collection to the synagogue in 2005.

But according to Beth Emeth's executive director, Pearl Grundland, the Jewish music archive at the 50-year-old university can provide "proper exposure and accessibility to people around the world" that the synagogue can't match.

> *'Cantor Danto was a concert artist, so his library represents a performance library'*

"The cantor was really beloved by Beth Emeth and all the members," Grundland said. "There's a lot of emotional attachment to the collection, but I would say anyone involved in this decision made the decision believing that this would be the best long-term home for the collection."

Aaron Kula, the FAU libraries' director of music performance and education, said he has known the Danto family since he was a child, because his father was also a prominent cantor.

"We always kept in touch to see if there was any possibility they might interested in gifting the collection to Florida Atlantic University," he said, adding that the school's music archive grew in large part because of the number of donations from Jews who had moved to South Florida after retiring.

The Danto collection includes books of sheet music dating back to the 1800s and cantorial, Yiddish and opera recordings that are "almost considered priceless," Grundland said.

Danto travelled the world to perform in concerts, and wherever he went, he looked for special music, Rouhama Danto said. "What he really wanted was for it to be used."

Kula told *The CJN* that Danto built "an amazing world-class library… [with] sheet music in virtually every European language that exists, and there's a wealth of one-of-a-kind cantorial music [in manuscript form] that he used. Those pieces are not published. They were handwritten… and they must date back to at least the early 19th century."

Kula called the collection "a major acquisition" for the library.

As of last week, the 97 boxes of music were still waiting to be shipped from Toronto, pending resolution of customs details, Kula said.

There are at least 10,000 pieces of sheet music, according to Kula. Each of them will be put into a searchable database, although the time frames for completing the work depend on how many people will be involved.

As well, recorded music will go to the university's recorded sound archives.

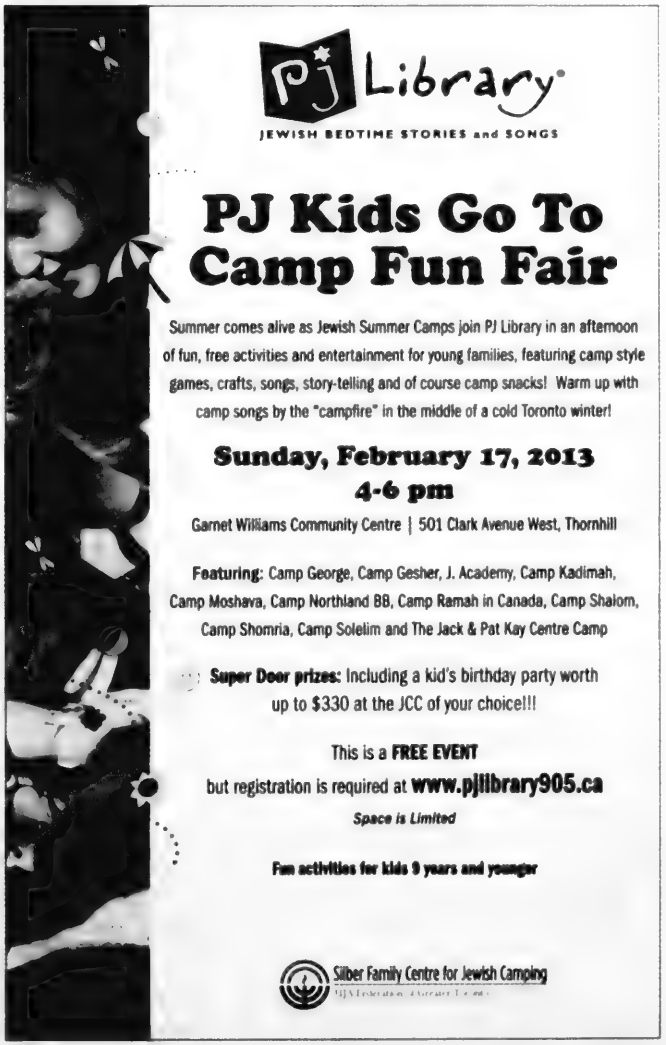
"I think the goal of the Danto collection will be not only to preserve it, but to use it in performances," said Kula, whose responsibilities include creating performance events using the university's print music collections.

"Cantor Danto was not only a cantor but a concert artist, so his library represents a performance library," Kula said.

"I'm very excited about getting it. I can't wait for the boxes to arrive."

The university's print music collection is online at http://www.library.fau.edu/depts/spc/spc/printmusic.htm, and its Judaica sound archives can be found at http://faujsa.fau.edu/jsa/home.php.

SPECIAL VISITOR: Israel's consul general in general in Toronto, DJ Schneeweiss, visited last week with Grade 1 students at Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School. Pictured with him are Ofri Magen, Mielle Kadosh-Redinger, Talia Granovsky-Sand and Rachel Sommer.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Eating Jewish is sweet at Shoresh

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

Did you ever wonder why honey is kosher? We dip apples in honey for Rosh Hashanah, and many have seen the custom of placing dots of honey on alef-bet letters at a boy's *upsherin* (first haircut). Yet, no other product from a non-kosher animal is itself kosher. Even the rabbis of the Talmud, Rabbi David Pardo said at the second annual Shoresh Food Conference on Jan. 27, wondered why it was allowed.

Rabbi Pardo spoke alongside beekeeper Fred Davis in a session called, "Oy Rabbi, Bees Make My Honey!" The Talmud gives two answers, he said. First, the bees aren't manufacturing the honey from their bodies – they just transport and store it, and second, because the Torah expressly permits it – in a lengthy, indirect way.

Rabbi Pardo of The Houase, a meeting place for Jewish students and young professionals, pointed out that the one reference we might think offers blanket permission to eat honey – the verses that call Israel a "land of milk and honey" – actually refer to sticky-sweet date nectar.

Davis, known in Toronto foodie circles for his hive share program, offering super-local honey to chefs like Jamie Kennedy, enlivened talmudic passages with vivid descriptions of how bees bring nectar back to the hive to "sell" it to others, offering directions via an intricate figure-8 "waggle dance." Honey itself never goes bad, Davis said. Honey was once found, still fresh, in an ancient Egyptian tomb.

"It's not the stings that bother me so much," Davis said of his career as the urban beeman. "It's shlepping around town" to check on hives atop the Four Seasons Centre, Casa Loma and other out-of-the-way locations to comply with safety provisions of the Ontario Bees Act.

Conference organizers Risa Alyson Cooper, left, and Sabrina Malach

"Beekeeping is not a money-making enterprise," he said. But on top of the many advantages of local eating, the truth is, it's "wonderful, wonderful honey." While supermarket honey is uniformly golden year-round, his clients experience two seasons of honey: a light, fresh, floral taste in the spring, and a dark, bold honey that resembles a stout beer around Labour Day.

As part of a conference discussing almost anything to do with Jews and food, Davis called his work, "doing a little bit of tikkun olam… to 'green' our city a bit more."

Shoresh executive director Risa Alyson Cooper opened the all-day conference at the Miles Nadal JCC, which drew well over 100 participants, by asking, "What does it mean to eat Jewishly?" Can we call something kosher if it contains genetically modified organisms (GMOs), if it's served in Styrofoam, if animals have suffered or if pesticides were used? "Should we expand the definition of 'kosher'?"

Shoresh Jewish Environmental Programs runs educational activities and grassroots initiatives rooted in Jewish social and environmental values, including the Kavanah Garden at the Lebovic Community Campus, community-supported agriculture sites around the GTA, and Bela Farm, a donated 92-acre property in Hillsburgh, Ont., which, when complete, will be the largest Jewish educational farm in North America. In November 2012, Shoresh was awarded a $100,000 Joshua Venture Fellowship for its work toward creating "just, vibrant and inclusive Jewish communities."

Last year's conference – inspired by the Hazon Food Conference in the United States – may have been the first, but it's nothing new for the Jewish People, Cooper said. "Our community has been exploring its relationship with food for 5,000 years."

Rabbi Ed Elkin of Toronto's First Narayever Congregation, who spoke on "Not Your Bubbie's Brisket: Biblical Meat Eating," said the lively sessions proved that "a lot of our people really care," and that the community has a responsibility to help them "connect with… texts and traditions in a joyful Jewish way."

Other sessions touched on Israeli politics, the biblical "*migrash*" (open land) as a model for an urban greenbelt, planning a vegan Passover seder, the history of Toronto's Jewish food, farming, kosher certification and many more issues.

Following a vegan lunch, participants socialized between sessions while voting for the "quintessential" Jewish food (challah won, hands-down, over entries like cholent, pickled herring and shakshouka) and bidding in a silent auction to raise funds for Shoresh.

And at the end of the long day, even exhausted participants rallied for breakout sessions ranging from "Gluten Free Anonymous" to "Kosher Local Organic Meat" and "Starting a Jewish Farm." A farm that might even contain bees, as Bela Farm will someday.

Oh – and the reason honey doesn't spoil, Davis said, is that the bees fan the watery nectar until it reaches a moisture content of exactly 18 per cent, too low for bacteria and fungi to survive. Local gluten-free baker Sara Lapell picked up on the Jewishness of the number 18. "That must be what makes it kosher," she joked.

Another bee miracle? With over 20,000 known kinds of bees (only a few make enough honey for us to share), Davis said a new species was discovered in 2010 just around the corner from the conference, on Bloor Street. There may be nothing new under the sun, but there's always something new to learn at a Jewish food conference.

For more information about hive shares for 2013, visit freddsbees.com. To learn more about Shoresh and its initiatives, visit shoresh.ca.

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Parking not included

Addressing questions about eating meat

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

Even meat-eaters have a hard time dealing with the "yuck factor" of the biblical sacrifices, said Rabbi Ed Elkin at the Shoresh Food Conference on Jan. 27.

Whether meat eating even has a place in an ideal world is up for debate, Rabbi Elkin said.

Some say sacrifice and slaughter, intricately connected in the Torah, were a concession to our frail human natures. Maimonides, Rabbi Elkin said, believed the sacrificial system was God's way of "weaning" the Jews off idolatry and channelling them toward the one true God. Other commentators differed, including Nachmanides, who said sacrifices were part of the divine plan all along: "God puts in the Torah what God wants us to do. Maybe we don't understand, but it's an ideal."

To read entire story, please go to cjnews.com

Temple Sinai takes part in URJ networking project

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

For Nathalie Rethazy, a co-chair of Temple Sinai Congregation's young families committee, it's important to show her children that she's "involved, and that the synagogue is our community, our second home."

Rethazy – along with Temple Sinai's Rabbi Daniel Mikelberg, Rabbi Ilan Emanuel and nursery school principal Bibi Golberg – travelled to Chicago recently to take part in a three-day conference run by the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), the umbrella group for 900 congregations.

Rabbi Daniel Mikelberg

Temple Sinai, a 1,700-family congregation, was the only Canadian synagogue among 32 at the late January conference, where the URJ launched three of its new "communities of practice," or congregational networking groups.

The groups, which will collaborate for the next 18 months, revolve around

- emerging young adult initiatives
- successfully engaging young families, and
- pursuing excellence through the congregations' early childhood centres.

Rethazy said it was a "phenomenal" weekend and that, in the next year and a half, she hopes to connect with people she met at the conference and pick up new ideas that she can use at the temple to engage young families.

"It was lovely to come together as a whole and know that we're all in the same boat," she said.

Recent young family initiatives at Temple Sinai include tot Shabbats, home Havdalahs and mitzvah days.

Golberg and Rabbi Emanuel, who is in charge of young families programming at the temple, work with the same cohort of congregants.

Golberg noted that many parents "are looking for Jewish opportunities rather than just secular choices." As well, she added, parents want to be more involved in their children's Jewish education.

"We're looking at how we can reach these young families," she said.

"This is the first step, where we are going to be working together creating some new programs that will come out of this."

According to a URJ news release, participating congregations will work together to "push the boundaries of existing congregational efforts, experiment in their own communities, receive peer support and guidance," as well as learn from URJ faculty.

At the conference, the organization's president, Rabbi Rick Jacobs, worked with each group, and URJ faculty member Amy Asin led workshops on experimentation and evaluation.

Rabbi Mikelberg, who is in the "young adult" community of practice group and works with congregants in their 20s and 30s, said that "the hope is to join together congregations across North America focusing on similar challenges. The idea is that we can help each other to grow and blossom and embrace this challenge."

He said Temple Sinai's programming for young adults focuses on social action, a social aspect, and an "entrepreneurial" series that offers mentoring opportunities.

"It's all about synagogue life and community life, and supporting one another."

One change in recent years, Rabbi Mikelberg said, is that synagogue life is no longer contained within the walls of the temple. Most of his programs are off site.

Although the other synagogues represented at the conference are American, those in big cities share similar challenges and opportunities, Rabbi Mikelberg noted.

"It's definitely very exciting. I now feel I have colleagues across North America, with whom I can brainstorm."

ONE FAMILY FUND'S MIX-IT-UP: From left are Shira Benson, Jordan Benson and Pam Foreht, chairs of One Family Fund's Mix-It-Up event, held on Jan. 29. This evening of hors d'oeuvres and entertainment raised more than $20,000 for the organization that helps send children affected by terror to summer camps in Israel. ***[Hudson Taylor photo]***

Why only talk about your grandkids? prossermanjcc

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1:00pm film - followed by discussion
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דער יידיש ווינקל

דזשערי קעין

וועגן יידיש*

חבֿר יוסף דוב סאָלאָוויטשיק

איך בין נישט קיין יידישיסט, וועלכער גלויבט, אַז דאָס לשון אַליין שטעלט זיך פֿאָר אַן אַבסאָלוטן ווערט. אָבער אַ גמראַייד בין איך יאָ, און איך וויס אַז הייליקייט און אַבסאָלוטקייט זענען נישט אַלעמאָלם אידענטיש.

די הלכה האָט פֿאַרמולירט צוויי אידעען פֿון קדושה: 1) גופֿי קדושה; 2) תשמישׁ־קדושה. זי האָט אָפּגעפּסקנט, אַז מען דאַרף ראַטעוון פֿון אַ שרפֿה שבת, נישט נאָר די ספֿר־תורה נאָר אויך דאָס מענטעלע, אין וועלכן זי איז איינגעוויקלט; נישט בלויז די תּפֿילין, נאָר אויך דעם זעקל, אין וועלכן זיי ליגן.

ממילא, יידיש וויי אַ שפֿראַך, נישט קוקנדיק וואָס זי איז נישט פֿאַרעכנט צווישן גופֿה־קדושה, געהערט זיכער צום קלאַס תּשמישׁ־קדושה, וועלכע זענען אויך הייליק און וועלכע מען מוז באַשיצן מיט אַלע כוחות. איז דען דאָ אַ שענערער "תיק", אין וועלכן די הייליקסטע ספֿר־תורה זענען געווען און זענען נאָך אַלץ איינגעוויקלט, ווי יידיש? אויף דער שפֿראַך האָט דער רמ"א, דער מהרש"ל, דער וויילנער גאון, ר' חיים וואָלאָזשינער און אַנדערע גדולי־ישראל מיט זייערע תּלמידים תּורה געלערנט. אויף יידיש האָט דער בעל־שמטוב, דער מעזריטשער מגיד און דער אַלטער רבי — סודות פֿון מעשׂה־בראשית דערקלערט. אויף פּשוטן מאַמע־לשון האָבן די יידישע מאַסן זייער אַמונה פּשוטע ליבע און טרייסטפֿט אויסגעדריקט.

עד־היום זאָגן גרויס ראָש־אישבות זייערע שיעורים אויף יידיש. אַזאַ "תיק" איז זיכער הייליק, כאָטש זיין קדושה איז נישט קיין אַבסאָלוטע, נאָר אַן אָפּגעלייטענע, און דעם גדר פֿון תשמישׁי קדושה. אויפֿהאַלטן דעם "טיק" איז אַ גרויסער זכות!

("דער טאָג" 14 פֿעברואַר 1961)

פֿון דזשערי קעין: עמעצער האָט מיר נעפֿרעגט – פֿאַרוואָס יידיש? ניט איין איבער כּיין ענטפֿער דורך די יערהונדערט פֿון הרב יוסף דוב סאָלאָוויטשיק, אַ פֿרומער ענטפֿער אָבער אַ יערטפּולער ענטפֿער, אפֿילו פֿאַר די פֿון אונדז וואָס דענען נישט פֿרום.

אויב איר האָט נעראַקנען וועגן אונדזער ווינקל שרייבט דורך פּאָסט אדער בליץ-פּאָסט: info@cjnews.com

Tikkun olam at heart of service day

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Just because you aren't good at fundraising doesn't mean you can't take part in community service.

That's the idea behind Mitzvah Day International, a British organization that co-ordinates events around the world on a predetermined day each year. Alan Simons is in the early stages of planning a Mitzvah Day to take place in Canada on Nov. 17, at the same time as the international activities this year.

"For me, it's not always about raising money," he said. "I'm not very good at that, I admit, and I think there are many other people who are rather uncomfortable or not good at it."

He said Mitzvah Day Canada was inspired by the many British Jewish organizations that devote resources to projects for young adults, usually aged 20 to 35. Mitzvah Day has incarnations all over the world, for example, in Australia, Turkey and the United States.

Mitzvah Day International describes itself as a Jewish-led day of social action with a mission to reduce hardship and poverty, help the environment and bring a little hands-on joy without fundraising.

Simons, who is originally from England but lives in Toronto, said he has heard several of his English friends talk about Mitzvah Day. He quickly realized it was a perfect project for someone like him, who loves to help the community through action.

The event has become so big in England that politicians including British Prime Minister David Cameron and London mayor Boris Johnson have supported it, urging people of all backgrounds to join in the efforts.

British MP Eric Pickles, left, and Mitzvah Day International founder Laura Marks, right, plant a hedge with volunteers at a local park on Mitzvah Day 2012 in England.

Although the event is Jewish-led, based on the idea of tikkun olam (repairing the world), Simons, 72, said he hopes there will be other groups joining in the effort to help the community.

Some of the mitzvot might include cleaning up a park or cemetery, bringing children into a retirement home to give joy to seniors, or holding a book drive. The options are endless, but the most important part is that the individual participants or groups decide on their own what they would like to do, Simons said.

While this will be the first official Mitzvah Day in Canada, it isn't the first time individuals and groups have run something similar. Many organizations have led their own Mitzvah Day projects, but it has never been a co-ordinated effort, which is what he hopes will happen.

Although the planning has just begun, Simons said he's received a lot of positive feedback from community members, synagogues and more.

"I'm hesitating to be over-optimistic but I'm very delighted in terms of what's happening now," he said.

The next step is to form a planning committee to determine a strategy, he said. He knows it will take some work to get the project off the ground, but it has to start somewhere.

"One can't sit back and just wait for things to happen," he said. "You have to try and see where you go."

For more information, or to get involved in Mitzvah Day Canada, visit mitzvahdaycanada.ca.

A key difference in Jewish divorce law

There is little that can divide a family like money. It's depressing to think of families torn apart fighting over inheritances, business deals or child succession roles. Throw in a divorce and extreme wealth and watch the fighting escalate.

The Ontario Superior Court recently overturned a spousal support waiver signed by Christine McCain, daughter-in-law of the founder of the McCain food empire, arguing that it was signed under duress. The court felt that a $5-million settlement, especially after 30 years of marriage, was just too little, considering the approximately $500 million net worth of her ex-husband.

While such huge amounts of money were unknown in talmudic times, our sages had to deal with similar issues, albeit on a smaller scale. In the world they lived in, it was the husband's duty to support the wife, and there was no obligation or expectation that the wife would work outside the home. A father would support his daughter until marriage, at which point obligations of support were handed over to the husband. If the husband came from a wealthier family, he was obligated to raise his wife's standard of living to his own. And if he was poorer, he would have to work hard, as he was not allowed to lower her standard of living from that which she was accustomed to. In other words a wife's standard of living could only rise because of marriage.

This obligation of support was absolute. There was no obligation or expectation that the wife should work to help out. She could choose to do so, and in such cases, the money she earned would go into the "family pot" and would not be specifically hers. Nonetheless, a woman could opt out of the system and keep all the money for herself, provided she waive her right to support from her husband.

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

In the unfortunate situation of divorce, Jewish law looked to ensure that neither spouse would have to deal with the other as they rebuilt their lives. The Torah term for a divorce – popularly known as a *get* – is actually *sefer kreitot*, meaning a book of separation. Unlike the western system of monthly alimony – forcing people who may (sadly) hate each other to deal with one another – Jewish law opted for a one-time payment, allowing spouses to sever all ties if they were so inclined. The amount was specified in the ketubah, likely the first prenuptial agreement.

While a minimum amount was required for all, higher amounts could and would be demanded from those able to afford more. Furthermore the assets that a woman brought into a marriage were enumerated in the ketubah, ensuring she could claim those assets upon divorce.

The women would then move back to her parental home or live on her own, but had no further claims on her husband's assets. If and when she remarried, her second husband would be responsible for her support. To the best of my knowledge, a woman would not be entitled to claim a higher settlement solely because her husband made millions. Of course, Jewish law does not work in a vacuum and would need to take into account the law of the land.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

'Biography' of Jacob emphasizes payback for bad behaviour

Views & Reviews

Martin Lockshin

Yale University Press has been publishing biographies of famous Jews, in a series called "Jewish Lives." The latest release is *Jacob: Unexpected Patriarch*, by Yair Zakovitch, emeritus professor of Bible at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As Zakovitch himself admits in the introduction, it would be a stretch to call this book a biography. It is actually a close literary reading of texts in the Bible, some that are clearly about Jacob and others that Zakovitch argues are about Jacob, even though they do not appear to be. The book was published in Hebrew two years ago and has now been translated into very readable English by the author's wife, Valerie Zakovitch.

Zakovitch describes the Jacob story as akin to a theatre production in which we can watch the action unfold but we don't really know what the characters are thinking. He notes, as have many scholars of biblical narrative, that the narrator rarely tells us how to assess the characters.

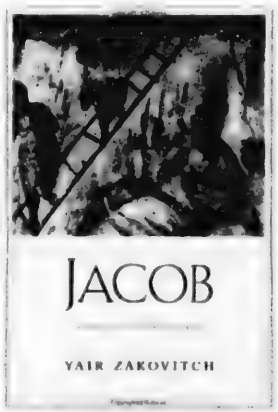
Still, Zakovitch states that "the story of Jacob's life was not put into writing simply to recount what occurred." The most constant message that he identifies in the Jacob stories is retribution for misbehaviour. In the middle chapters in Genesis, Jacob purloins his older brother's birthright and blessing. Zakovitch argues that the Bible gives Jacob his comeuppance for these deceptions again and again.

The idea that Jacob's actions come back to haunt him later in life is not new. It can be traced back to early midrashim and was later made famous by Martin Buber and by Nechama Leibowitz. Recall that Jacob, at his mother's instigation, fooled his blind father, Isaac, into thinking that he was Esau in order to get the blessing meant for the firstborn son. He carried out the deception by taking his brother's clothes without permission and putting goat skins on his arms to make them feel more like those of the hairier Esau (Genesis 27). Later Jacob's future father-in-law, Laban, fooled Jacob by having him marry his older daughter, Leah, when Jacob was hoping once again to put the younger, Rachel, before the older (Genesis 29). And later yet, Jacob's sons deceived him tit for tat by stealing the clothes of their younger brother, Joseph, and covering those clothes with the blood of a goat (Genesis 37).

But aside from these well-known examples, Zakovitch finds a series of other payback stories about Jacob, which to the best of my knowledge are his own insights.

In Genesis 26, Esau comes home from the hunt one day and is famished. He asks Jacob for some food, which Jacob will provide only in exchange for Esau's birthright. Esau complies, relinquishing his birthright and receiving bread and stew in return from Jacob. Zakovitch notes a series of striking similarities between this story about two brothers and the story of the conflict between the two sisters, Rachel and Leah, now both married to Jacob.

One day Leah, the older one, had some mandrakes that Rachel wanted. Leah was willing to give them to her sister only as part of an exchange: Jacob had been scheduled to spend the coming night with Rachel and instead he would spend it with Leah. The deal was, so to speak, consummated (Genesis 30). Zakovitch notes a number of inversions here. In the Esau-Jacob story, the older brother asks the younger for something; in the Leah-Rachel story the roles are reversed. In both stories, the one with the goods asks for something more important in return and gets it. And as Zakovitch puts it, "Jacob, the slick negotiator in the first story, is transformed into negotiated goods in the second." He adds, pointedly: "When it comes to women, whether mothers or wives, Jacob's passive acquiescence can be assumed."



In another example, when Jacob ran away from Canaan, fearing for his life after fooling his brother, the two specific items that he prayed for from God were "bread to eat and clothing to wear" (Genesis 28). We recall that Jacob had used precisely those two items – bread to buy Esau's birthright, and clothing to steal his blessing. Later in the Torah, notes Zakovitch, roles are again reversed. In Numbers 20, Jacob's descendants, the Israelites, are on their way to Canaan from Egypt and they need a favour from their "cousins," the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. The Edomites refuse to sell them water, which Zakovitch sees as more payback for the saga of the coerced purchase of the birthright.

Readers who like such literary analysis of the Bible ought to enjoy this book. But they would have to either know the narratives of Genesis very well or read the book with a Bible open at the same time. Readers should also be warned: Zakovitch indulges in some unconvincing biblical criticism, often not supported by texts. For example, he is convinced that the story told in Genesis 38 of the birth of Tamar's twin sons, Peretz and Zerach, was once a different version of the story of the birth of Esau and Jacob, yet he presents no convincing evidence for this conclusion. His attempts to explain many texts as reflecting political tensions in Israel in the period of the First Temple (the approximate time of the composition of these stories, according to Zakovitch) impressed me as speculative at best.

Furthermore, there is barely a positive word about Jacob in the whole book. I found this hard to swallow. My guess is that many people might be irritated by the consistent belittling of our patriarch. A more balanced and more uplifting treatment of the life of Jacob, also filled with literary insights, is Rabbi Shmuel Klitsner's *Wrestling Jacob: Deception, Identity and Freudian Slips in Genesis* (reviewed in these pages in 2007). Other scholars who have offered sensitive literary insights (without the attitude) include Robert Alter, Yoel bin Nun, Leon Kass, and David Silber.

But fans of the Bible who are willing to overlook, or are not troubled by, the issues that I raise will find delight in Zakovitch's skilled literary analysis of the Bible.

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Engagement strategy brings Jewish life to students

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Hillel's newest intern program has introduced 645 Toronto students to 20 Jewish programs and organizations in the past five years, said Stephanie Krasman, assistant executive director for Hillel of Greater Toronto.

The goal of the Campus Entrepreneurs Initiative, she said, is to create meaningful Jewish relationships with students on campus. Typically, an intern would approach Jewish students and invite them out for meaningful Jewish conversation usually over coffee.

"There's an authentic Jewish element to this work," Krasman said. "Ultimately, it is about making an enduring commitment about Jewish life."

Through the program, which has been established in three cities across North America, Hillel hires interns who work solely to engage Jewish students on campus and introduce them to Jewish programs and organizations, Krasman explained.

Miriam Borden, a University of Toronto student, is one of eight "engagement" interns with Hillel of Greater Toronto. She described herself as a perfect example of the program's results.

"I came from 12 years of Jewish day school and a year at yeshiva, and I do Jewish studies, so I figured I don't really need Hillel," she said, adding that there were all the "usual turnoffs," such as the perception of Hillel being too cliquey or uncool.

She said she vowed never to set foot in Hillel and succeeded until one of the interns last year sought her out. She agreed to go for coffee with the intern and discussed her interests, which included slam poetry. After a few meetings, the intern suggested she plan her own slam-poetry storytelling event.

"So here I was, involved in planning a Hillel event," Borden said, laughing. "I'm proof that it works."

To find these Jewish students, the interns often use Facebook first to look for people they know and then look at their friends' networks, said Borden, who describes social media as the best outreach tool.

To learn networking techniques, interns attend a weeklong Hillel training course in St. Louis, Mo. During the school year, they meet 20 times for two-hour leadership training and development seminars. "Last year this meant the interns were exposed to 66 hours of leadership development and 30 hours of Jewish learning," Krasman said.

In total, she said she contacted about 30 people last semester, and estimated that 20 responded, and she "engaged" with 15. Most of these people were found on Facebook, although being a Jewish studies major means Borden can also find many people in class.

From left are Jaclyn Parker, Anna Gol, Miriam Borden and Alyssa Moses, all former or current Hillel engagement interns.

"It's amazing when you really see how far you can really expand your network," she said. "It's like a rubber band where it could be smaller or bigger as you like it."

The peer-to-peer approach is what makes the program such a success, Krasman said. "When students think back to their Jewish experience on campus, they'll think of the intern they had this amazing relationship with."

Interns are instructed to be upfront about their mission. From the very first message, they let people know they are part of Hillel and are interested in speaking to them about ways to get involved in Jewish life.

Borden described the approach as a bit of a delicate dance, given that she's approaching people who may not always identify as Jewish all the time, and she's asking to speak to them about their religion.

The program is helping her prepare for her future career, which she hopes will be in Jewish education. "[The internship] brings me in touch with what's going on in the emergent Jewish community, the young people who are the next generation of people sending their kids to Jewish schools and camps," she said.

While Borden said the program has been very beneficial to her, she won't participate again next year. Hillel limits interns to one school year in order to refresh their network, giving them a chance to reach a new group of Jewish students each year.

However, she said she will leave the program with a large network of professional connections.

"I know important names now – important people in Jewish community work. And they might know my name, which is pretty cool," she said.

DID THE LOSS OF A FAMILY MEMBER BEFORE JUNE 14, 2010, RESULT IN A CORONER'S INVESTIGATION AND AUTOPSY?

IF SO, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT AN ORGAN WAS RETAINED AFTER AUTOPSY.

When deaths are investigated, pathologists sometimes retain an organ for further testing to help determine the cause of death.

In the past, family members may not have been notified that an organ had been retained. Now, families are routinely notified when an organ is retained and their wishes are sought regarding how the organ should be treated after testing is complete.

The Ontario Forensic Pathology Service is reaching out to anyone for whom the loss of a family member before June 14, 2010, resulted in a coroner's investigation and autopsy.

Immediate family members and personal representatives (i.e. those responsible for administering an estate) are invited to contact us to find out if an organ was retained in their case.

Some organs that were initially retained are no longer available due to the practices of the time. Others are still at the hospital or forensic pathology unit where the autopsy took place. In those cases, affected families and personal representatives may now request that the organ be sent to a funeral home for cremation or burial. Expenses will be covered by the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service and the Office of the Chief Coroner.

Remaining organs retained before June 14, 2010, will be respectfully disposed of beginning on June 14, 2013. This is in accordance with regulations made under the *Coroners Act*.

A toll-free telephone line has been set up. Contact us at 1-855-564-4122 or visit our website at Ontario.ca/OrganRetention.

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Brooklyn College department to co-sponsor BDS event

JTA

NEW YORK — The political science department at Brooklyn College reportedly will be an official co-sponsor for an event in support of the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement.

The Feb. 7 event will feature Omar Barghouti, the co-founder of the BDS movement, and Judith Butler, a Jewish academic who openly speaks sympathetically about Hamas and Hezbollah, according to the *New York Daily News*, which wrote an opinion piece decrying the event.

Barghouti has compared Israelis to Nazis, according to the newspaper.

A representative from the college, however, said the event does not demonstrate that the department endorses the BDS movement, which advocates the boycott of Israeli products, but that the "department's support is simply for providing a forum for discussion and debate about the topic. Nothing else is implied."

The primary host of the event is the Brooklyn College Students for Justice in Palestine, a group that says it is aimed at "helping end Israeli apartheid and the illegal occupation of Palestine."

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of New York strongly condemned the college's decision to lend its name to the event, writing to JTA that "while we vigorously defend academic freedom, we believe that these freedoms do not extend to faculty and academic bodies exploiting their association with the university to enhance their biased and hateful agenda."

The JCRC called on the political science department to remove its name from the event.

Harvard Law Professor Alan Dershowitz has referred to the BDS movement as one of the most "immoral, illegal and despicable concepts around academia today."

Herzog Hospital to display kids' artwork

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

More than 150 winners of Canadian Friends of Herzog Hospital's latest awareness campaign, the Windows to the World – Kids Helping Kids – children's art competition, were honoured at a recent awards ceremony.

Some 700 people from across Canada attended the ceremony held at LeParc Conference and Banquet Centre in Concord, Ont., on Jan. 27.

About 13,000 children and teens, aged four to 19, submitted artwork for the competition from schools and camps in nine provinces and the Yukon Territories. Some of the art was submitted independently.

A panel of seven judges, including well-known Canadian artists, selected 177 winners from the submissions, based on the artist's age, use of colour, composition, artistic skill, message and creative design. The winning entries came from Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Ontario – and even one came from a Canadian citizen living in Romania.

One of the 25 grand prize winners was Li-elle Rapaport, a Grade 8 student at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School in Toronto. She won with a picture based on the theme "dazzling dream." The 25 grand prize-winning pictures will be displayed in the children's respiratory unit of the Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem.

"When I found out the art was for a children's respiratory wing, I thought of bubbles filled with good air, full of hope and colour and happy things," Li-elle said. "Each bubble, like each child, is unique. I hope my bubbles will make the children happy."

Rhonda Wolfond, the project development director for the initiative, "partnered the Woodbridge Art School & Gallery with the Canadian Friends of Herzog Hospital.

"The initiative was structured to introduce charitable and community values to children and to demonstrate to them that, through participation, they can make a difference to the global community," she said.

Noa Daniel, a teacher at Leo Baeck Day School's north campus, said he introduced the program to his school "because it was a natural fit, a wonderful program for a great cause. Besides building bridges, we were building a community and comfort for children in need through artistic expression."

Seven posters were created from the winning submissions. In addition, there were 14 Platinum Honour Awards and two educational scholarships to the Woodbridge Art School. In addition, the judges selected one picture from each poster for the categories Best Message (also won by Li-elle) Best Creative Design, Best Use of Colour, Special Effects Award and Artistic Skill Award.

The winning pictures that are not going to the hospital will be displayed in seniors homes, schools, shelters, medical offices, banks and public venues across Canada.

The awards ceremony included a silent auction with an opportunity to purchase the winning posters. Guests who wished to view the award ceremony and winning art as a keepsake could purchase a video produced by Richard Saunders and Raisyl Mandel of Redstone Pictures, who were also recipients of an award for philanthropy.

Li-elle Rapaport, a Grade 8 student at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School, is one of the 25 grand prize winners of the Windows to the World art competition.

[Susan Minuk photo]

Student interns developed and implemented the awareness campaign. "Once it started to grow, it exploded," said intern Jenna Himelfarb.

Upon completion of Herzog Hospital's new respiratory unit in 2013 – to be housed in the Samson Medical Pavilion, which is currently under construction – international youth ambassador Madeleine Venn-Mitchell, along with Himelfarb, will go to Israel with the winning pictures.

"Thanks to the Windows to the World initiative, beautiful artwork will decorate each room in the new children's respiratory unit," said Dr. Yehezkel Caine, director general of the Herzog Hospital.

For a list of the winning artists, go to www.woodbridgeartschool.com.

Mazel Tov מזל טוב

Max & Fanny Sitzer are thrilled to announce the birth of their great-granddaughter, Demi Jordyn, on Dec. 22, to proud parents Stefanie & Ryan Shear.

Mazel tov Benjamin Jacov on your third birthday on Jan. 8. With love from your parents Dimi & Ronny Ushky and family.

Isla Jasmine joined our family Oct. 30. Congratulations to parents Elliot Steele & Elana Skop, and grandparents Joyce & Michael Steele, Corinne & Leslie Skop.

Michelle & Jason Outmezguine welcomed Zoey Hannah on Nov. 15. Grandparents, Ilana & Danny Topp, Ellen & Bob Outmezguine, and great-grandmother Heddy Hoflich.

Eilat and Noam welcomed Dalia, Jan. 13. Parents Maya & Jody Goldwasser, grandparents Irit & Asher Lepkin, Margaret & Abie Goldwasser, great-grandparents Lilo & Kurt Pfeffermann.

Daniel & Karen Rubin welcome Zachary Eli, born Dec. 17. Grandparents, Danny & Ilana Topp, David & Sheryl Rubin. Great-grandparents Bernie & Norma Rubin, Lila Lerner.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

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Deadline reminder: Feb. 11 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 21 and Feb. 15 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 28. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 7

LEMBA JEWS OF ZIMBABWE
Modreck Zvakavapano Maeresera discusses Zimbabwe's Lemba Jewish community, in a satellite broadcast from New York, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. $10/$15.

BROADWAY TO HOLLYWOOD
Sheldon Glass discusses "Jewish Artists and Moguls from Broadway to Hollywood," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

MEGILLAT ESTHER
Rabbi Menachem Leibtag takes a closer look at Megillat Esther, 7:30 p.m., Or Chaim Yeshiva. 416-633-5770.

Friday, Feb. 8

JEWISH GENEALOGY
Les Kelman discusses "My Continuing Search for Roots and How You Can Search for Yours," 7:30 p.m., Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 18 Wynford Dr. 416-385-3910.

FAMILY SHABBAT
Temple Kol Ami holds a family Shabbat service, 6:30 p.m. 905-709-2620.

Saturday, Feb. 9

ALL-AGES SHABBAT
Danforth Jewish Circle holds an intergenerational Shabbat service, 10 a.m. Eastminster Sanctuary, 310 Danforth Ave.

HAVDALAH ON ICE
Join Beth Tikvah Synagogue at Canlan Ice Sports, York University, for skating and Havdalah, 7:30 p.m. RSVP sigal@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

TORAH STUDY
Bracha Feder leads the Torah class at Beth Tikvah Synagogue this morning.

WOMEN'S ROSH CHODESH
Celebrate Rosh Chodesh, 8:30 p.m., the Chai Centre. info@thechaicentre.com.

THE CEMETERY CLUB
Congregation Darchei Noam shows the award-winning documentary *The Cemetery Club*, 7:30 p.m., 864 Sheppard Ave. W. $5.

Sunday, Feb. 10

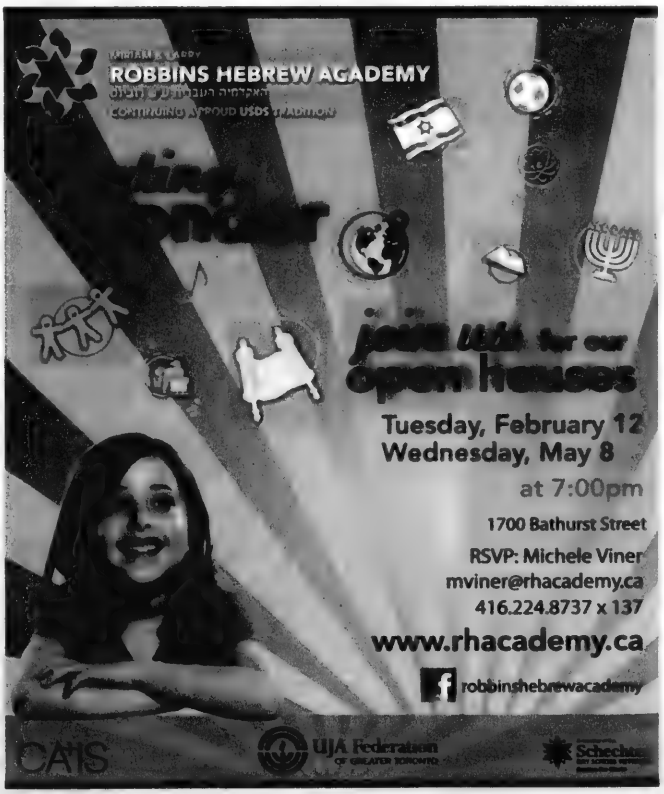
ISRAEL ON CAMPUSES
Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs speaker on "The Battle for Israel on University Campuses," B'nai Shalom Congregation, 10 a.m., Oakville. www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

RESPONSES TO SUFFERING
Sherri Wise discusses "Men & Women: Responding to Suffering Alone and Together," 8 p.m., Westmount Shul, 10 Disera Dr., Unit 250, Thornhill. office@westmountshul.com.

FREE HEBREW COURSE
Beth Emeth Synagogue offers a free Hebrew reading course starting today, 9:15 a.m. Call 416-633-3838.

THE PEOPLE AND THE BOOK
Torah in Motion presents "A Closer Look at Tanach," 9:30 a.m.-

Continued on page 25



Continued from page 24

4 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 416-633-5770; www.torahinmotion.org.

PLAY OR LEARN MAH-JONG

Shoshana chapter of Canadian Hadassah presents an afternoon to play or learn to play mah-jong, 1:30 p.m., Earl Bales Community Centre. $36. For tickets, call 416-630-8373.

Monday, Feb. 11

PURIM PARTY

The Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired holds a Purim party, 7 p.m., at the Prosserman JCC. Call **Bess**, 905-508-2892.

ELDER CARE

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner discusses issues in elder care, 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim.

Tuesday, Feb. 12

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

The movie *Mr. Warmth: The Don Rickles Project* is shown at Beth Tikvah, 2 p.m. $5.

Wednesday, Feb. 13

NEW TO TWO

A program for babies and toddlers (up to age 2) and an adult is offered at Shaar Shalom, Wednesdays 10 a.m. Call 905-889-4975 to register.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Understanding the Christian Concepts of Trinity and Satan," 8 p.m., Beth Torah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Feb. 14

LOAVES OF LOVE

Chabad of Markham holds a challah-baking workshop. $10, girls under 16 admitted free. RSVP 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

Other News

VENDORS WANTED

Vendors wanted for a March 3 market, 15 Hove St. Proceeds to B'nai Brith programs and Uptown Chabad. Call **Sandy**, 416-631-8261, or sandygord@gmail.com.

PURIM WITH JEWISH JAZZ

Friends of Yiddish present "A Freleykhen Purim with Jewish Jazz," featuring **Jordan Klapman, Sharon Smith** Feb. 17, 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah. RSVP **Sandy**, yiddish18@yahoo.ca or 416-458-1440, by Feb. 13.

SURVIVORS VIDEOS

To commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Jan. 27, 2013, March of the Living Canada uploaded video accounts by survivors about liberation. To view the videos, go to www.marchoftheliving.org.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Act to End Violence Against Women is seeking volunteers to provide emotional support to women who have experienced violence. Training will be provided. Call 905-695-5372 or info@acttoendvaw.org. Knitters (and donations of wool) are also needed to make mittens for children.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group. Starts Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Successful Step-parenting: A 6-session group for couples in blended families. Starts Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 22

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, Feb. 13. Membership registration now open for 2013.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Feb. 12, **Rachel Levin** discusses "Frida & Diego: Artists and Lovers," 10 a.m. Feb. 14, **Judy Weiss** discusses "Beating Those Midwinter Blues," 1:30 p.m.

Wagman Centre Entertainers are in rehearsal for their new production and looking for men who love to sing, dance and entertain. Call **J. Ross**, 416-733-0580.

New Horizons for Seniors is a discussion group meeting at Beth Tzedec Synagogue, Feb. 11 and March 11, 1:30 p.m.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155, **Jordan Klapman** discusses composers and performs Oscar-winning songs, Feb. 14, 1:30 p.m. Positive-aging group discussion series with **Phyllis Flen** starts March 5.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Concert with Judy and David on Family Day, Feb. 18. Call ext. 4235.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Purim Carnival and Circus Show, Feb. 24, 10:30 a.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Opera with **Iain Scott** runs Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Feb. 7, *Aida*.

Red Cross babysitters course, Feb. 10, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., for children 11 and older.

Film lectures with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Art Appreciation with **Osnat Lippa**, "The Impressionists," Feb. 12-March 5.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Woody Allen** Feb.11, 7-9 p.m.

Jewish Immigrant Writing in America, with **Sharoni Sibony,** Feb. 7-28, 7 p.m., Ext. 154.

How-to Purim. Learn blessings, stories and recipes for the holiday. Feb. 10, 9:30 a.m., Ext. 277. Purim Lunch and Learn, Feb. 15, noon.

Clive Lawton discusses "What Are Jews For?" Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m.

Jessica Stuart and the Spectrum house band present a concert, Love, Loneliness and the Spaces Between, Feb. 13, 8 p.m., Al Green Theatre. Tickets, 410/$15 www.algreentheatre.ca.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers, Feb. 25-April 29.

Register now for the MNJCC Theatre Lab, March 7-May 30. Develop skills while rehearsing pieces from new Jewish theatre.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Paintings by **Irit Epstein** on display in the gallery until Feb. 18.

Awakening the Voice, Sounding the Soul: Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**, Jan. 23-June 26, 7:30-9 p.m., twice monthly. $10 drop-in or $80 for the series. Info: music@mnjcc.org.

The Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Celebrate family day with karate, basketball, computer, clay and printmaking workshops and more. Feb. 18, 1-5 p.m.

Red Cross babysitting class for children 11 and older, March 12, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Call ext. 3028.

Eleanor Silverberg discusses "Caring for An Adult with a Chronic Mental Health or Brain Disorder," Feb. 17, 10 a.m.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3025.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

Canada warns Hungarian Roma not to seek asylum

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Canada is taking a proactive role in dissuading Hungarian and Roma asylum-seekers from choosing it as a place of refuge.

A month-long $13,000 billboard, bus-shelter and radio ad campaign by the Canadian embassy in Budapest targeting the industrial city of Miskolc – home to the largest Roma population in Hungary – is advising would-be applicants to Canada that the immigration system here has changed and they best be aware of the fact.

The announcements, which began on Jan. 16, read as follows:

"An announcement from the Government of Canada. To deter abuse, Canada's refugee system has changed. People with unfounded claims will be sent home faster. Learn more: www.cic.gc.ca/change."

(Translated from Hungarian. See accompanying photo.)

Jason Kenney, Canada's minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, has long proclaimed that Hungarian Roma have been abusing Canada's immigration system for years.

A billboard in Miskolc, Hungary, announces changes to Canada's immigration policies.

In 2008, after visa restrictions were lifted, a new wave of Hungarian Roma began seeking refuge in Canada.

In early 2012, Kenney characterized most of the Roma claims as "bogus" and pushed for immigration reform after a spike in Hungarian asylum seekers in 2011.

According to the ministry, Hungary was Canada's No. 1 source country for asylum claims in 2011, with more than 4,400 applicants.

Canada's immigration laws changed in 2012 with the passage of Bill C-31, the Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act.

Hungary was put on the government's designated country of origin list (DCO) late last year. Canada considers DCO-designated states to be democratic and as having institutions and laws to assist and provide protection for minorities.

Alexis Pavelich, press secretary for Kenney, said in an email that Canada continues to "take pride in the compassion" of its asylum system.

"We continue to resettle more genuine refugees than almost any other country in the world. In fact, our government is increasing the number of refugees Canada resettles by 20 per cent," Pavelich wrote. "But Canadians have no tolerance for those who abuse our system and seek to take unfair advantage of our country at great expense to taxpayers.

"To date, less than $3,000 has been spent on this public awareness campaign. A total of $13,000 has been budgeted, but a total cost will not be known until the campaign is completed. This cost is significantly less than the average of $30,000 it costs Canadian taxpayers per bogus asylum claim. Accordingly, every single unfounded claim that we can prevent from being made as a result of this public notice returns real savings for hard-working taxpayers."

The Canadian Roma community took exception to the government's campaign in Hungary last week, saying it was motivated by stereotypes and racism and did not take into account the reasons Roma want to flee the EU-member state.

Panning the government's information campaign, Gina Csanyi-Robah, executive director of Toronto's Roma Community Centre and chief spokesperson of the Canadian Roma community, accused Canada of condoning continuing human rights abuses by far-right Hungarian nationalists against her people.

Listing Hungary as a DCO doesn't take into account the rising xenophobia and antisemitism taking hold there, she said.

Members of the nationalist Hungarian opposition Jobbik party have recently made overt statements against Roma and Jews, while its paramilitary offshoots have gone on marches to verbally and physically attack both Roma and Jews in recent years.

"What the Canadian government continues to do in Hungary in its efforts to discourage Roma to seek asylum in Canada is absolutely wrong," Csanyi-Robah said. "It… encourages the continued shaming and hatred directed at the [Roma] community for 'ruining Hungary's good name' and is genuinely interfering into the refugee asylum process by making Canada appear as a country to not seek safety in. When will this barrage of insulting, unjust behaviour ever end? When in our history as a country has the Canadian government ever engaged in such activities?"

Kenney's office noted that in 2009, it engaged in "a similar public notice campaign" for residents of Mexico and the Czech Republic.

In February and March 2001 the ministry also ran a four-week anti-fraud campaign both domestically and abroad "against crooked immigration consultants and marriage fraud." It featured TV and Internet ads, announcements in Canadian airports and on flights, and ads in "mainstream and ethnic print" media targeting potential immigrants from the Philippines, India, and China, Citizenship and Immigration Canada said.

In a Jan. 16 story on hvg.hu – Hungary's leading online economic and political magazine – Miskolc Mayor Kriza Ákos was quoted saying he was "outraged" at Canada's campaign and that his city would forbid any Roma refugees returned by Canada from finding housing or apartments if they had sold or given up their homes in order to seek asylum.

Akos said he's asked the Canadian embassy why his city was targeted for the campaign, but has not received a satisfactory answer. The ministry told *The CJN* it focused its messaging on Miskolc because it "has been the No. 1 source area in Hungary for asylum claims in Canada."

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Anna Elek	Jan 18/13	484 Avenue Road
Molly Lewkowicz	Jan 17/13	77 Willowbrook Road
Monica Sadler	Jan 17/13	20 Wickstead Way
Ida Gould	Jan 17/13	60 Tilson Road
Mary Zimmerman	Jan 19/13	546 Steeles Avenue, W.
Molly Berman	Jan 21/13	122 Angus Glen Blvd.
Dr. Gerald Baker	Jan 21/13	355 St. Clair Ave. W.
Earle Iverson	Jan 22/13	89 Skymark Drive.
Norman Green	Jan 23/13	54 Foxbar Road,
Sam Gelman	Jan 24/13	18 Newcastle Cresent
Shirley Gold	Jan 22/13	55 Carscadden Drive,
Steve Winter	Jan 26/13	9800 Yonge Street
Fannie (Faye) Corbin	Jan 25/13	525 Chaplin Crescent,
Pauline Atkins	Jan 28/13	306 Finch Avenue, East
Julia Markowitz	Jan 26/13	1166 Bay Street
Alvin Rosenberg	Jan 25/13	67 Clarendon Avenue
Faye Seltzer	Jan 26/13	1 Lunau Lane
Lewis Frank	Jan 26/13	866 Sheppard Ave. West

HEBREW BASIC

Chaim Weinberg	Jan 19/13	100 Canyon Avenue,

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Jardanovski, Boris	Jan. 16/13	Private
Briskine, Efim	Jan. 17/13	Private
Shlyubsky, Shlyoma	Jan. 17/13	Private
Korotkov, Vasily	Jan. 17/13	
Kazimer, Michael	Jan. 17/13	Private
Bazarsky, Fanya	Jan. 18/13	Private
Applebaum, Mark H.	Jan. 18/13	138 Carlton Rd.
Wolfish, Vera	Jan. 19/13	
Rubinstein, Judith	Jan. 19/13	53 Timberlane Dr.
Jurbin, Morton Peter	Jan. 19/13	
Liverant, Moishe	Jan. 20/13	Private
Arbetman, Mary	Jan. 20/13	Private
Saltowitz, Jessie	Jan. 20/13	55 Ameer Ave.
Sadoway, Mayer	Jan. 20/13	3580 Bathurst St.
Freedman, Morris	Jan. 22/13	15 Macarthur Dr.
Singer, Mary	Jan. 22/13	80 Front St. E.
Goodfellow, Dennis	Jan. 22/13	140 1/2 Beach Ave.
Adler, Edith	Jan. 23/13	11 Townsgate Dr.

Holocaust education award announced

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney has announced the creation of a new award for Canadian Holocaust educators.

Kenney took part in a Jan. 27 memorial candlelighting and wreath-laying event hosted by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem in Toronto as part of International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

His ministry has established a one-time, $5,000 award in 2013 for the middle school or high school teacher who best exemplifies instruction on the historic genocide.

The Award for Excellence in Holocaust Education comes as Canada gets set to chair the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), starting in March and running until it cedes the chair to a new holder in 2014.

Former Liberal MP Mario Silva will be the chairperson during Canada's term.

The award money will be given with the understanding that it "be reinvested in Holocaust education" at the winner's school.

The award winner will be announced at the IHRA Conference – formerly the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research – in Toronto in October.

For details on the nomination process and requirements, visit cic.gc.ca/holocaust-award.

Kingston shul gets new rabbi, goes Conservative

Sam Zimmerman
Special to The CJN

KINGSTON, Ont. — With the official installation of both a new rabbi and a new shul board on Jan. 25, Beth Israel Congregation, Kingston's oldest shul, has completed its transition from an Orthodox synagogue to a Conservative one.

For 14 years, under the leadership of Rabbi Daniel Elkin, the 102-year-old synagogue maintained an active and engaged community, said Richard Kizell, Beth Israel's treasurer as well as a longtime member.

However, after Rabbi Elkin retired in 2012, congregants decided the time had come for a change.

"Our community has changed in terms of its philosophy and demographic over the years," said Michael Springer, the newly installed president of Beth Israel.

"In the beginning, our shul was made up of immigrants, primarily Ashkenazi, who weren't necessarily Orthodox, but believed in a strong Orthodox ritual. [But] over the last 30 or 40 years, most of the congregants had begun to align with the Conservative movement. Certainly, that's the case today."

The change in religious affiliation better suits the needs of the synagogue's members, such as their desire for more liberal and egalitarian values, Kizell said.

Many young Jewish families who have recently come to Kingston have voiced some of these ideas, he added.

"I think seating was the No. 1 issue. There were more and more people that had quit our synagogue because they found separate seating offensive to them," he said. "There were always people that wanted more women's participation in the synagogue, and over time, that desire grew."

Indeed, there has been a complete change in women's roles and participation in Beth Israel's liturgy, such as counting women as part of a minyan and allowing them to be have Torah aliyot.

Women are encouraged to participate in the congregation's religious and spiritual services, said the shul's new spiritual leader, Rabbi Shalom Plotkin.

Springer said the transition to a Conservative synagogue has been very well received by a majority of the Kingston Jewish community, which numbers about 1,100 people.

"Since this transition, we haven't looked back," said Rabbi Plotkin, who arrived in July. "We've had a minyan every single weekend, every Shabbat, and we're proud of that. People are coming to read, to pray, and to sing together, and also to learn Torah together."

Not surprisingly, the recent change has not been well received by everyone, and the synagogue has lost some members as a result, while others are at odds with the transition, but remain members because they can still connect with the shul's programming, Springer said.

Rabbi Shalom Plotkin, Kingston's Beth Israel Congregation's new rabbi ***(Barry Kaplan photo)***

But he stressed that members can expect great things under Rabbi Plotkin's leadership.

By drawing on significant experience from previous pulpits in the southern and eastern United States, Rabbi Plotkin said he hopes to bring new energy and members into the growing congregation, which had 142 member families as recently as 2009.

After completing his degree in ancient history and business management at the University of Maryland, Rabbi Plotkin received his ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

He said he and his wife, Elise, and his two daughters, Hannah and Elyana, have received a warm welcome from the Beth Torah congregation and the Kingston Jewish community.

"The families and members of the synagogue have invited us into their homes," he said.

Alongside his responsibilities at Beth Israel, Rabbi Plotkin has become involved in many parts of the Kingston community, particularly with staff and student leaders of Hillel at Queen's University, building on the relationship Rabbi Elkin established.

"One of the most significant changes apart from the transition of the synagogue has been that the Hillel at Queen's has grown exponentially," Rabbi Plotkin said. "There seems to be a connection between some of the students and the local Jewish community, and I'd like to see even more connection."

The relationship between Hillel and the shul is mutually beneficial, said Josh Freedman, president of Queen's Hillel.

"Beth Israel offers us the infrastructure to cater to the needs of Jewish students. Moreover, we try to advertise to their events as much as possible in an attempt to foster a broader sense of community," he said.

Both Springer and Rabbi Plotkin said they're optimistic about the future of Beth Israel.

"Over the next 100 years, I'd like to see us strengthen our ties to Israel, and also, strengthen our ties within the community," Rabbi Plotkin said. "My vision is to build community and bring people together. I'd like to see the synagogue meet as many of the spiritual needs of the members as we can."

Observant Jew elected to mayor's office

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — He's the first kippah-wearing Jew to become mayor of a Montreal borough – the city's largest – and the job lasts only another nine months.

But Lionel Perez is still intent on making a real difference in Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG).

Perez was acclaimed as interim mayor of Côte-des-Neiges-NDG two months ago, when Michael Applebaum left to become the city's interim mayor after Gerald Tremblay resigned. Perez hopes to return to his previous position as councillor for the borough's Darlington district – a position now vacant – when the next municipal election takes place in November.

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Israel faces threats from the north and south

Instability, chaos, violent upheaval, economic failure and massive uncertainty continue to plague much of the Arab world. "Arab Spring" is a term rarely heard these days, except in an ironic sense. In this climate, Israel remains a rare case of stability, even as surrounding strategic threats mount.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The most pressing security concern for Israel is the looming possibility that, as Syria's civil war rages, the country's chemical weapons could fall into the hands of rebel Sunni Islamic forces or be transferred to the Shia forces of Hezbollah, which, under the guidance of Iran, support Damascus. Either way, Israel has made it clear that any attempt to transfer such deadly weapons would be a "red line" and would be countered.

On Jan. 27, Israel completed the deployment of two Iron Dome missile batteries in the north as protection against missiles from Syria and Lebanon that could carry chemical warheads.

Israel has also drawn a red line at the transfer of advanced Russian-made anti-aircraft missiles from Syria to Hezbollah. These missiles pose a severe risk to Israeli fighter aircraft and are considered to be "game changers" in the regional strategic equation. On Jan. 30, western media reported that Israeli jets had struck a convoy carrying Russian SA-17 anti-aircraft missiles from Syria to Lebanon near the border. The *Globe and Mail*'s Patrick Martin cited Israeli analyst Mark Heller's remark that Israel (which remained silent about the attack) was sending a message to Iran as much as to Hezbollah and Syria.

An Israeli F-15 Eagle fighter aircraft *[Flash90 photo]*

• • •

Israel is also concerned about ongoing turmoil in Egypt. What began as peaceful protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square on Jan. 25 soon took an ugly turn. On Jan. 27, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi declared a state of emergency in three cities – Suez, Port Said and Ismailia – following anti-government protests and riots that left scores dead. Violent clashes even returned to Cairo.

"The past two days in Egypt looked at times like a slow-motion repeat of the revolution that toppled Hosni Mubarak two years ago: the marches, the gas, the shouted demands to topple the regime, and a miscalculated response by [Morsi]... Two years of transition and seven months of [Muslim] Brotherhood administration have failed to restore a sense of accountability," the *Economist* wrote (Jan. 28).

By the middle of last week, events seemed to be spiralling out of control, with Morsi floundering and speculation swirling about whether the army might step in. Much of the media coverage focused on the clash between Islamists and secular reformers. But what's really driving popular discontent is the failure of the government to address the tremendous economic distress gripping the country.

In the Jan. 29 *National Post*, Matthew Fisher noted: "The economic prospects of young Egyptians have been grim for years. According to statistics compiled by the government, the unemployment rate of those between the ages of 15 and 29 reached a staggering 77.5 per cent last year – against an official national unemployment rate of 12.6 per cent."

While this is true, the economy has only declined since the Brotherhood gained power. Tourism, upon which Egypt relied for billions in revenue, has died. Foreign investors, never large in number, have mostly fled. And the International Monetary Fund, which pledged almost $5 billion to Egypt, insists on austerity measures, including Cairo's significantly reducing its large subsidies for necessities such as fuel and wheat – a move that would further strain an already deeply impoverished population.

Fisher said that it's "unfair to think that Morsi could have turned Egypt's decrepit economy around after only a few months in power," but he doesn't point to even one positive step Morsi and the Brotherhood have taken on their own. Indeed, they were more concerned about consolidating power and ramming through a new constitution written by the Brotherhood.

The failure of governments across the Arab world to deliver on the real needs of their citizens is nothing new. Neither are the terrible regional consequences that such instability breeds.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

Chassidim to lose control of daycares

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The management of its network of subsidized in-home daycares is being taken out of the hands of the chassidic community.

Radio-Canada reported that Quebec's Ministry for the Family and Seniors will close the office that runs the network on Feb. 11 because of non-conformity with a number of regulations.

There is no accusation of misappropriation of funds.

The network, which has been in existence since 2006, consists of 122 daycares in private homes providing 487 places for preschool children at the government-subsidized rate of $7 a day.

Those spots will remain available, but the running of the network is to be the responsibility of two bureaus that manage daycares in the Côte des Neiges district.

Radio-Canada reported that the network has received close to $20 million in funding since its creation under Premier Jean Charest's Liberal government.

Through the access to information law, the public broadcaster learned that ministry inspections found "hundreds" of administrative infractions by the network's office, such as incomplete files, non-existent agreements with parents, the absence of an "educational project" and references on those responsible for the daycares.

The office also failed to provide the ministry with its enrolment figures, which are essential to determine the level of subsidization.

Alex Werzberger, head of the Coalition of Chassidic Organizations of Outrement, told *The CJN* that the "community will try to negotiate a solution with the government whereby the daycares can remain under chassidic control.

"Nothing so wrong has been done. The children are well taken care for," he said. "The problem is really one of not keeping up with the paperwork.

Family Minister Nicole Léger's press attaché Bruno-Pierre Cyr did not return messages from *The CJN* for comment on this story.

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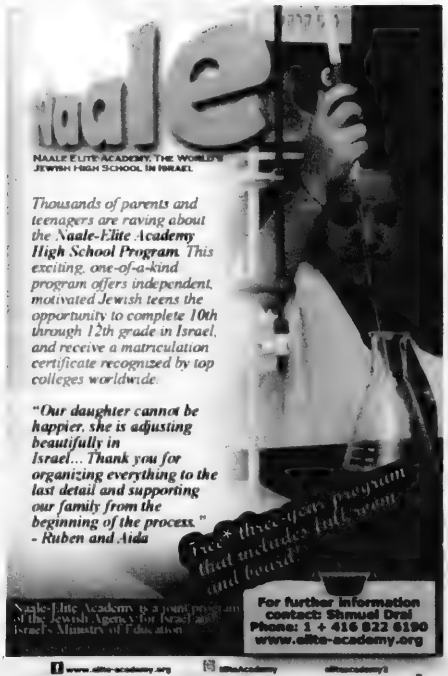
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Netanyahu seeks unity government

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last Saturday night promised to establish "the widest possible national unity government" and urged even those political leaders who did not recommend him as prime minister to reconsider and join him.

Netanyahu spoke immediately after President Shimon Peres, at a ceremony at the President's Residence, formally charged him with the task of forming the next government.

Netanyahu said the first priority of his new government would be thwarting Iran's effort to attain nuclear weapons. He also pledged to seek peace, saying "every day that passes" without negotiations with the Palestinians is a day wasted, and urging Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to come back to the peace table.

Netanyahu, who was recommended as prime minister by 82 of the 120 incoming members of the Knesset, also pledged to try to heal many of Israel's internal divides – on equality of military service, on easing economic burdens and on electoral reform – "without tearing the nation apart."

He said Israel had weathered the global financial crisis in large part because of the stable government he headed these past four years, but that the economic and security challenges in the region were actually becoming more grave. The dangers facing Israel were the worst it had faced for many years, he said.

Therefore, although his next government would tackle domestic challenges, Israel's security would come first, and the top priority would be thwarting Iran's nuclear weapons drive "and other threats to our nation and our citizens."

Reaching out to potential coalition partners from the centre and left, he pledged his government "will be committed to peace." He appealed directly to Abbas "to come back to the negotiating table."

On domestic matters, he vowed to create more jobs, equalize "the burden" – an apparent reference to drafting haredi Israelis – "without tearing our people apart," cut the cost of living and push for a more stable electoral system. He appealed for help from the various parties to build "a wide national unity government – as wide and stable as possible."

Therefore, he called upon "even those who have announced that they won't sit in the government to think again – to work together for the good of the people."

Israel, he said, does not have "the luxury of being divided... So many outside forces are trying to divide us... We have to put marginal interests to the side." His goal, he said, would be to foster peace within and without, and ensure security for the nation. "It is in that spirit that I accept this mission," he said.

Peres, inviting Netanyahu to form a new coalition, said Israel "needs a new government as soon as possible." He said that the party representatives with whom he met last Wednesday and Thursday had highlighted a number of issues for the new government to address urgently. These included tackling the deficit, bolstering social justice, fighting against racism, equalizing the burden on Israelis, dealing with service in the Israel Defence Forces, reviving peace efforts and facing Israel's security challenges, Peres said.

He said he hoped the coalition negotiations would be completed quickly so that the new government could "roll up its sleeves" and get to work.

Netanyahu will have 28 days to complete the political wheeling and dealing needed to form a coalition. If he is unable to do so in the allotted time, the president can give him a 14-day extension.

The parties that recommended Netanyahu continue as prime minister were his own Likud-Beiteinu (which won 31 seats in the Jan. 22 elections), Yesh Atid (19 seats), Jewish Home (12 seats), Shas (11), United Torah Judaism (7) and Kadima (2) – for a total of 82 endorsements.

Timesofisrael.com

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Tiny Israel a space power, conference shows

Viva Sarah Press
CJN Israel Bureau

TEL AVIV — Israel may be a tiny nation but it has a lot to offer the international space field.

That was the main message to come out of the eighth annual Ilan Ramon Space Conference in Herzliya at the end of January, which drew a record 14 heads of space agencies as well as experts from around the world, including NASA and the European Space Agency.

"Israel belongs to an exclusive club of about 10 countries in the world that have all capabilities in space – producing satellites, launching them and communicating with them," Daniel Hershkowitz, Israel's minister of science and technology, told *The CJN*. "We are small, but Israel is a power in space research."

Hershkowitz said Israel's importance in the field was highlighted at the conference, where participants included current NASA administrator Charles Bolden, the heads of space agencies in France, Brazil and Italy, deputy heads of agencies from Canada and Russia, a senior representative from China, and representatives from several top companies.

Israel's space industry specializes in specific areas, including miniaturization and communication technologies.

And though the Israel Space Agency's budget is all but insignificant compared to that of NASA, it is a sought-after collaboration partner.

"Israel is one of the anchors of co-operation with NASA, along with several other countries. We will consider expansion of co-operation on other applications in space exploration and development of integrated technologies" Bolden told the conference.

"The entrepreneurial spirit of the Israeli people is so overwhelmingly strong," former NASA administrator Sean O'Keefe told the *Media Line* Mideast news service. "You have honed the idea of using whatever you have to respond to the situation."

The meeting in Israel also recalled the 10th anniversary of the Columbia shuttle disaster, in which Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon, was killed.

From left are Science and Technology Minister Daniel Hershkowitz, Rona Ramon and Menachem Grinblum, director general of Israel's Ministry of Science and Technology. *[Yoav Ari Dudkevitch/GPO photo]*

"This conference commemorates the amazing life of Ilan Ramon by fostering co-operation among nations," Bolden told the attendees. "The word 'shalom' is not simply 'peace,' but wholeness and completeness. Ilan and the whole crew brought us wholeness, even though they are no longer here. It's up to all of us to build on their legacy."

And though the schedule had many workshops on the latest developments in the field, space agency heads and astronauts took time to meet with the next generation of space explorers.

Bolden attended the opening of Israel's new educational Moona Science, Environment and Space Center in Sakhnin, which is being dubbed as a new opportunity to further Arab-Jewish coexistence.

"A space shuttle successfully connects between 14 astronauts from around the world, no matter what culture, religion, race, gender or nationality they are," Bolden told students at the opening of the centre. "They all connect, which means that we can also do that on the ground, and in this way, you can act and succeed."

Bolden and U.S. astronaut Randy Bresnik also judged an exhibition of solar system models built by Jerusalem-area high school students.

"Israel has a strong human resource. But human resource is not something you find at age 25. It's something you invest in from birth. Exposing children at an early age to the magic of science is extremely important," Hershkowitz told *The CJN*.

Space IL, a non-profit organization established by a multidisciplinary team of Israeli space enthusiasts to compete for the $30-million Google Lunar X Prize, was also at the conference. Google's challenge calls for a team to successfully launch, fly and land a robotic spacecraft on the Moon. Yariv Bash, a co-founder of the Israeli team, said it was important that NASA leaders took time to talk to the school children.

"They are the future of Israel," he said. "Space IL is aimed at the young generation. We are trying to ignite the imagination of the country's young generation and push ingenuity past its limits. We want to stimulate the young to take an interest in space exploration."

Bolden said at the conference he is sure Israel will eventually produce another astronaut.

The Science and Technology Ministry put out a statement that said it is looking seriously into the option of training another Israeli to become an astronaut in the tradition of the late Col. Ilan Ramon. The Israel Space Agency is making informal contacts with international space authorities on the matter. Although NASA has halted the dispatching of manned space shuttles into space, it may be that an Israeli trained by NASA could be sent to work at the International Space Station in a few years, the ministry said.

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Israel's water

Continued from page 1

The Sea of Galilee has already collected enough water to reach its average yearly total, with more than 330 days left to round out the total.

Thanks to the heaviest winter rains Israel has seen in decades last month, the lake hit the 1.57-metre mark late last month – the average yearly intake – raising it to 210.84 metres below sea level, the highest it's been since 2006, and only two metres below the level at which water would have to be let out.

The technological advances, together with the wet weather, have led the Water Authority to nix its water conservation campaign after running it for years.

"You can now shower alone," Sofer joked, though he added that wise use of water is always sound policy.

Unfortunately for the public, being water wealthy hasn't yet translated to cheaper prices. Desalination is expensive, and on Jan. 1 the price of water increased by three per cent for the first 3.5 cubic meters per person in the household, bringing it to 9.09 shekels ($2.43).

Beyond the allocated 3.5 cubic metres, water costs 14.60 shekels per cubic meter. The price increases adds up to a 36 per cent increase since 2010.

TimesofIsrael.com

Israeli army chief in Washington amid Syria crisis

Time of Israel Staff
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel's army chief arrived in the United States Sunday for talks with his American counterpart, amid tension with Syria following a reported Israel airstrike there last week. He arrived as Israel's defence minister insisted that Israel "means what it says" about preventing advanced weaponry being moved into Lebanon as Bashar Assad's regime in Damascus loses control.

IDF chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Benny Gantz began a five-day work visit as the guest of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the IDF said Sunday.

It said Gantz and Dempsey would hold "a series of work meetings together" and with other U.S. officials, and would "discuss current security challenges, the regional security status in the Middle East and military co-operation."

Apart from the Syria crisis, the two military chiefs will likely also focus on Iran's nuclear weapons drive. Formally starting the process of building his new government on Saturday night, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said stopping Iran would be his first priority. Late last summer, amid reports Netanyahu wanted to launch military action against Iran, Dempsey publicly and dramatically declared that he would not want to be "complicit" in any such Israeli action.

Israel's reported airstrike Jan. 29 is said to have targeted a convoy carrying advanced anti-aircraft defence systems toward Lebanon, presumably to Hezbollah. Syria said the IAF hit a scientific research centre in Jamarya, northwest of Damascus, and on Feb. 2, it released purported video footage of the scene. Other reports indicated more sites were targeted, including a biological weapons research centre.

A *Time* magazine article last week said Washington has given Israel a "green light" for more such raids if it deems them necessary. It said the United States was prepared to carry out raids of its own in the Aleppo area if it feared rebels might otherwise gain control of weapons of mass destruction in that part of Syria.

File photo of Israeli Chief of Staff Benny Gantz, right, and visiting U.S. counterpart Martin Dempsey in January 2012

On. Jan. 30, U.S. officials told the *New York Times* that Israel notified the United States in advance about the airstrike it carried out. An unnamed western official told the *Wall Street Journal* that the convoy was carrying sophisticated Russian-made SA-17 anti-aircraft weapons, which could constitute a strategic game-changer were Hezbollah to possess them.

Israel hasn't confirmed the Jan. 29 air raid, but Defence Minister Ehud Barak hinted Sunday at Israel's involvement.

Speaking at a security conference in Munich, Barak said, "What happened in Syria several days ago... that's proof that when we said something we mean it — we say that we don't think it should be allowed to bring advanced weapons systems into Lebanon," he said.

Barak said he believes Assad's fall is imminent and would be a major blow to Iran and Hezbollah. He said that "Hezbollah from Lebanon and the Iranians are the only allies that Assad has left."

Assad responded to the Israeli strike for the first time on Sunday while speaking with Iranian envoy Saeed Jalili in Damascus. He said that Israel's aggression "exposes the true role conducted by Israel in collaboration with the external forces hostile [to Syria] in destabilizing security in Syria and weakening it so that it forgoes its national principles."

Meanwhile, Iran last week threatened "grave consequences for Tel Aviv" after the airstrike.

And on Sunday, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, a traditional foe of Assad, said the raid was illegal according to international law.

"Anything could happen in the region," he told reporters in Istanbul. "Those who treated the Israeli government like a spoiled child should know that history will not forgive Israel's state structure."

The previous day, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu blasted Assad for his non-response to the alleged Israeli air raid. "Why didn't Assad even throw a pebble when Israeli jets were flying over his palace and playing with the dignity of his country?" he asked reporters.

Davutoglu suggested Assad was conspiring with Israel. "Is there a secret agreement between Assad and Israel?... Why don't you use the same power that you use against defenceless women against Israel, which you have seen as an enemy since its foundation," he said.

On Feb. 1, Russia issued a statement condemning the "unprovoked" attack on the territory of a sovereign country, "no matter the motives to justify it," while Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed Amr said his country condemned the "illegal attack" on Arab soil and urged the international community to do so as well.

And the Arab League, which has been harshly critical of Assad, also rebuked Israel, calling the bombing a "glaring violation" of an Arab country's sovereignty.

TimesofIsrael.com

Israel Briefs

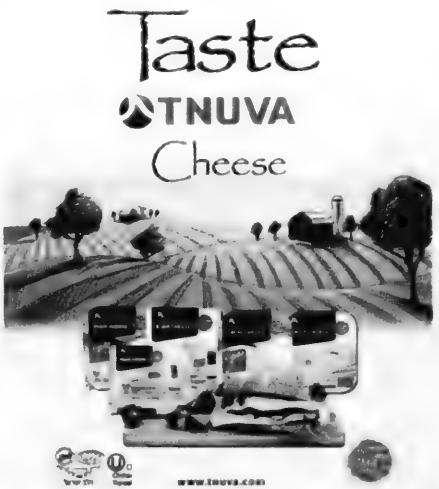
Fischer to leave bank early

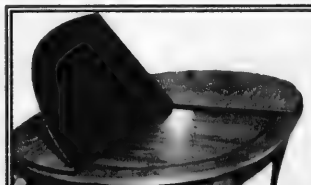
Stanley Fischer is stepping down from his position as governor of the Bank of Israel. Fischer, 69, will leave office June 30 after serving eight years that included shepherding the Israeli economy through the global financial crisis of 2007-08. His term was scheduled to end in 2015. In 2010, Fischer was named the world's best bank governor. After the global economic woes of 2007-08, in September 2009, the bank became the first in the developed world to raise interest rates. Fischer became an Israeli citizen when he assumed his position. He's known for his American-accented, but nearly flawless, Hebrew. He previously served as chief economist at the World Bank. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Fischer played a major role in Israel's economic growth and in the achievements of its economy.

Tax transfers resume

Israel has resumed transferring tax money to the Palestinian Authority that it collected on behalf of the PA. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly decided to transfer all the money withheld from December because of the PA's serious financial problems. Tax money collected for the PA from November, reportedly about $115 million, was transferred to the Israel Electric Corp. to cover part of the PA's debt to the utility. The money freeze came after the United Nations General Assembly voted on Nov. 29 to upgrade the Palestinian's UN status to non-member state observer against Israel's wishes. Israel collects income tax from Palestinians working in Israel, as well as import duties for the PA.

Files from JTA

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Warsaw Ghetto uprising's 70th anniversary

Moshe Phillips
JNS.org

Seventy years ago last month, the Nazis began their second deportation of the Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto.

In response, on Jan. 18, 1943, the first organized and armed Jewish/Zionist resistance action in the ghetto was launched. The fighters of the ZZW and ZOB drove the Nazis from the ghetto.

Comment

Months later, on April 19, 1943, on the eve of Passover, the Nazi SS and police units entered the ghetto and were attacked by organized Jewish partisans yet again.

There were two separate armed resistance organizations in the ghetto – the ZZW and ZOB. The most famous Jewish leader of armed resistance is Mordechai Anielewicz, commander of the ZOB (Jewish Fighting Organization) during the uprising. The ZOB was an alliance of several Zionist and non-Zionist youth groups. Anielewicz received paramilitary training in Betar as a young teenager and left the group before the war. The ZOB had a socialist orientation, and Betar as an organization did not participate in it, in part because of politics.

ZZW, the Jewish Military Organization, was commanded and manned by Betar members and their allies. Betar's fighters in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising have been largely written out of history. Moshe Arens, a former Israeli defence minister who was a Betar member, recently wrote a yet-to-be published book on Betar's heroic battle against the SS in the ghetto. That book, *Flags Over the Warsaw Ghetto* (Gefen Publishing, November 2011), and articles by Arens about the ZZW that were published in *Yad Vashem Studies*, *Ha'aretz* and the *Jerusalem Post* have helped to create a far more accurate account of the ZZW's participation in the uprising. The book and the articles also did much to recall the heroism of Pawel Frenkel, ZZW's commander.

The ZZW is now thought by historians to have been the better-equipped force in the ghetto, as it had procured machine guns. The ZOB, however, had more fighters.

The groups finally decided to co-ordinate their efforts in the last moments before the April 19 battle began. For 28 days, Jewish warriors fought the enemy and showed bravery not seen since the days of Bar Kochba's uprising against Rome.

In the Vilna Ghetto, Betar leader Joseph Glazman was deputy commander of the United Partisan Organization, the only armed Jewish resistance group in that ghetto.

Crowd near the wall of the Warsaw Ghetto
[Photo courtesy of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies]

Betar was founded in 1923 by Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1880-1940), a figure who is too often forgotten today. Professor Daniel J. Elazar (1934-1999), a scholar of the Jewish political tradition, in the May 15, 1981, edition of the journal *Sh'ma Elazar* remarked about Jabotinsky's legacy:

"Would there be serious public commemoration of the 100th birthday of Zev Jabotinsky had it not been for the fact that the Likud won the election in Israel in 1977? Not likely. For 30 years and more, Jabotinsky was one of those non-persons in Israel and the Jewish world... The ruling Labor party made him a non-person for the same reasons that it portrayed [then-prime minister] Menachem Begin and his supporters as uncivilized fascists – it is easier to beat the opposition by painting it as irrelevant, intolerable and non-existent, until it is too strong to be dismissed."

This year's 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising offers an opportunity to remind today's Jews about Jabotinsky's vital contributions.

Moshe Phillips is the president of the Philadelphia chapter of Americans For a Safe Israel.

Former NYC mayor Ed Koch dies at 88

Ron Kampeas
JTA

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Ed Koch, the pugnacious former New York City mayor whose political imprimatur was eagerly sought by Republicans and Democrats alike, has died.

Koch, 88, died early last Friday morning of congestive heart failure, his spokesperson told the *New York Times*. He had been hospitalized twice in recent weeks to drain fluid from his lungs.

Famous for greeting constituents with "How'm I doing?" the Jewish mayor presided over some of the city's most difficult years, from 1978 to 1989, and helped spur the recovery that would flourish under one of his successors, Rudy Giuliani.

Koch's third term was mired by corruption scandals and burgeoning racial tensions, and after losing his bid for election to a fourth term in 1989, Koch retired into a happy existence as a Jewish Yoda, blessing or cursing political penitents as he saw fit, and not always hewing to the prescripts of his Democratic Party.

In 1990, on a visit to Jerusalem during the first intifadah, Koch was struck by a rock in the head. He was barely nicked, mopping up his wound with a handkerchief, but the incident became one of Koch's proudest moments, he often said. "I shed a little blood for the people of Israel," he would recall.

Koch never met a solicitation for an opinion that he didn't like. He endorsed Giuliani, a Republican, in his successful 1993 bid to defeat David Dinkins, who had defeated Koch four years earlier, and went on to share – and sometimes take over – the stage at endorsements for other Republicans, including New York governor George Pataki, senator Al D'Amato and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

The measure of the warmth both parties felt for him was reflected last week by statements from their Jewish affiliates.

"Mayor Koch was a passionate and principled leader and an outspoken defender of Israel and the Jewish community," Matt Brooks, the Republican Jewish Coalition director, said in a statement. "He chose principle over politics and didn't engage in partisan bitterness."

The National Jewish Democratic Council statement underscored that whatever his past peregrinations, Koch worked to elect and then re-elect President Barack Obama.

"Koch was a consummate and proud Jewish Democrat who advocated fiercely for the U.S.-Israel relationship and the progressive domestic policies in which he truly believed," a statement said.

Egyptian official says Holocaust was a 'myth'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

A senior Egyptian official close to President Mohamed Morsi suggested the Holocaust was a myth invented by U.S. intelligence agencies to discredit their Nazi foes.

Fathi Shihab-Eddim, who is responsible for appointing editors to state-run newspapers, said, "The myth of the Holocaust is an industry that America invented."

He went on to claim the Holocaust was used "to justify war and massive destruction against military and civilian facilities of the Axis powers and especially to hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the atomic bomb."

Shihab-Eddim's comments came as the world marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which coincides with the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp by Soviet forces.

The remarks also came about two weeks after a 2010 video was released in which Morsi, then head of the Muslim Brotherhood, called Jews "the descendants of apes and pigs."

The Muslim Brotherhood has long been criticized for bigotry: the new Egyptian constitution prohibits Copts (Christians) from becoming president and it withholds religious rights from Ba'hai's and Shiites.

"I can't say I'm surprised," said Nazi-hunter Efraim Zuroff in Jerusalem. "These views are very prevalent in the Arab world. The fact a person of his stature – an adviser to Morsi who chooses the people for state-run media outlets – [made them] is very dangerous."

"The worst kind of Holocaust-denial is government-sponsored Holocaust-denial. In other words, the leadership of the country is telling you the Holocaust never took place," he said.

Zuroff contrasted western democracies, where only individuals on the fringes of society with no influence promote Holocaust denial, and the Arab world. The Muslim Brotherhood, he continued, "is incredibly ignorant and stupid when it comes to the history of World War II and the Jews."

He called on western governments, including Canada, to protest the Morsi remarks and those that deny the Holocaust.

If similar statements were made by western leaders, there would be a protest. "They're not holding them to the same standards as [expected] in the western world," he said.

Canadian business school deans visit Israel

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Peggy Cunningham didn't waste much time before briefing members of Dalhousie University's business school about her trip to Israel.

Cunningham, dean of the Rowe School of Business, told her colleagues and others at the Halifax university that Israel earned its reputation as "startup nation" through entrepreneurship and in part, by the quality of its research institutions.

She suggested Israeli successes in innovation and high-tech companies could be studied and applied in Nova Scotia. And in an email exchange with *The CJN*, she said Nova Scotia and Israel have much to learn from each other.

Cunningham was part of a group of 11 deans of Canadian business schools who visited Israel recently under the auspices of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and the Israeli Embassy in Ottawa. Business schools at the University of Ottawa, McGill, the University of Manitoba, the University of Calgary, Simon Fraser University and Ryerson and Memorial universities were among those represented.

They were accompanied by Dylan Hanley, CIJA's associate director of university studies.

Prior to her departure for Israel, Cunningham said she was "more aware of Israel's political issues than its business climate. Thus the visit totally changed my views. Learning about Israel's success with regard to high-tech innovation was very powerful, but it was also valuable for me to see the complexity of the business environment, from small family businesses to large international businesses."

In briefing notes she distributed at the university, Cunningham pointed out Israel ranks third in the world for entrepreneurship and produces more than 4,000 high-tech startups. "It is number 1 with regard to the quality of its research institutions. It has 18 per cent of all life-science patents in the world, and it is number 1 in terms of patents for medical devices. It has also outpaced the world with regard to job creation, surpassing the European Union, Brazil and China. Exports make up 40 per cent of its economy."

Surveying the academic scene, Cunningham noted students generally attend following military service and are more mature than their Canadian counterparts. She suggested three Israeli universities – the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the University of Tel Aviv and Ben-Gurion University, are seeking international students.

"I am going to further explore the idea of offering a tour for top achieving students from our four schools. We learned a lot on our tour, and students would, too. Many of the entrepreneurship programs we saw were the result of close collaboration between business and government. Israel focuses on information technology and knowledge management. There is a growing focus on 'clean tech,' water conservation and realization there is a requirement to think about environmental and social sustainability. Thus, such a trip would provide a rich learning venue for [our] students."

Cunningham suggested other exchanges could include hosting Israeli academics as visiting scholars. "We have invited Dov Zohar from the Technion to be a visiting scholar, and would welcome others as well," she said.

"We are creating a new program for top performing students who will be able to compete to go on a trip similar to the one we went on, with some course work taken at Israel universities," she also stated.

That's the kind of result that CIJA was banking on. "In the last few years, our strategy has been to work on bridge-building between Canadian and Israeli universities," said Hanley.

Much of the discourse on campuses has been hijacked by "a small number of angry anti-Israel voices... We're taking the high road. This is about collaboration and bridge-building in areas that are natural."

Israel is well-known for its innovation in high tech, medical devices, environmental solutions and renewable energy, said Hanley. For their part, Canadian business schools are among the best in the world.

"We're hoping to see exchange agreements, programs, academic collaboration, study tours and studying abroad," Hanley said.

In a statement, the Israeli Embassy in Ottawa, said, "One of our goals at the embassy is to expose [Israel's] success story to Canada's business, political, cultural and academic communities.

"Our hope is to build partnerships in the areas of innovation and entrepreneurialism between Canadian and Israeli institutions that will have a long-term impact, mutually benefiting the citizens of both countries."

Israelis are well-known for spawning innovative new businesses in high tech; Canadians have expertise in energy and resource management. Perhaps these are areas where exchanges could results, Hanley suggested.

So far, CIJA has been happy with the feedback from the participants. For her part, Cunningham went hoping "to learn more about the universities, areas for potential partnerships and entrepreneurial success. My expectations were exceeded," she said.

Israel, Palestinians co-operate on water issues

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — While politicians in Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) continue their on again/off again posturing and peacemaking, some facts on the ground are bringing Israelis and Palestinians closer together – notably when it comes to environmental issues.

Quietly, Israel and the PA have been co-operating extensively to preserve the environment of the entire landmass west of the Jordan River, according to a top water engineer from a large Palestinian-controlled city in the West Bank. The PA needs and wants Israel's help in keeping water clean, expanding agricultural opportunities for farmers, and ensuring safe disposal of waste and trash, the engineer said.

Attending the 17th annual International Cleantech Business Forum along with about a dozen other PA engineers and municipal officials, "Amar" (who asked that his real name and employer's name not be used) said everyone in the PA, without exception, had nothing but admiration for Israel's accomplishments in technology, especially water and agricultural tech.

"We want and need the advanced systems that Israel has developed to preserve the environment and to enhance agricultural output. We are neighbours, and we share the same environment, so it is to both our advantages that we co-operate on these issues."

Far from the limelight, Amar said, Israel and the PA have developed numerous joint projects to tackle environmental problems. "For example, this June a new sewage treatment facility in Emek Hefer will come on line, which will be connected to sewage flow from Tulkarm, Jenin, and other West Bank towns."

The project is actually the completion of a longstanding effort by officials on both sides of the Green Line to do something about wastewater from PA cities that had for years choked and threatened to destroy the Alexander River, which flows near Netanya. The project required extensive co-operation between Israel and the PA, with contractors building cesspools, pipes and other infrastructure. "Even during the wars (in 2002-2003, and last year), the co-operation continued," Amar said. The more, and higher quality, water available, the more West Bank farmers will be able to plant, and the higher their incomes and living standards will be. "That's good for everyone as well," he added.

Uzi Landau

Amar's comments presaged those of outgoing Water and Energy Minister Uzi Landau, who spoke a few minutes later at a symposium on water and energy.

"Our neighbours are in great need," Landau said, citing the severe and chronic water shortage in Jordan, and the long-standing erosion of water resources in Syria that has forced many farmers off their land. "Water in the Middle East is becoming scarce, even more scarce than oil."

While the water situation around Israel deteriorates, Israel, said Landau, has found the solution to its own water problems and is ready and willing to export its knowledge and experience to anyone who seeks it, including its longtime enemies. "Within a few years, there will be a 70 per cent to 80 per cent chance that the water coming out of your tap will be desalinated."

Thanks to technology, Landau said, "Israel's water supply is now stable."

Already, Landau said, about a quarter of Israel's water economy is based on desalinated water, a figure that will reach 50 per cent within two years. The goal is to raise that to 75 per cent by 2020.

But desalination isn't the only area Israel excels in. "Already 75 per cent of the water supplied to agriculture comes from recycled sewage and waste water. According to the UN, which has declared 2013 the Year of Water, there is no 'wastewater,' only water that has not been recovered. The UN has called on nations around the world to aim for a 50 per cent recovery rate of wastewater by 2025. In Israel, we have a 95 per cent recovery rate."

Israeli companies, concluded Landau, are world leaders in desalination and sewage recycling. "And if our neighbours choose to seek our help, we will gladly provide it," he added.

For Amar, that invitation is nothing new. "We are just as interested in preserving water resources and having a clean environment as Israel, and we have done our share to preserve resources as well."

For example, Amar said, the PA has stopped drawing water from the badly depleted Jordan River, even though it is entitled to a share, along with Jordan, according to the Oslo accords. Instead, Israel has been compensating the PA with water from the National Water Carrier, which draws from the Kinneret, the coastal aquifer and, increasingly, from desalination plants. "Co-operation in these areas is good, and we have respectful relations with our Israeli colleagues on the basis of a common concern. Personally, I have no use for politicians, and I don't trust them, neither yours nor ours," said Amar. "I trust scientists and specialists. That's why I'm at this show."

Former journalist writes children's book

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

What does a seasoned journalist and author do after leaving a career of interviewing many of the world's high-profile leaders, diplomats and decision makers?

She writes a children's book.

Montreal-born Aliza Davidovit made a career for herself working on the ABC news magazine program *20/20* with Connie Chung and as a producer at Fox News Channel. She's also written numerous profiles of celebrities and diplomats for a wide array of magazines and journals, much of it centred on Israel advocacy.

Now that she's out of the TV news game – though she still ghost-writes biographical material for many prominent personalities – her most recent effort is something much less politically weighty, though as important as any story she's ever covered: a morality tale for children called *Spunky the Monkey*.

Written by Davidovit and illustrated by Montreal artist Bec Eichler, the kids' bedtime book follows the exploits of a little monkey who is sick of his steady diet of bananas and longs for a pizza.

So he decides to steal one and is quickly apprehended. To say any more is to give away the plot, suffice it to say a lesson in appreciating what one has and how one's actions impact others is learned.

The book is a smorgasbord of vibrant colours and amusing drawings by Eichler's hand, and the rhyming narrative proves a fun read for children ages three to seven.

(This writer tested the book out on his own daycare- and kindergarten-aged children, to their delight.)

Reached in New York, where she is now based, Davidovit told *The CJN* she wanted to change her direction after tiring of the political sphere.

Working in the U.S. "ego-driven" news sphere for the past 18 years made her realize that her focus should be on children and how to influence them to make moral decisions in life.

"I don't think one can really make change [as a journalist] using words in the U.S. political realm," she said. "I realized in that world, even though I'm using my words and the full force of my talents and abilities and exposure, it's hard to make change in the world. Especially because [politicians] are so ego-driven. Congressmen or senators know the answers before I even ask my questions. It really doesn't matter what my question is. They have an agenda and throw their answers at me. I can't pierce that world.

"Like I said, everything I do is to make this world a better place and from the heart. This year I'll be ordained as a rabbi, and I carry a sefer Torah in my heart wherever I go," she said.

> *Everything I do is to make this world a better place*

Though she has no children of her own, Davidovit, who was married to an Orthodox rabbi for 10 years before leaving him, is a firm believer in Jewish values.

And she is an aunt to numerous family members.

"Pretty much everything I do, whether in journalism or Israel advocacy, is always [with the mission] to not just make people see the light, but to be the light. To be the proponent of good thoughts and deeds," she said.

And it all starts with youth, she said.

In order to change the future of the world – "which is going to hell in a hand basket," she said – one has to start with the children.

"You can't change prime ministers and diplomats, so I felt it was time" to try and get a message of positivity to kids, Davidovit said.

Today's adults, she said, are so busy trying to give their children the things they didn't have, they forget to give kids the things they did have.

"Which is a work ethic, a sense of values, appreciation for things... these things are lacking in today's society. There's such a sense of entitlement among children and teenagers," she said. "Boy oh boy, I'm scared for future generations if we don't change this."

Davidovit said she grew up learning a work ethic and respect for her elders because her mother worked in the nursing-home industry.

"When you look at kids today, the way they talk to their parents, never mind their grandparents... there's no respect. Where do you go from that?" she asked.

This year, she plans to go on a speaking and reading tour in promotion of *Spunky the Monkey*, and the first place she has targeted to launch the tour is in Montreal at United Talmud Torahs elementary school in St. Laurent.

"It will be interesting to go back there in this capacity," she said.

Davidovit plans on turning the book into a series of books and lessons for kids, using a different animal for each.

"Look, parents today are so open-minded, their brains fell out. Kids need to learn right and wrong. Black and white. You can't leave it to them to decide what's right or not," she said. "They need to hear over and over the difference between right and wrong, so that when the parent isn't around, at least their voice and lessons are still present and *hakking* their *kops* [beating them over their heads]."

Aliza Davidovit

Asked whether she plans to have the book published in Hebrew and other languages and how many copies were made in the initial print run, Davidovit demurs.

"I'm still pushing the English version, but many people have asked me whether I'll translate it into Hebrew and French and other languages. I'm considering it," she said.

As for the numbers, Davidovit won't divulge publishing statistics for fear of hurting its distribution among youth.

"In the Talmud it says, 'Whatever is counted isn't blessed.'"

For more information, visit: www.davidovit.com/bookstore

Sonny Goldstein, CFP

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David Broza serenades community

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Showcasing his renowned staccato picking and flamenco-infused Israeli pop style, guitarist-songwriter David Broza electrified an audience at Toronto's Sheraton Centre event venue last week.

The musical guest of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's 2013 campaign closing event, Broza played a selection of his hits and poems-put-to-guitar in an intimate concert on Jan. 30.

For anyone who hasn't experienced a Broza performance, the man has a solid stage presence and can captivate a crowd both with his expert and emotive flamenco strumming techniques and his storytelling abilities.

Broza, the son of an Israeli-English businessman and folksinger mother, was born in Haifa but raised and schooled in both England and Spain from ages 12 to 18, when he retuned to Israel to serve in the army.

He began his musical career in 1977, immediately after his Israel Defence Forces service – during which time he'd started playing guitar in Israeli cafés and bars in his off-service hours to make some extra money – though he'd initially planned to become a graphic artist.

Since then, the trilingual musician has released 28 albums and received worldwide accolades. His presence has also been felt in North America, when he took up residence in New Jersey for 17 years to study American poets.

He's been called the Israeli Bruce Springsteen and a post-modern Leonard Cohen, as well as drawing comparisons from music critics to the musical stylings of Jackson Browne and Gordon Lightfoot.

On this night, the Israeli troubadour interspersed tales from his youth living abroad in Madrid – where he fell in love with flamenco music – with his love of Israel and the many collaborations he's worked on in his home country.

One story in particular shed light on some of the inner turmoil that fuels Broza's creativity. A chance meeting with one of his favourite Spanish poets, Pablo Guerrero, provided a moment of levity at the concert.

"I was back in Madrid and I booked myself a couple of shows at this bar. After one of them, an elderly man walks into my dressing room and I immediately recognized him as Guerrero. I was shocked. And instead of telling him what an honour or privilege it was to meet him, I asked him if he would consider writing with me. To which he said 'no,'" Broza recounted, the audience laughing at the foible.

But Guerrero did invite him to his home for coffee and asked Broza to tell him more about himself.

"So, maybe because he was a stranger, I began to tell him deep, dark things about myself. And I kept going. Eventually, he told me to stop and that I was depressing him," he said, eliciting more laughter from the audience.

Yet days later, Guerrero faxed him a poem based on all Broza told him. It was a dark and depressing ode, but once put to song, it became one of his greatest hits, he said.

Finishing the tale, Broza launched into it, *Lloro (Amarga Es Tu Ausencia) – Cry (Bitter Is Your Absence)*, a haunting song that held the audience rapt.

Hit after hit emanated from the Israeli musician, culminating in a three-song finale for which he invited fellow Israeli musician and oud master Yair Dalal on stage, to perform two songs – the beautiful *Bedouin Love Song* and an extended jam – before inviting the JRoots Supplemental Jewish School choir to join them in a rendition of arguably his most popular song, *Yihiyeh Tov* (*All Will Be Well*), his anthem for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

The choir, comprising children aged four to 12, stood as a group behind Broza and Dalal, smiling, and confidently chanting out the chorus and swaying to the song when prompted by the two elder musicians.

At one point, Broza, 57, looked back at the choir and told the audience how the song is a wish for the children of Israel and those of the Palestinians might one day live together in peace "under the olive trees. And that fresh new grass will grow over the graveyards in the name of love and peace.

"For after 100 years of war, we haven't and will not lose hope," he proclaimed.

With that, Broza, with Dalal conducting the choir, belted out the final refrain to the song and exhorted the kids and the crowd to sing out "*Yihiyeh Tov*" as he strummed furiously, before standing and taking his final bows with the children.

The choir closed the night with a rendition of *Hatikvah*.

David Broza *[Jen Arron Photography photo]*

FROM VIOLENCE TO VIOLINS: A concert with celebrated violinist Moshe Hammer and pianist Ross Inglis to raise funds for a music program entitled "From Violence to Violins" for 350 at-risk youths in 18 Toronto schools aroused standing ovations from over 200 guests at the Shaarei Shomayim Congregation recently. The program, which included the music of Mozart, Kriesler, Bruch and Sarasate, also paid tribute to Toronto pianist and popular band leader, Leo Spellman, who composed *Rhapsody 1939-1945*, internationally acclaimed as one of the most searing and soaring musical testimonials to the Holocaust. The audience was rapt as Hammer played a moving Spellman piece entitled *Mood*. ***[Brian Cantor photo]***

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Email your information to "contest@thecjn.ca" Re: **"SING" Contest**, or mail to: The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to 416-391-0949

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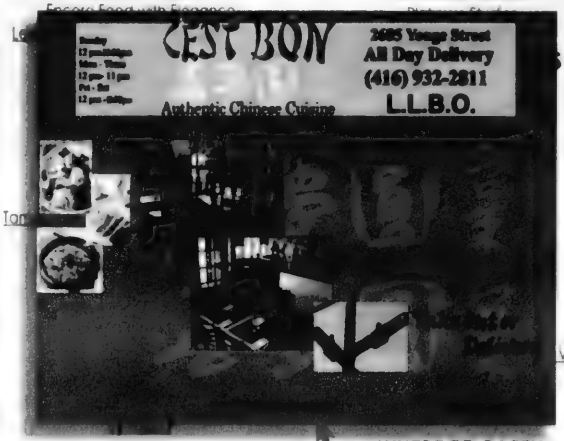

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Tarragon presents a Moscovitch double bill

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Hannah Moscovitch's play *Other People's Children*, part of a Moscovitch double bill coming to Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, is about an upwardly mobile couple that hires a Sri Lankan live-in nanny for their 10-year-old daughter.

Paul Lampert, the co-director of *Other People's Children*, said that it's a "very modern look at what happens when we have someone take care of our children, when we make the choice that we have to get back to work."

In the play, the husband, Ben, is not crazy about the nanny, Sati, coming into the house because he's more of a traditionalist who would like his wife, Ilana, to form a stronger bond with their daughter.

"Very quickly it turns out that Sati is not only an excellent nanny, but she has three children of her own back in Sri Lanka... she's an excellent mother," Lampert said. "She's able to cope well."

Ilana, who is played by Lampert's wife and co-director, Nikki Landau, begins to feel insecure about her own motherhood and her mothering qualities, and Ben starts to like Sati's mothering qualities. The difficulties arise as the relationships develop, Lampert said.

"Inevitably there are going to be people in the audience with children who have nannies, and they are going to be asking themselves similar kinds of questions of how good a parent they are and how much is this person I'm bringing into the house becoming part of my family," said Lampert, the father of a daughter, Clara, 5.

"It is interesting because we are really speaking to this socioeconomic bracket that would very much understand these issues."

The play also looks at the nanny's situation – she has left her children behind to be raised by someone else, perhaps a relative, to take care of other people's children, Lampert said. The relative is forming bonds that are more ingrained and tighter with "other people's children."

Gray Powell plays Ilana's husband, Ben, and Elisa Moolecherry, a Canadian who is the artistic director of BeMe Theatre in Munich, plays the nanny, Sati.

As a co-director, Lampert said the challenge for him is that Moscovitch writes "in a very particular fashion and yet none of the text is upfront. It is all sub-textual, so you really have to work with the actors very closely to find what is going on underneath the text and you have to navigate that.

"Luckily, Hannah is occasionally in the room and I can actually ask her what she was looking for. Hannah writes in an almost cryptic fashion and what is said is deeply buried with intention and motivation. The language is a façade... only a mask for what is really going on underneath."

Paul Lampert

Lampert said that Moscovitch is a "fascinating playwright who is quickly becoming one of the most important playwrights currently in Canada."

Although this is the first time Lampert, a National Theatre School of Canada graduate, has directed a play by Moscovitch, Lampert's list of credits is extensive, including working with Poland's Teatr BLIK, and International Theatre in Vienna. He directed the national première of *Oleanna* for the Stary Theatre in Kraków, Poland, and *I, Claudia*, for BeMe Theatre, which toured to Barcelona, Shanghai and Munich.

Lampert has directed at theatres across Canada, including at the Blyth Festival and Shaw Festival. He's the past artistic director of Toronto's George Brown Theatre School and is now on sabbatical from teaching acting and directing at York University.

Other People's Children is on a bill with *Little One*, directed by Natasha Mytnowych.

Lampert and Landau are the co-artistic directors of Theatre PANIK.

Hannah Moscovitch's Other People's Children *is presented in co-production with Theatre PANIK at Tarragon Theatre's Extra Space from Feb. 14 to March 24. For tickets, call the box office at 416-531-1827 or visit www.tarragontheatre.com.*

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

COMPOSER JOHN WEINZWEIG HONOURED ON THE CENTENNIAL OF HIS BIRTH

The late composer **John Weinzweig**, who would have turned 100 years old in March, is being remembered with a weekend of free musical events at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music to be followed by a yearlong series of events across Canada.

Weinzweig is being honoured for his musical innovation, his passionate mentorship of students such as R. Murray Schafer and Harry Somers, his energetic advocacy for Canadian music, and his legacy as a founder of the Canadian League of Composers and Canadian Music Centre.

A free evening of music curated by Soundstreams artistic director **Lawrence Cherney** features the combined talents of conductor **Victor Feldbrill**, pianist **Serouj Kradjian**, soprano **Shannon Mercer**, flutist **Robert Aitken**, harpist **Judy Loman**, bassoonist **Bianca Chambul**, double bassist **James Van Demark** and the **Guelph Chamber Choir**. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. March 8, 8 p.m.

A day of free lectures and lecture-recitals exploring Weinzweig's influence and contemporaries is offered on March 9, and the **Cecilia String Quartet** perform a free lunchtime performance on March 11. Also on that day, a commemorative plaque for the former Weinzweig family home is set to be unveiled as part of the City of Toronto's Legacy Project. For more details, visit www.johnweinzweig.com.

• • •

Jacob and Jack: Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents *Jacob and Jack*, a comedy by **James Sherman** that the *Chicago Sun-Times* called "a beguiling comic love letter to the American theatre and its Yiddish roots." In this theatrical farce, Jacob is the grandfather whom Jack honours with a theatrical tribute; afterward, in his dressing room, Jack confronts certain challenges as an actor and husband while Jacob is shown having problems of his own, 75 years in the past.

***Jacob and Jack* runs at the Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre Feb. 27 to March 10.**

Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St. Feb. 27 to March 10. Tickets are variously priced from $19 (preview) to $48. 416-781-5527, www.teatrontheatre.com

• • •

Koffler Musician in Residence: Koffler Centre of the Arts and Ashkenaz Foundation present the exclusive artist residency of acclaimed, genre-defying musician, artist and educator **Simja Dujov**. The Buenos Aires-based artist blends Latin musical traditions with his eastern European Jewish roots and mashes in electro-klezmer, Balkan, Gypsy punk and other musical morsels. Dujov presents master classes, workshops and participates in other educational and musical activities from Feb. 17 to March 1.

He also performs a concert with friends at the Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W., Feb. 27, 8 p.m. $10, $12, $15. www.kofflerarts.org

• • •

Jewish Jazz for Purim: Friends of Yiddish presents *A Freylekhn Purim* with Jewish Jazz featuring **Jordan Klapman** and **Sharon Smith**. Guests $10. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch avenues). Sunday Feb. 17, 2 p.m. RSVP by Feb. 13 to Sandy, 416-458-1440 or yiddish18@yahoo.ca

• • •

New in Print: Toronto-area dentist **Lawrence L. Gaum**, whose family came from Belarus via Cape Breton (where he was born), has published a collection of autobiographical stories and sketches titled *Living Life and Saying Goodbye*.

The author of a previous book of family history titled *From Belarus to Cape Breton and Beyond*, Gaum's focus continues to be family history, and the present collection includes many stories about relatives from Glace Bay. This diverse assortment is subtitled "Stories that take you far away... and bring you home again." Kudos to Gaum for recording his often-funny reminiscences for the benefit of his grandchildren and their descendants, friends and other interested readers.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series Woody Allen Past and Present with a discussion (with film clips) of *Husbands and Wives, Bullets Over Broadway, Manhattan Murder Mystery, Sweet and Lowdown, Everyone Says I Love You, Match Point, Vicki Christina Barcelona* and *Midnight in Paris*. $12 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Monday, Feb. 11, 7 to 9 p.m. film@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Spectrum Music and Al Green Theatre present Love, Loneliness and the Spaces Between, a Valentine's Day-themed concert with **Jessica Stuart** and the **Spectrum** house band. Inspired by prose and poetry ranging from *The Little Prince* to *Of Poor Bertolt Brecht*. $15, $10. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Wednesday, Feb. 13, 8 p.m.

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents **Jordan Klapman**, pianist and music historian presenting a performance-program on Hollywood's Oscar-winning Jewish songs and composers. Between 1932 and 2010, Jewish songwriters won virtually half of the Oscars for Best Song, composing some of the most beloved music of the last century. Klapman takes a fascinating look at the songs and the lives of composers and lyricists such as **Jerome Kern, Dorothy Fields, Irving Berlin, Harold Arlen, Frank Loesser, Lerner and Loewe**, and **Burt Bacharach**. $3 includes light refreshments. Miles Nadal JCC, Feb. 14, 1:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Hart House Theatre presents **Martin Sherman**'s play *Bent*, a bold, intimate look at the homosexual victims of the Nazi regime, terrorized and forced to wear pink triangles just as Jews wore yellow stars. $25, $15, $10. Hart House Circle, University of Toronto, March 1 to 9. 416-978-8849, www.uofttix.ca

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Hezbollah, Hamas are Israel's chief military foes

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

A generation ago, Israel's battlefield adversaries were primarily the Arab armies of Egypt and Syria, both of which fought a succession of wars with Israel from 1948 onward. Since then, the irregular forces of Hezbollah and Hamas, based in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip and backed by Iran and Syria, have been Israel's chief military foes.

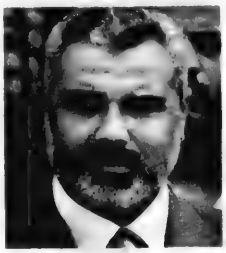
Hezbollah, otherwise known as the Party of God, engaged Israel in a bruising war of attrition in southern Lebanon in the 1980s and 1990s. These battles did not end until Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000. The next round of fighting took place in the summer of 2006, when Hezbollah, touched off a month-long war after killing and kidnapping several Israeli soldiers in the northern Galilee.

Hamas, which emerged during the first Palestinian uprising, terrorized Israelis by means of suicide bombings starting in 1994. Israel responded with a campaign of bombings and targeted assassinations of its leaders. Beginning in 2001, Hamas began firing rockets at Israel, triggering a succession of skirmishes and border wars in 2008-09 and 2012.

Clearly, as Joshua L. Gleis and Benedetta Berti argue in *Hezbollah and Hamas: A Comparative Study* (Johns Hopkins University Press), a first-rate account of their respective development, Hezbollah and Hamas have evolved into important players in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and will continue to play this role in the future.

Founded in 1982, following Israel's invasion of Lebanon, Hezbollah is a multi-faceted Islamic fundamentalist Shiite organization – a political party, a socio-religious movement and a terrorist group.

Although Israel's postwar occupation of southern Lebanon was a key factor in its emergence, at least two other factors accounted for its formation, the co-authors contend. Hezbollah capitalized on Shiite grievances of being treated like second-class citizens in comparison to Sunni Muslims and Christians. As well, Hezbollah was inspired by the Islamic revolution in Iran.



Ismail Haniyeh

"For Iran, having a proxy force in Lebanon allowed it to attack Israel, have a hand in the Arab-Israeli peace process (which it opposed) and expand Shiite influence in the Arab world," write Gleis and Berti.

Syria, too, used Hezbollah as a surrogate in its struggle with Israel. But because the non-sectarian Syrian regime feared that Hezbollah might use its influence to Islamize the Lebanese Shiite community, Syria tried to keep Hezbollah in check by supporting its secular rival, Amal, from which much of Hezbollah's leadership was tapped. Syria's relationship with Hezbollah improved only after 2000, the co-authors note.

From the moment of its establishment, Hezbollah was committed to three objectives: expelling foreign armies – mainly American and French – from Lebanese soil, setting up an Islamic government in Lebanon and wiping Israel off the face of the Earth.

The co-authors claim that Hezbollah thrives on conflict: "Hezbollah's core raison d'être lies in its 'resistance' agenda with respect to Israel... It needs an ongoing confrontation with the Jewish state to maintain both external legitimacy and a wide supportive base."

Hezbollah, given its belief that Israel is an illegitimate and illegal entity, claims that all acts of "resistance" against the Jewish state cannot be considered terrorism. As the co-authors contend, Hamas makes a self-serving distinction between "martyrdom" operations, which are permitted under Islam, and suicide bombings, which are not allowed.

Hezbollah is far more than an anti-Zionist organization, exhibiting "a rabid streak of antisemitism," Gleis and Berti point out.

Hassan Nasrallah, its secretary-general, has been quoted as saying, "If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak and feeble in psyche, mind, ideology and religion, we would not find anyone like the Jew. Notice I did not say the Israeli."

Hassan Nasrallah

Hezbollah also engages in Holocaust denial, placing itself on the same level as neo-Nazis.

Prior to the Second Lebanon War in 2006, Hezbollah fired Katyusha rockets at Israel and launched guerrilla warfare against the Israeli army in Israel's self-declared security zone.

With Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon, the rules of the game changed as Hezbollah shifted the majority of its attacks to the disputed Shebaa Farms region, taken by Israel from Syria in the Six Day War and now claimed by the Lebanese government.

During the early 1990s, Hezbollah moved its operations abroad, bombing the Israeli Embassy and the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires, supposedly with Iran's assistance.

In the past few years, however, Hezbollah has largely refrained from attacking Israel. Israeli deterrence has worked, but will probably not last indefinitely. As Gleis and Berti observe, Hezbollah has been rearming at "a feverish pace," and the day will come when it will throw caution to the wind and try to provoke an incident that will embroil it in battle with Israel yet again.

Like Hezbollah, Hamas is Islamic to the core, having emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. But Hamas is fundamentally a product of violence, having been formed on the anvil of the first Palestinian uprising in 1987.

Not surprisingly, Hamas, like most Palestinian Islamic groups, was influenced by Iran. As Gleis and Berti write, "The [Iranian] revolution provided proof that the Islamists could use the power and ideology of jihad to bring about real change... and wage jihad against Israel."

From the outset, bilateral relations between Hamas and Fatah – the mainstream Palestinian organization founded by Yasser Arafat in the mid-1950s – have been characterized by competition and reciprocal distrust. No such tension appears to have sullied Hamas' relationship with Hezbollah.

After having trounced Fatah in the Gaza Strip's municipal elections in 2005, Hamas won the legislative elections there in 2006, and Ismail Haniyeh was installed as prime minister.

Fatah lost the last election because it was mired in a culture of endemic corruption and was discredited by its failure to deliver services effectively and end Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Gleis and Berti explain.

Although Hamas is pragmatically amenable to signing a long-term truce with Israel, within the context of a two-state solution, it accepts neither Israel's existence nor its legitimacy. According to Hamas, Israel exists on territory deemed to belong to a Muslim religious trust.

Hamas, like Hezbollah, has grown increasingly sophisticated militarily. In last November's eight-day border war, Hamas rockets reached the outskirts of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv without causing death and destruction, shot down by Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system or landing in open fields or in the sea. Although the rockets caused no harm, their range shocked some Israelis.

Politically, Hamas has been effective in Islamizing the Arab-Israeli dispute, the authors add. This, too, is a disquieting trend.

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Soo's Schiller developing into tough guy to play against

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Landon Schiller refused to take "no" for an answer – and in the long run, it got him the result he was looking for.

Last year, the Thornhill native attended the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds' camp, but didn't make the cut. It was back to major midget for him, where he suited up for the Toronto Junior Canadiens.

He didn't mope or pout. Instead, he worked on his game, developing the foot speed and strength he'd need if he wanted to play in the OHL.

Last summer he worked out at the BodySmith gym in Stouffville, along with lots of other OHL players and prospects, following an exercise regimen specifically designed for hockey players.

This season, his efforts paid off: he cracked the starting lineup of the Greyhounds as a 17-year-old right winger.

Schiller recently turned 18 and, after serving a 10-game suspension, he's getting back in the groove with the 'Hounds.

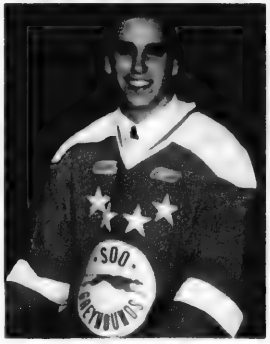
"I always had faith. It was a matter of making it happen," he said.

So far this season, with limited ice time, he's scored one goal, but he has 43 minutes in penalties to go along with it. His stats suggest he's got a lot more to give. As a 16-year-old with the Markham Majors, he scored 14 goals and added 21 assists in 52 games. He appeared in the GTHL all-star game in 2012

He admits coming from major midget to junior hockey was "a huge jump. The hockey is a lot faster, the guys here are a lot stronger."

"At first it was tough, but with all the practising and trying to find where you fit, the guys helped me make the jump," he said. "It's difficult, but it's good, because the guys are welcoming. It's like a family."

Schiller counts Brad Marchand of the Boston Bruins, Mike Richards of the Los Angeles Kings and Jarome Iginla of the Calgary Flames as his favourite NHL players and role models. What he likes about them is that they'll do just about anything to help their team win.



Landon Schiller
(James Egan Photography)

"I work really hard," he said, in evaluating his game. "I'll compete every shift, put pucks on the net, do the little things right."

"To a certain degree [Schiller] is finding his way, what role he's going to fill in the future," said Greyhounds head coach Sheldon Keefe.

Schiller is "an energy guy, versatile who can play all [forward] positions. He's just a very hard-working and respectful player who's eager to contribute to the team. Those are the kinds of guys who are easy to have around," Keefe said.

So far this season, Schiller has played mostly a fourth line, limited-minutes role, but he's moved up when injuries or suspensions hit the team.

The Greyhounds see Schiller's contributions increasing as he grows and gets more mature. He has a well-rounded skill set, including a good shot.

"We believe he'll turn into a nice, all-around player who won't be easy to play against," Keefe said.

Since arriving in Sault Ste. Marie, Schiller has continued to work on his defensive game, killing penalties and developing a more "explosive" first step.

He's also adjusting to life far from home. He's been billeted with a local family and is enrolled in school, where he's finishing Grade 12.

Now in his NHL draft year, Schiller's stats certainly don't jump off the page screaming, "Pick me."

But, he said, "I see it as a marathon, not a sprint. I hope to get more chances to show what I can do next year."

Greyhounds' athletic therapist is a 'hockey guy'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

If you're a physiotherapist, there are plenty of places to ply your craft. But if you're also a hockey guy, then you've got to be at the rink.

Richard Rotenberg is a hockey guy, so it's no surprise that if you check his CV, you'll find plenty of hockey, hockey, hockey.

Rotenberg, 29, has been athletic therapist with the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds for the past two seasons. Before that, he worked with the Barrie Colts, and prior to that, he was with the Queen's University hockey program and the Kingston Voyageurs tier II junior A team.

"I'm a hockey guy," he said on the phone from the Soo. "I grew up playing hockey. That's where my passion lies."

With his training in sports and orthopedic applications, as well as cardio rehab and neurological rehab, hockey has proven to be the ideal venue for him and his skills. "My job essentially is to be with the team all day, every day," he said.

When you're working for a team playing a collision sport, there is no shortage of medical issues to deal with, such as cuts, broken bones, sprains and head injuries.

Most common are contusions (bruises) caused by collisions with players and pucks.

In his years in the OHL, the worst injury he encountered was a player who was knocked unconscious from a clean check. The player was taken off the ice on a stretcher and treated in hospital. Fortunately, the player "is doing great. He made a full recovery."

Working with hockey players is fascinating for Rotenberg. "You never know what you'll get from day to day. You're involved in the game, you meet fantastic people."

Working with juniors is particularly gratifying for him. "You see kids grow up and you try to be part of it the best way you can.

"At this point in my life, I love my job. I love the setting I work in, and it doesn't even feel like work," he said.

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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Bassist bases *The Ancestry Project* on his musical family

Heather Solomon

Zachary Lober wasn't born yet when his grandfather Hy "Blackie" Herman was at the height of his popularity as a bandleader in 1950s Montreal.

Now in his mid-30s, Lober remembers how when he joined his high school's music program, his grandfather began to share his memories.

He didn't learn about the Herman family's longer musical history until after he earned a degree at McGill University studying double bass and worked as a professional jazz bass player in Montreal from 2000 to 2005.

"I wasn't aware at all of my zaide's family's history with music until many years into studying music on my own. I can't explain why it wasn't common knowledge, but once I caught wind of it, I asked questions," Lober says.

He found out that his great-grandfather Israel Herman was a klezmer violinist in Borshov, Poland, with brothers Chaim, who was a drummer, and Sam, a violinist.

Zachary Lober

The family left for Canada in 1924 after a particularly virulent spate of pogroms terrorized the Jewish community. Israel brought along his wife and two-year-old son Hyman, who grew up to love the drums and work with music greats such as trumpet player Maynard Ferguson, and pianists Oscar Peterson and Paul Bley.

Zachary Lober is flanked by his grandparents, Sophie and Hyman Herman, who inspired Lober to write *The Ancestry Project*.

(Photo courtesy of Zachary Lober)

Lober completed his master's degree in 2007 at the Manhattan School of Music and remains based in New York. His grandfather's stories began to percolate into his creative life.

"I thought there's got to be a way to integrate this history into something that I can share that's personal. I recorded interviews with Zaide and decided to incorporate his words into music that I would write," Lober says.

The result is *The Ancestry Project* that played Brooklyn's IBeam performance space to rave reviews and is coming to Montreal's Segal Centre for Performing Arts on Feb. 21.

Lober hand-picked his band, including alto saxophonist David Binney, tenor saxophonist Chet Doxas with whom Lober has collaborated on CDs, pianist John Escreet, who has recorded with Lober in the performance collective The Story, and drummer Damion Reid.

Lober keeps the heartbeat going on both electric and double bass, and he mans the turntables and a midi-sequencer that pops out sound bites and cues certain phrases or plays the interview as an often humorous and sometimes touching narrative over the music.

"I have a whole other interest in hip-hop music and always admired scratch DJs. I had the idea to hit the recordings of Zaide's voice into the band by putting it onto vinyl and having a DJ improvise with his words," says Lober.

"I had to know how to write for the DJ, so I signed up for three months of lessons at the Rock and Soul School in New York and learned so much about the craft that I could do it myself."

The hour-long show follows Herman's immigration, his professional encounters, and admiration of mambo and cha-cha king Tito Puente, combined with snatches of that music and a traditional klezmer *doina* preserved from Israel Herman's day.

Most of the music, however, consists of Lober's original jazz compositions. His fiançée, Alice Zulkarnain, cues projections of wartime Poland and Herman's life and friends, providing a visual context.

"In New York, the audience reaction was great. Through my research, I even found out that the Herman family has a contingent in Long Island, and Chaim's grandson, Solly, a retired drummer and bandleader, came to the show with his wife.

"It was very moving for all of us. That sharing with family is going to happen in a big way in Montreal," says Lober, who will reserve a front row seat for his 86-year-old zaide.

After his Montreal appearance, Lober continues his work as a sideman in New York, Canada and Europe and participates in multiple international jazz festivals, but he's aiming for a major tour of *The Ancestry Project*.

To promote its availability, he's recording the Segal Centre performance on audio and video.

"I think there are a lot of people interested in the show as it relates to their own backgrounds," says Lober.

"It was important to me that it be performed in a theatre-type environment where the community would feel good about seeing it. I want to tour other Jewish cultural centres around the world."

Check out our Heebonics blog to read up on how Canadian clothing retail giant Roots was founded by two Toronto Jews. Also, you can watch a video of Robert Sarner, the company's director of communication and public affairs, telling attendees at Jewish Employment Toronto's (JET) kickoff discussion/Q&A – a program held recently at JUMP (Jewish Urban Meeting Place) – how Roots, founded in 1972, stays relevant to a new generation of consumers.

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נינה שנהב
nina.shenhav@gmail.com

"זה כניראה הולך להיגמר עם החבר שלה, אז אני חייבת להביא אותה איתנו לקפה השבועי, בסדר?" מסבירה לי טלי בטלפון. אני דווקא יחסית די מחבבת את פזית, אחותה. זאת אומרת, לא ממש שונאת אותה. טלי: נינה הגעת. הזמנתי כבר לשלושתינו קפה ועוגות. אם בא לך גם על טוסט, זה כבר יהיה על חשבונך.

אני: הסירי דאגה מליבך. מה נשמע, פזית? שמעתי שזרקת סוף סוף את האירלנדי המעצבן שלך. הקטע שלו לסיים משפטים של אחרים הטריד מאוד.

פזית (מביטה משום מה בטלי, בהלם): מה?! לדעתי את צריכה...

אני (במהירות): להתנצל? כן. כניראה קיבלתי אינפורמציה מוטעית. אני מניחה שלהיפך, כלומר שהאירלנדי המעצבן שלך זרק אותך?

טלי (בזעם לעברי):יודעת מה, תזמיני טוסט. על חשבוני. ככה אולי תדברי פחות

פזית: שון ואני לא סיימנו את מערכת היחסים היפהפיה שלנו. יש רק בעייה קטנטונת. משוכה, אם לדייק, שאנחנו צריכים לעבור. לא ביג דיל. זה רק ש...

אני: שהוא מסיים משפטים של אחרים? כן, מטריד מאוד. תכונה איומה.

פזית: זה לא זה בכלל. זה רק שאני יהודיה. לכן הוא לא רואה אותנו מתחתנים בקרוב. ואני דווקא בכלל לא איכפת לי. העיקר בשבילי זה...

אני: שהוא יתגייר. כן, אני לחלוטין מבינה. איך אחרת?

פזית: לא! מה פתאום! העיקר בשבילי זה...

טלי : שיהיו לך ילדים בקרוב. טוב זה ברור, מתוקה שלי, השעון מתקתק רצח.

פזית: לא! העיקר בשבילי זו האהבה! טלי, אולי גם את תזמיני לך איזה טוסט?!

אני: אבל ידעת מלכתחילה. בואי נגיד שהצלב הענק שעל צווארו יכל להסגיר במעט את הנטיות הלאו דווקא שמיות שלו. שלא לדבר על זה שהוא לא אכלן כפייתי, שהוא אוהב, שלא נדע, ספורט, וכמעט שלא מתקשר לאמא שלו...

פזית: הסימנים אכן היו שם, אבל חשבתי ש...

טלי: שהוא יתגייר למענך. ואם הוא היה גבר אמיתי, זה מה שהוא היה עושה!

אני: טוב, אולי לא מבחינה טכנית. אולי לא ליטרלי, כי מייד אחרי התהליך...

פזית: התחלתי לומר! שחשבתי שהאהבה תגבר על הכל. גם לי לא קל.

טלי: תזרקי אותו, ממי. אנחנו נכיר לך בחור יהודי יפה, גבוה, אתלטי, בלונדיני.

אני: רק שהוא יהיה טיפה נמוך, מקורזל, כהה ושמנמן, אבל את לא שיטחית.

פזית: אז דווקא שתדעו שאני...

טלי: שאת כן שיטחית? שטויות, נסדר לך אחד עשיר. זה הכי חשוב, בתכל'ס.

פזית: אולי תפסיקו לסיים בשבילי משפטים? אני מתה מגעגועים אליו בגללכן!

COCA-COLA SALAD

6 oz cherry-flavored kosher gelatin (not sugar-free)
1 c boiling water
10 oz Coca-Cola
16 oz.can red tart pitted cherries in water
8 oz. can crushed pineapple
1 c chopped pecans

Place gelatin in large bowl and pour over boiling water; stir until dissolved. Stir in Coca-Cola. Refrigerate mixture until partially firm, about 30 mins. Check and stir every 3-5 min. You want it thickened but not set.
Place cherries and juice in food processor fitted with knife blade or in blender. Pulse or blend a few times to lightly chop cherries. Once gelatin mixture has thickened, stir in chopped cherries & juice, pineapple & juice, and pecans. Pour into bowl or gelatin mold. Refrigerate until set or overnight. Remove salad from mold by inverting onto serving platter. Serve cold.

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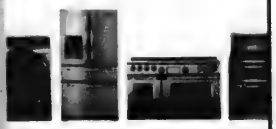
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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

French academic and author Shmuel Trigano, who talks about the Jewish community's problems with the Muslim communities in France.

A panel organized by Congrégation Or Hahayim in Côte Saint-Luc recently discussed the significance of the elections in Israel last month.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says that Israel understands and recognizes the legitimacy of Israelis living outside the Jewish State.

The gap year challenge

Taking a gap year is a daunting thought. It is a promise to yourself to take the search for inner self to the next level.

The obvious comforts – friends, family, home – spring to mind first. Are you prepared to leave all of these behind, for a short while at least? Then the secondary doubts – school, travel partner, what to do – emerge.

These levels of worry build barriers. To find oneself, one must be willing not to worry; one must be willing to try; one must be willing to say not why, but why not. As Nestea says, "Take the plunge." Plunge into this opportunity of a lifetime.

Read entire story online

The Roma: none is too many

Human rights organizations such as the Simon Wiesenthal Center are documenting an increase in violence and vandalism against the Roma and Jewish community of Hungary. Many Roma fearing for their families' lives have arrived in Canada in an attempt to find a safe home.

What they are discovering are laws passed and changes of policy by the Harper government that make refugee claims in Canada more difficult, especially for those coming from countries on Immigration Minister Jason Kenney's "safe" list – places where he says all citizens are safe and secure. Hungary is on that list.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

According to our new laws, refugee claimants from "safe" countries have a few weeks to prepare their hearings, a process you and I couldn't manage easily, and effectively lose their right of appeal. Further, people who claimed refugee status after Dec. 15, 2012, no longer have access to health care through the Interim Federal Health program, including pregnant women, children, and people facing acute crises such as heart attacks. Ask your federal MP to clarify how this is possible.

Kenney has travelled to Hungary and used Canadian tax dollars to underwrite a billboard campaign in Miskolc, a town with one of the largest Roma population in that country. The billboards urge Roma not to come to Canada, and state that "people will be returned very quickly" to Hungary.

The mayor of that town has also responded, threatening that Roma who leave Miskolc and then are shipped back by Canada are not welcome, and will be denied housing and schools for their children. These actions and statements sound eerily familiar. The Roma are truly people without a home.

The following is an email I received from Gina Csanyi-Robah, the executive director of the Toronto Roma Community Centre:

"Dear Avrum: Almost every Roma child from Hungary and the Czech Republic that I have taught in Toronto has reported abuse at school – physical, verbal, and psychological violence from teachers and other students and their parents. Many have reported beatings by skinheads and have shown me scars on their bodies. Many have been deported now. I have had a number of reported teenage suicide attempts as deportation becomes eminent.

"In April 2011, 200 Hungarian Roma families were terrorized for three weeks by neo-Nazis who came to the village of Gyongyospata as participants in a Jobbik rally. Jobbik is a neo-Nazi styled political party that has representation in the Hungarian parliament. The thugs entered schools, stood outside homes, they followed people to the stores and shouted Hitler-like remarks and threatened death."

The police stood by. The Red Cross stepped in. Gina added that many families from Gyongyospata are here as refugees claimants and that two families came to the Roma Centre and told their story to Kenney on Oct. 29, 2011. "These families have lost their asylum claim and are now in the process of removal," Gina lamented.

What's incredibly bizarre, while all of this is happening, Kenney was invited to light a flame of remembrance on International Holocaust Remembrance Day – Jan. 27 – by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem. Somehow, along the road we have redefined our hands-on commitment to "never again" and forgotten we are "none is too many."

Please fix this part of our world. It is broken. Call the Roma Community Centre at 1344 Bloor St. W., at 416-546-2524. See www.romatoronto.org and/or the Facebook group: Toronto Roma Community Centre. Offer help.

After so much Holocaust education, we should know what to do.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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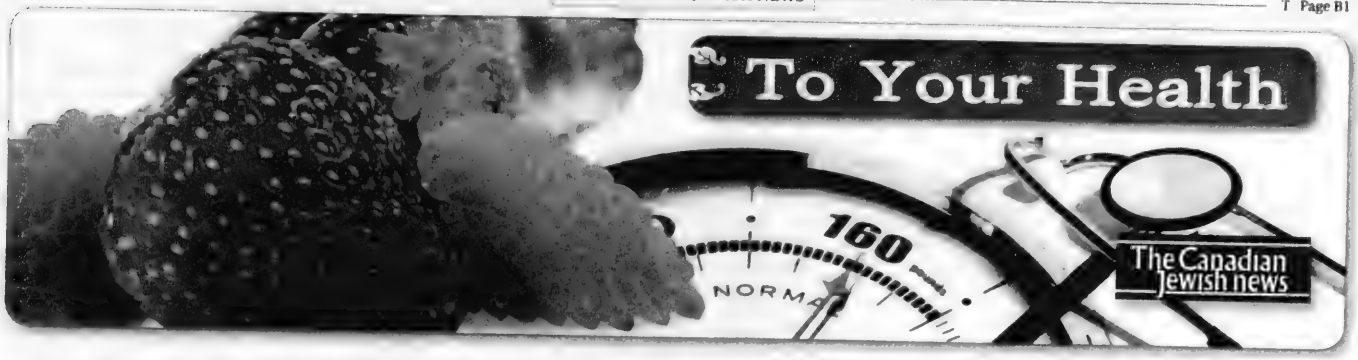

Doulas there to help the new mother

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Pregnant women once used to ask each other, "Who's your doctor?"

Today the question for some is becoming, "Who's your doula?"

If you're wondering, "What's a doula?" the answer is she's a blend of old and new. From an ancient Greek word meaning "female slave," she serves a very traditional role, helping a new mother before, during and after childbirth.

According to the professional organization DONA International, a doula "does not perform clinical or medical tasks such as taking blood pressure or temperature, fetal heart tone checks, vaginal examinations or postpartum clinical care." But she can do almost anything else, from childbirth education to support at home and at the hospital.

Unlike a doctor or nurse, a doula's only responsibility is to care for the mother. Referring to the original Greek, Toronto doula Rachel Shifra Tal, CD(DONA) (a DONA-certified doula), says that "we are a slave to the mother's needs. We're working under her… we're supporting the woman 100 per cent.

"Just because you're in a hospital doesn't mean you're going to have your needs met or have a say in your own care," Tal says. "Most women don't realize [that] their doctor has maybe a 25 per cent chance of being at the birth… they figure… they're going to be monitored every minute."

A doula generally stays "from whenever they call us until two hours after the birth." That constant, reassuring presence, studies have shown, creates better outcomes: fewer Caesarian-sections, lower episiotomy rate, faster recoveries, less postpartum depression and more successful breastfeeding.

Tal meets many "fear-based clients or first time mothers – or both." She's shocked that women feel compelled to share horror stories of labours gone wrong with expectant mothers. "Seasoned mothers think it's okay to tell all these stories to new mothers."

Fathers, too, may be apprehensive. "We were fighting for a couple of generations to get husbands into the delivery room," Jerusalem doula Sarah Goldstein, CD(DONA), says. "Once we got them there, some husbands didn't want to be there, some were very confused about what they should do."

Hiring a doula won't shut out the husband if he wants to stay, Goldstein says. She's not there to replace him, but "to help him to help her.

"Sometimes, birth can be very long, and he's spent, emotionally and physically… As part of that birth team, [a doula] can help… strengthen their relationship."

"The main thing I hear from husbands," Tal says, "is, 'Thank God you were here so I could just be the husband.' They felt more confident in their role because they had somebody behind them all the time." That sometimes means literally. "I've caught a few husbands who've passed out."

Doula Rachel Shifra Tal with her daughter, Shlomit, left, and one of her newest clients, Sadie.

Photo credit: Tamar Tal Mandel

Goldstein, author of *Special Delivery: Jewish Birth Stories of Faith and Inspiration* and a sequel, *More Special Deliveries*, is seeing more demand for doulas in Israel.

As in Canada, the doula's fee is not covered by public or private health insurance. Occasionally, a close relative who wants to give new parents something truly special will offer to pay for a doula. Less-experienced doulas who are not yet well-established may also negotiate a lower rate for their professional services. Student doulas may also be available as an "extra pair of hands" for those who can't afford a doula, says Goldstein, a former social worker who has been training doulas for nearly eight years.

Tal says, "If you're going to… climb Kilimanjaro, you're going to need a tour guide. Birth is an uncharted territory. You need somebody who's been there." Even experienced mothers can benefit, particularly if they've had a past C-section, or if they've had a traumatic or alienating birth experience.

Goldstein sees the doula's job as a spiritual one. "Birth is a time when we're bringing a Jewish neshamah [soul] into the world," says Goldstein, who made aliyah from the United States 33 years ago. "It's a time we connect to something very godly, something that is beyond us." Giving birth can both challenge and awaken women and help them find "strength and courage we never knew we had."

"The Shchinah [God's presence] is there in the delivery room," Goldstein says.

The major drawback to a medicalized birth experience, Goldstein says, is that "we're taking away from women the ability to understand their bodies, [and] instilling a fear." We've come to believe our bodies are weak, but "given the proper support system… if we're treated in a humane way in a birth setting… most women can rise above it and go through the challenge of birth."

Goldstein says that "becoming a mother is the first step toward a lifetime of [empowering] ourselves and our children… We need to be advocates for them, and our first step is in the birthing room."

But DONA warns that the "advocacy role does not include the doula speaking instead of the client or making decisions." Instead, she must convey "the client's wishes… by encouraging her client to ask questions… and to express her preferences and concerns."

Unfortunately, the term "doula" is unregulated: anyone can call herself a doula, and in rare cases, doctors or hospitals have refused to work with doulas, based on a few overstepping the bounds of advocacy, arguing or making unsafe medical recommendations.

"We're not able to come in there with our own agenda…," Tal says. "I want the mother to feel empowered, to feel her voice matters, that she's an active participant in her birth, if she so chooses."

She says she decided to become a midwife after seeing her first birth at 11, and she chose to be a doula after moving to Israel with her parents as a teenager. In the past, she says, doulas weren't necessary because mothers and grandmothers helped at births. Our generation, suffering from a "collective amnesia," has lost that experience to twilight sleep and medical intervention. Through restoring women's confidence, she says, "I would personally love to work myself out of a job."

Tal, who is also a rebbetzin, opening her home for Shabbat meals and Torah classes, sees a lot of overlap between her roles. "Being a doula and being a rebbetzin are the same thing, in a way… you experience very intense life situations with people, counsel people in difficulties, crises, challenges. It's very holy work."

Back to nature to reduce illness

Maxine Seider
Special to The CJN

What is damaging to the environment could also be detrimental to your health, says Betty Rozendaal, a naturopathic doctor in Thornhill, Ont.

The environment and health are two concepts that Rozendaal has merged into one. She believes that environmental toxins, whether from the air we breathe or the products we use, have a major impact on both our physical condition and the natural world.

"We have been conditioned to believe that we need certain products. People don't realize that these product choices impact both the environment and our health," Rozendaal says.

She emphasizes that there are some simple changes that can be made to reduce your exposure to environmental toxins. These can be as simple as changing the products you buy. For example, you can switch from regular produce to organic, and choose less harmful cleaning supplies. One suggestion she offers is exchanging household chemical cleaning products for a vinegar and water solution or baking soda. Vinegar can even be used to create an acid solution to wash fruits and vegetables, in order to minimize the ingestion of harmful chemicals that were once sprayed on them.

Rozendaal practises what she preaches. When she set up her practice, she paid special attention to both the methods and the materials that were used to renovate her clinic. Her intention was to reduce the allergens and toxins that she and her patients would be exposed to on a daily basis.

Dr. Betty Rozendaal performs acupuncture.

She stresses the importance of harmony between nature and humans. "We are living in a world where we have as much impact on the environment as it has on us."

Prior to becoming a naturopathic doctor, Rozendaal worked as an environmental consultant. Early in her career she travelled to Indonesia to help develop an environmental research centre. This sparked her interest in teaching people how to take care of their environment. She noticed that in many developing countries, the environmental standards were lower than those in North America.

Clean water, a basic need for survival, was often contaminated by household and industrial waste. Her role was to teach people how to check the quality of water. She hoped that she was leaving them with the skills needed to ensure quality and safe drinking water.

As a child, Rozendaal already had health care as a career idea in the back of her mind. After completing two degrees in environmental science, travelling, working in the environmental field and spending many years working for various large energy companies, she made the decision to become a naturopathic doctor. It seemed the obvious choice to her as a way to merge her two fields of interest. Her primary goal was to educate people and lessen the disconnect between what we do and the effect on our health.

"It's important for people to be informed in the choices they make and the impacts it will have. Awareness is key," Rozendaal says.

Being healthy does not have to be difficult. By simplifying the products we use and turning back to nature, we can improve both the environment and our health.

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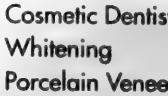
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Fitness program combines several disciplines

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

"No matter what your fitness level is, or your age, you can benefit from doing non-impact exercises," says Hayley Borden of Toronto, the creator of Pilatecize, a custom fitness program that combines a number of programs and techniques.

Pilatecize combines the core principles of Pilates, the flexibility of yoga, the balance and co-ordination of the exercise ball, strength training with resistance bands and ballet movements into one complete mind/body workout.

Recognized internationally as a fitness health expert, motivational speaker and sports enthusiast, the 48-year-old has trained many celebrities and professional athletes including members of the Toronto Blue Jays, the Rolling Stones, PGA golfers, professional squash, tennis and soccer players, and corporate executives.

Borden, who is a certified pilates fitness expert, says that with Pilatecize, you can get twice the workout in half the time, and she stresses that the right attitude is essential to support a healthy lifestyle.

"As you strive to live a fit, healthy lifestyle, your mind is the best tool you have. Your thoughts and your attitude can make all the difference. By changing them, you can change your life."

She told *The CJN* that she learned the hard way. "About 17 years ago, I was a single mother, depressed, overweight and out of shape. I realized I needed help."

She began taking courses in holistic nutrition and, along with changes in food and exercise, she took acting classes and is a member of ACTRA.

She went on to take her personal training certificate at Ryerson University and later taught body movement as a faculty member in the drama department.

Borden could be a prototype for the Zoomer generation. She has completed numerous marathons, triathlons and motocross events, and done racecar driving, scuba diving and skydiving.

Paul Godfrey, former president of the Toronto Blue Jays Baseball Club, in a thank you-note to Borden on behalf of the team, notes that her Pilatecize program was of significant assistance to the players and coaches.

"I hope that the Pilatecize program will become part of our regular strengthening and conditioning program to improve the players' flexibility, strength and performance," he wrote.

Holt Renfrew, a leading retail store, featured Borden in an all-day event titled All About You, which focused on health and well-being.

"Her bubbly personality and wealth of knowledge was definitely an asset. Our customers loved her," said Sally Scott, director of marketing for Holt Renfrew.

"Haley is truly Toronto's queen of Pilates. She makes exercising fun and enjoyable. She teaches you to understand your body and work with it, not against it. She actually makes me look forward to working out."

This message is reflected in a note from Sherry Cooper, a global economic strategist and executive vice-president of Harris Bank (Chicago) and BMO Financial Group (Toronto).

"An hour with Haley Borden flies by, but the results are amazing. Within a few sessions, you can see and feel the results of increased muscle toning and strength."

She adds, "Haley customizes the workout for all levels and pre-conditions. She has a bubbly personality and clearly enjoys her work."

Borden has appeared in numerous television commercials and writes for a variety of magazines.

To view Borden's video go to www.pilatecize.com or contact her at haley@pilatecize.com.

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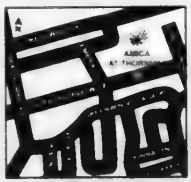

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Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

Bennett Cohen is an unlikely person to head the International Association of Women Runners.

The 55-year-old father of two wears two hats. By day he's a business executive working in the computer component industry, but on weekends and evenings he specializes in coaching female runners aged 40 years and older.

"Coaching is a labour of love. I've been passionate about running since 1979," Cohen says, explaining that he started running that year because he thought "it would be a good activity to counterbalance his sedentary job as a mechanical engineer."

While Cohen switched careers four years later – he went back to school to get an MBA – running has remained an important part of his life.

He also started doing research on running and exercise physiology. Other runners began asking him for advice, or they had running questions, and that research work led to active coaching evenings and weekends.

When he began coaching 12 years ago, he worked with both men and women "The practice eventually migrated to women," he says, "because my three-day-a-week running program appealed to women with busy schedules."

Much of Cohen's research focused on best training practices and injury prevention, and he discovered that the public was getting a lot of misinformation. "There are myths perpetrated in pop media that had been disproved by scientific research."

A case in point is the myth that training five or six days a week can improve one's results. Cohen points out that people following such a rigorous routine are often overtraining, which can make them more injury prone. "The body needs time for recovery."

Running three days a week, you'll race your best and reduce the risk of injury.

"None of my coaching clients have missed their goals in a race due to injury, while following my program, and practically all of them have dramatically improved their times running three days a week," he says.

Another myth is the practice of stretching as part of a warm-up. "Everyone believed that stretching would reduce injury, but research shows that there's no proof that stretching reduces injury."

In fact, he says stretching before a race can result in a slower running.

He also recommends exercises that strengthen the feet and lower legs to prevent injury.

Cohen is now spreading the word on injury prevention for runners with his recently published ebook, *Injury Free Running for Women Over 40*. The advice is applicable to runners of both genders, he says.

"Research studies show that 63 per cent of runners get injured every year," he says. "There is a huge need in the general running community to have access to information based on real science to reduce the risk of injury."

He adds that his ebook provides solutions on how to get back to running following an injury.

In 2009, Cohen and his wife, Gail Gould, formed the International Association of Women Runners. Among the services it offers is a free weekly newsletter covering a variety of topics that include nutrition, training tips and injury prevention.

Cohen says he finds coaching with women very rewarding, because they tend to be motivated by intrinsic or internal factors such as what happens to them emotionally as a result of achieving their running goals.

"It's a generalization, but men are more motivated by extrinsic factors like competing against someone, he explains. "They want to run faster than their buddy, or they want to run a race in a particular time."

When women reach their goals, they find they often have increased confidence, he says. "A feeling of success spills over into other areas of their life. They become positive role models for friends and peers."

He says the runners he attracts are not beginners. "They have specific goals that they want to accomplish."

And his personalized running and training program is done in an unconventional way – through phone and email. "This removes the geographical restrictions of traditional coaching," he says. "Coaching clients by phone and email fits well for women with busy schedules."

His clients live all over North America, and he actually works with a woman from Christmas Island, which is off the coast of Australia. "I do most of the coaching by email," he says, "but I also speak with her by phone."

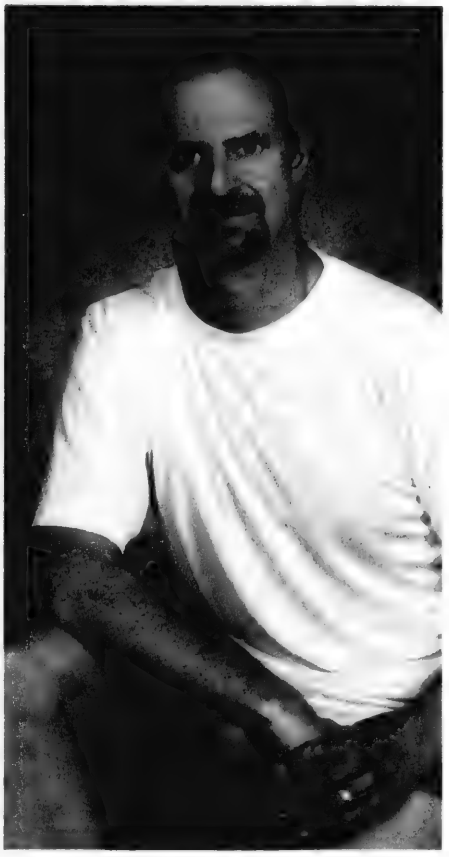
One of his most memorable coaching experiences was his work seven years ago with a woman who was not athletic. "She was the type of person who would be chosen last for a team in gym class."

He coached her for four months to help her achieve her goal of running a half marathon.

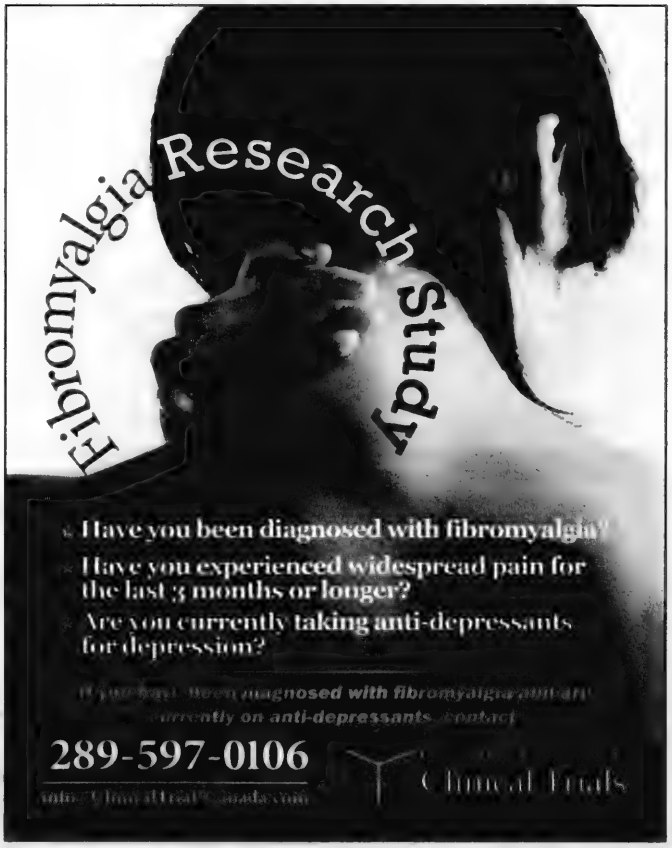
"She completed the training and stuck with the program. On race day she completed the half marathon and beat her goal time.

"She said to me, 'For the first time in my life I feel like an athlete.' That was one of the most meaningful compliments I ever received as a coach. You could see the transformation in her over the time I worked with her."

Injury Free Running for Women Over 40 can be downloaded at this webpage: injuryfreerunningforwomen.com. For information about coaching, go to www.iawr-connect.com/coaching or phone 1-888-565-7444.



Bennett Cohen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Healthy eating starts at the grocery store

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

There are few of us who aren't aware of our waistlines, and even fewer who don't secretly wish we could be a different shape – usually thinner. And it's common sense that what we eat has a major impact on our size. But so does how we shop for our food. The trip to the grocery store and the way we go through the aisles is the starting point for our consumption. Change that pattern and there's a good chance we could change our shape, too. Here are some suggestions.

Don't shop hungry. The golden rule of grocery shopping is to eat before you leave home. Hunger can make everything look good, and by shopping on a full stomach, you're likely to have more control over your purchases.

Shop around the perimeter of the store. When you arrive, avoid the centre aisles in favour of the perimeter, says Jennifer Libman, a Toronto dietician. "This is where the healthiest products like fresh fruits and vegetables, milk and other dairy products, grain products and meats and alternatives are found," she says. The bulk of your shopping cart should be comprised of fruit and vegetables – canned and frozen varieties are okay too, she adds. "Just make sure to choose ones without added salt or sugar. And challenge yourself to try a new fruit or vegetable every week!"

Check what's inside the product. It's useful to look at the ingredients list of a product you're considering buying. But be sure to check out the serving size first, Libman says. "Small packages may actually contain two or three servings of the product, so look out for that. Use nutritional labels to compare similar products and choose the ones that are lower in fat, saturated fat and sodium, and higher in fibre and vitamins and minerals."

Lauren Kramer shops for produce.

If you are going to shop the centre aisles for snacks, choose air popped or light microwave popcorn, pretzels, baked chips, cut up fruits and vegetables, unsalted nuts and whole grain cookies. "No-sugar-added puddings, bean dips and low-fat cheese are OK, but watch out for sugary drinks," Libman says. "Water is always the best – or low-fat milk, tea and small amounts of 100 per cent juice."

Those centre aisles are home to processed food like sugary cereals, white starches, pastas and bottled fruit punches that contain high fructose corn syrup. If these aisles are your usual haunts, be warned – they are dangerous territory for shoppers. The trouble is, those processed foods are so nicely packaged, they're very tempting, says Suzie Fishbein, author of the *Kosher by Design* cookbook series.

Be snack smart. "Choose nuts for snacking and keep your fridge stocked with lots of fresh fruit that's prepared and cut up," Fishbein advises. "If you see melon cubes in a beautiful bowl, you might be more inclined to eat it than if it was a whole melon. One of my late-night snack treats is fat-free whipped cream and strawberries, but consider freezing grapes for those sweet cravings, or stock up on different flavoured rice cakes."

Make your own meals as much as possible. Many people complain that they do not have time to cook, a prime reason they reach for processed meals. But no one has *that* little time, Fishbein insists. "An egg white omelette will take you four minutes to make for dinner. A piece of flounder, sole or tilapia is healthy and cooks fast – in seven minutes. Add some whole-wheat couscous and you have a healthy meal," she suggests.

No time to roast a chicken? Opt for chicken pieces or chicken breasts, as they cook faster. "Don't make being short of time an excuse to eat inferior and unhealthy food," Fishbein says.

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Stronger friendships for a happier, longer life

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

In her recent book, *MWF Seeks BFF* (dating-scene slang for "married white female seeks best friend forever"), author Rachel Bertsche wrote that "having strong friendships is more likely to make a person happy than is having money."

Sibby Sherman probably knew that already. At 79, she says more than six decades of friendship with her BFFs has kept her going through good times and bad. "It's helped a lot."

From four girls in their early teens – "Frances, Dorothy, Phyllis and myself" – in downtown Toronto, the group expanded in high school to include four more – Ruth, Sylvia, Audrey and Violet. "They joined in, and we just became very good friends... We had our own club, called Club Tamar."

Their single days were a fertile time for friendships and fun. "We had a ball at the Hadassah Bazaar. Some of the girls went to Sainte-Agathe [Que.] for summer vacation, winter vacation. We used to go to Crystal Beach [Ont.] – it was the place to be. My parents had a cottage there, many moons ago."

Even hard at work, they were together. While Phyllis helped in her family's women's wear store, Sherman says, "Frances and I would go there on the weekends and help her. We had a ball doing that."

Marriage and children never interrupted. "We were at each other's bar mitzvahs, bat mitzvahs, weddings... it was a little bit hard to see each other as much, but we still kept in touch." Phyllis married and moved to New York, but always made an effort to come back to mingle with the old crowd.

They still try to get together once a month, a dinner date they all look forward to. Ruth Berger, 80, says, "It's great to be around them... We've been through good times and bad times. There's been divorces, we've had husbands die, we've always been together through that."

Researching her book, Bertsche found studies showing that good friendships seem to help heart health. In one study of Swedish men, lack of social support was "one of the two leading risk factors for heart attacks and death from coronary artery disease" (the other was smoking).

A 2004 study of women in the United States showed that strong social ties may improve survival among women with suspected coronary artery disease. Factors included how many people the women socialized with and the types of interactions. And the *American Journal of Clinical Oncology* published a report in August 2012 showing that social attachments may help patients with ovarian cancer.

Bertsche wrote that, with breast cancer in her mother's family, "when I came across a study of women with breast cancer that found that those who had 10 or more close friends pre-diagnosis were four times more likely to survive... I take note... My mom, so far, has been cancer-free. Still, this study makes me want to round up the neighbours and drag them to her apartment until she's weaving friendship bracelets with 10 other middle-aged women. You can't be too careful."

Back row, from left: Ruth Berger, Sylvia Hebscher, Dorothy Gaudin. Front row, from left: Audrey Rotenberg, Sibby Sherman, Frances Shauh.

Bertsche's quest was spurred by a move away from New York City where she'd always lived close to longtime BFFs. Her goal wasn't replacing them, but finding new friends she can call at the drop of a hat. She quotes an essay in which author Ann Patchett writes: "That's my idea of real intimacy: it's not the person who calls to say, 'I'm having an affair'; it's the friend who calls to say, 'Why do I have four jars of pickles in my refrigerator?'"

Sherman and her buddies are "jars of pickle" friends – always have been, always will be. "We've had our wonderful good times," says Sherman, "and we've had our tragedies," like when one friend lost her son and they all came together to offer support, along with family and other friends. "Of course, we do have other friends... this is just our 'group.'"

"When we [each] had our first grandchild, Frances Shauh... would make us a beautiful afghan. My older granddaughter is 27; to this day... she snuggles up with it – she will not let that afghan go."

The friends have also comforted each other through the loss of three of their own: Edith, Phyllis and Violet. "Violet... borrowed my wedding gown," Sherman says. "I was married a few months before her, and she loved my gown so much, she actually wore my gown. That goes to show how close we were."

The secret to staying close? Sherman says, "Really keep in touch with each other. Don't let years go by that you don't talk to each other." And let grudges go for the sake of peace. "I don't recall ever having a real argument... We've never come to the point where we've stopped talking to each other."

And a spontaneous phone call can't hurt. "When Frances called me to wish me a happy new year from Florida, her first words were 'Happy New Year, girlfriend!' Even at our age, we consider ourselves girlfriends."

Girlfriends are great, according to life-cycle expert Gail Sheehy. In an October 2011 article in *USA Today*, she reported on a Gallup-Healthways poll showing that women with strong friendships are more likely to be optimistic and have a strong sense of meaning and engagement in their lives. And by "friendship," she meant real-life, pick-up-the-phone-and-call friendships, not online virtual "friends," who won't be there, Sheehy wrote, "when you have a blowup with your boss and fear for your job. If you have no ready social outlet, you'll likely start to sleep poorly and feel your energy drain. The best way to recover optimism is to walk and talk with a girlfriend or a group."

For the past couple of years, with some of the group away in Florida each winter, Sherman and her friends here in Toronto have made their own sunshine bonding over mah-jong. "We just love it – it's a game we enjoy, but it's also a social time for us. That's when we do all our chatting."

As for Bertsche, she didn't exactly find a new BFF in the year allotted for the challenge. But she did finish the year far less lonely than at the start, having unearthed a few facts about friendship that Sherman probably could have told her years ago.

Being friends, says Sherman simply, has "just made us complete and just so happy." Her old friend Ruth Berger agrees. "There's nothing like the old friends... We have history. We really do have history."

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Rose Reisman's tips on eating healthy in restaurants

Jennifer Friedman
Special to The CJN

Now that the rich meals and indulgent desserts that represent the holiday season are behind us, many Canadians are ready to make healthy changes for the new year.

Busy lives and packed schedules can make sticking to resolutions difficult, and it's often tempting to turn to restaurants to make our lives a little easier. Restaurant meals, however, are almost always higher in calories, fat and sodium than foods prepared at home, and menu descriptions can be deceiving, making it difficult to know which items are healthy choices.

Rose Reisman, health and wellness entrepreneur, has some advice to help Canadians navigate restaurant menus so that they can eat out without sacrificing their health.

Her latest book, *Choose It and Lose It*, aims to help Canadians make healthy choices when they are dining in restaurants.

"The typical Canadian eats out 11 times during a two-week period," said Reisman. "The good news is that you can make significant changes to your health by learning how to make informed decisions and not being fooled by healthy-sounding menu descriptions. It's possible to eat out seven days a week without ever gaining weight."

Rose Reisman

Choose It and Lose It takes on several common myths about restaurant meals. One is the mistaken belief that vegetarian dishes are always healthy. "Meatless dishes can contain loads of fat, cheese, oil or nuts, and can be very high in calories, overall fat and even saturated fat," said Reisman.

Another misconception is that chicken and fish dishes are always healthier than red meat. "Things like tuna are packed in oil and mixed with mayonnaise, and chicken is often battered or fried," she said. "As a health-conscious consumer, you always need to ask how the foods are prepared."

Learning restaurant jargon is key to making healthy choices. "Decoding menu descriptions can be tricky, but there are certain buzzwords that you can watch for when deciding what to order," said Reisman. For example, words like "crispy" or "crunchy" typically means the item has been deep-fried. Secret sauces are often mayonnaise or oil based, and prime meats can contain 50 per cent more calories and fat than other cuts of meat.

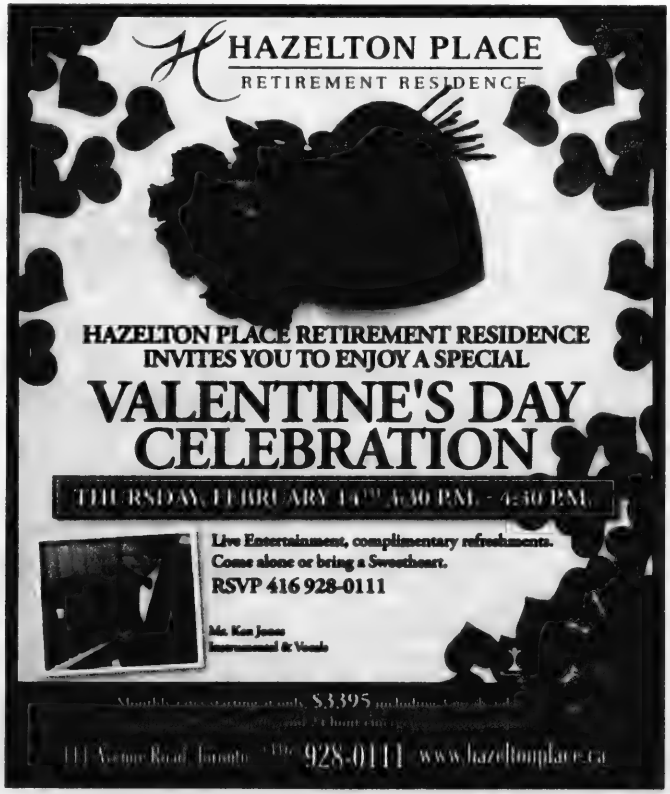
"Look for menu descriptions like grilled, poached, roasted or baked," said Reisman. "These cooking methods tend to use less fat." Diners should feel free to ask for menu items to be customized to their own needs. "Even if it's not listed on the menu, doesn't mean it can't be prepared in the kitchen."

Choose It and Lose It also offers guidance to readers about the healthier options available at common ethnic restaurants. Regardless of the type of restaurant you end up in, it's possible to make healthy choices.

Reisman encourages parents to let their children choose from the regular menu rather than the one for kids. "Children's menus are almost always full of deep-fried options and rarely have very many vegetables," she said. "Even if the portions are too large, it's better to take half home or split amongst two kids."

Parents should be aware that their children learn by example, so if they want to teach their children good eating habits, then they should be making healthy choices as well, Reisman stresses. "Kids learn by osmosis – they'll want to order what you do."

The good news is that eating healthy in restaurants doesn't mean you need to give up dessert. The key is to keep it small. "Usually, we can satisfy our sweet tooth after a few bites, so why do we need to eat such a large portion?" said Reisman. "Split a dessert among the table, or better yet, many restaurants are now offering miniature-sized desserts so you can still have that sweet ending to your meal."



Mount Sinai poet-in-residence helps staff build resilience

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

There's nothing unusual about people lining up in the cafeteria at Mount Sinai Hospital. But on this day in October, the lineup was not for food.

Patients, volunteers and clinical and administrative staff were waiting at the Spontaneous Poetry Booth, where poet Ronna Bloom was sitting at the table writing poetry on demand.

"I wrote 20 poems in 1-1/2 hours," she recalls. "I said to people, 'What do you need a poem about?' Then I would write a poem about the subject for a dollar."

The money went to the hospital, she adds.

This poetry booth is one of several projects Bloom is spearheading as poet-in-residence at Mount Sinai Hospital. Her term officially began this past fall.

A writer, psychotherapist, teacher and author of five books of poetry, Bloom was awarded a $10,000 artist-in-the-workplace grant by the Ontario Arts Council, which Mount Sinai Hospital agreed to match.

The programs she's offering include readings on the medical units, as well as workshops and writing coaching sessions for staff.

The poet-in-residence falls under the auspices of the health, arts and humanities program of the University of Toronto department of psychiatry's division of psychotherapy, the humanities and educational studies.

Dr. Allan Peterkin, a psychiatrist at Mount Sinai, heads the health, arts and humanities program at U of T.

"We're trying to introduce all kind of arts-based learning. It's about how the arts can inform the work we do as clinicians."

This humanities/arts educational group thought it would be "exciting" to have a poet on site at the hospital, he says, explaining that poetry allows for periods of reflection. "People can explore challenges and conflicts."

The poetry workshops enable staff to cope with stress. "It helps the staff take better care of themselves. This program builds resilience."

Peterkin says the poet-in-residence is an extension of narrative medicine, which he often utilizes in his clinical work with patients. He notes that narrative medicine – which incorporates storytelling with patients – can be done through reflective writing or even through reading literature.

"There is a culture of honouring stories at Mount Sinai," he says, pointing out that the hospital runs several narrative medicine programs embracing arts and humanities, among them, a monthly cinema group and a literary journal, which are both open to public participation.

Ronna Bloom, left, poet- in-residence at Mount Sinai Hospital, is seen at the Spontaneous Poetry Booth with Melissa Barton, the hospital's director of occupational health, wellness and safety.

The hospital publishes its journal, *Ars Medica: A Journal of Medicine, the Arts and Humanities*, twice a year.

The new poetry program adds another dimension to arts and humanities at the hospital, Peterkin says.

"The poet-in-residence is a perfect fit. Ronna is a gifted poet and teacher. We are really fortunate to have her."

Bloom, who gives a course in personal narrative writing in the continuing education department at U of T, has also been the university's "poet-in-community" since 2008.

In that capacity, she has facilitated several series of workshops at the university using poetry.

"The workshops help students and staff explore their passions and needs in a non-academic environment. It's a way to integrate their scholarly interests with their personal life and concerns," she says.

At Mount Sinai, staff use the writing workshops to connect to what they're doing, she says. "It's a way to ask questions, to write about personal feelings and to reflect on their work life."

The workshops are usually one hour long. "There's a lot of intimacy," but she stresses that there is no pressure for participants who come from many different departments, to share what they write.

But when people do share, "they express relief that they can express bottled-up feelings through their writing," she says.

"They are often surprised that their experiences are echoed by other people in the room."

Bloom describes the writing process as "a kind of alchemy between the poem and the person. We don't know what's coming. It's quite an amazing thing to get out of the way and let the poem come."

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Food can be your best medicine

Beverly Levitt
Special to The CJN

Broccoli whisks carcinogens out of your cells. Tomatoes disrupt a merger of molecules that could be carcinogenic. Garlic lowers your cholesterol.

Almost daily, headlines shout out a new study reiterating what Hippocrates knew all along – "Thy food shall be thy remedy." Certainly the father of medicine wasn't referring to burgers and fries, fried chicken and pepperoni pizza, North Americans' favourite foods, even though reams of research indicate a diet high in fat and low in fibre contributes to every illness from colon cancer to heart disease.

Enter the baby boomers, the first generation to try to deliberately reverse the aging process and progression of disease and be proactive in extending their lives. They are excitedly entering produce sections, piling fruits and vegetables into shopping carts.

But after being told for years that a vitamin a day keeps the doctor away, why should we suddenly believe we can not only get enough nutrition out of our food, but that it will prevent and cure disease?

We simply need to read the latest studies disproving claims for supplements such as beta-carotene.

First it was the widely publicized CARET study that said beta-carotene might not be the answer to heart disease. Then the *New England Journal of Medicine*'s report linking it to cancer was decidedly pessimistic. But the topper is a new study reported in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, which reiterated the importance of taking beta-carotene with vitamins C and E because using it alone can cause it to turn into a damaging free radical.

Even the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, while acknowledging that foods rich in vitamin E and beta-carotene can help cancer and heart disease, do not make the same claim for the supplements.

"This does not invalidate Linus Pauling's lifetime study of vitamin C and its connection to the prevention and cure of the common cold, that iron is closely linked with anemia, calcium is important in preventing osteoporosis, folic acid (one of the B vitamins) can help block birth defects. But the variety of nutrients you get from your diet can't be replaced by supplements from the health food stores," says Riva Touger-Decker, director of the master's program in clinical nutrition at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey...

"If you eat carrots, you're getting beta carotene, dietary fibre, carotenoids, phytochemicals. If you take a beta-carotene supplement, that's all you're getting. And you're not even sure it's being absorbed," Touger-Decker says.

"If you need vitamins, something is wrong with your diet," says nutritionist and registered dietitian Elissa Fleiss.

"Supplements are medicine," says Annemarie Colbin, author of *Food and Healing* (Ballantine, 1996). "People should be cautious before taking them."

Keith Ayoob, assistant professor of pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, stresses the danger of taking megadoses of single nutrients. "Vitamins and minerals work synergistically and interrelate. By taking too much of one, you risk creating an imbalance."

Linda Van Horn, professor of preventive medicine at Northwestern Medical School, agrees. "People think just because they're popping vitamin E, or even a cholesterol-lowering pill, they can continue devouring their daily dose of greasy hamburgers, chocolate doughnuts and banana cream pie."

On the other hand, phytochemicals (naturally occurring chemicals found in fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains) not only yield a plethora of vitamins and minerals, they are also effective at fighting and preventing killer diseases including cancer, heart disease and hypertension, she adds.

"Then my mother was right when she told me to finish my spinach," muses Marvin Geller, director of Princeton University's counselling centre.

"But maybe she should have added kale, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, collard and turnip greens, kale and okra," says Ayoob.

"With the explosion of knowledge, it's hard to make unconscious decisions anymore," Geller says. "We're told if we eat dessert, our arteries will get clogged; if we pass up our vegetables, we're missing an opportunity for phytochemicals. We can't even look at food without thinking about which ones will make us live longer."

Calcium is one of the supplements routinely prescribed to prevent and treat osteoporosis, but its most beneficial sources are highly controversial.

Andrew Nicholson, director of preventive medicine for Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in Washington, D.C., stresses that the best source of calcium is greens and beans. He scoffs at the visual of celebrities wearing milk moustaches as a fraudulent campaign connecting dairy products with good bones.

"Eating a high dairy, high meat diet is dangerous – people don't need that much protein," Fleiss says.

She, Nicholson, Dr. Dean Ornish, founder of the Preventive Medicine Research Institute for the cure of heart disease, and John Robbins, among others, recommend a plant-based diet, citing that too much protein and fat causes many diseases including heart disease and osteoporosis.

Researchers at Michigan State showed that by age 65, female vegetarians had a measurable bone loss of 18 per cent while meat eaters lost 35 per cent.

Diet has also proven beneficial in the treatment of diabetes. Nicholson says patients are achieving miraculous results by changing to a high-fibre, low-fat, plant-based diet. There's a dramatic decrease in their medical needs; many can eliminate their daily dose of insulin altogether.

Dr. Anthony Capobianco, doctor of osteopathy, in Long Island, N.Y., doesn't give people lists of what to eat and what to avoid. "It's not about changing diets – it's about raising your consciousness... It's [also] important to love what you eat. If someone absolutely hates broccoli, no matter how healthy it is, it won't do him any good."

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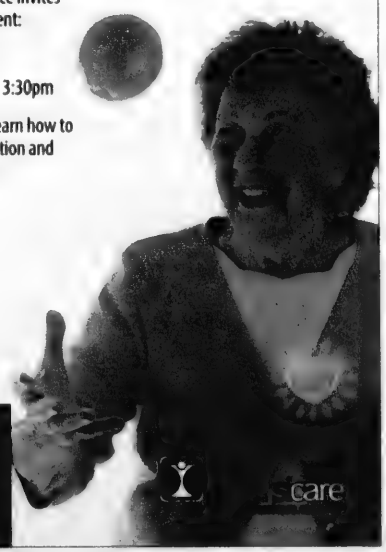

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Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

Everyone agrees – you should learn to meditate. For stress, better sleep, to relax, enjoy your family life, or improve your focus on school or career.

Maybe your doctor even suggested meditation, now that its health benefits have been reported in studies from Harvard University and other mainstream institutions.

But it's easier said than done, as Torontonian Mordechai Chemel discovered. A social worker who spent 10 years counselling clients with stressful medical conditions, he quickly realized that very few professionals had resources to help beginners get started. Clients are told, "I don't really know. See what's online."

Online, they usually find two possibilities: a popular but complicated medical meditation program, largely inaccessible to laypeople – in which case, "they're in for a long, complicated, overwhelming ride," Chemel says – or one of many religious meditation programs.

"People may be hesitant to go to the local monastery or Zen temple," says Chemel, who studied advanced meditation in Japan before he received his master's degree from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work at Yeshiva University. "In addition to learning meditation's benefits... [they're] also exposed to all kinds of religious philosophy sprinkled in... The whole environment may have all kinds of things that a Jewish person specifically is not going to be comfortable with, like idols, burning incense, etc."

Chemel hoped to create a program that could guide a person with no previous experience directly into meditation, without additional religious messages: "Why not extract the key essential components... and create a program that can be easily learned and practiced?"

Chemel spent years combing through those complex meditation programs, drawing out "their essential therapeutic aspects and then creating a user-friendly easy-to-learn meditation program." Along the way, he recruited four co-authors to share their areas of expertise, creating a program they could all stand behind: practical, engaging, easy-to-learn and affordable. "They all edited and added their pieces to it," says Chemel.

His co-authors were James Brawer, a professor of anatomy and cell biology at McGill's faculty of medicine whose interest in meditation evolved from years of teaching functional neuroanatomy; Dr. Lionel Gerber, a psychiatrist with Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre; Abe Kass, a Toronto social worker in private family practice, and Leo Steiner, a Toronto clinical psychologist in private practice who uses relaxation techniques and cognitive therapy with his clients.

Mordechai Chemel

The result, Chemel says, is a three-CD program he calls the "A to Z of meditation." Available through the authors' website, healthbasedmeditation.com, both in CD form for $45.99 or as an MP3 download for $29.99, the program jumps right in with its first track, the "Quick Start Instructions."

Chemel says, "We're not asking a person to stop their job or change their schedule. It's just 15 to 20 minutes once or twice a day... The program's designed to be manageable. We're not looking at hours sitting on a mountaintop."

The short, guided sessions cover the basics such as what to wear, how to sit, where to sit, ways to sit – "including on a chair, so it really is accessible for everyone." Then the CD leads listeners through their first encounter with meditation. Progressively longer sessions help increase focus. The program trains listeners to concentrate on one specific physical sensation during meditation so their thoughts don't wander.

"There are instructions and encouragement sprinkled throughout," says Chemel. "A person can get their feet wet and feel they've got a guide right with them." Beyond meditation, Chemel says, "there are also optional guided relaxation exercises for those looking for something easier to do – five to 10 minutes for a quick relaxation experience."

Soon, they're ready for the full-length 20-minute meditation, with three background options (silence, nature sounds, or Eastern flute music). "They're actually cued as to when to begin, told to let the CD play, and they'll be instructed as to when the session is over."

Chemel and his co-authors have done their best to make meditation easy, but they've also included all the information curious users will need, including a full audio manual "with questions about meditation, background information, the history of meditation... how the scientific community became intrigued by its benefits. Everything in these three CDs is there so that anyone can access it."

A guidance counsellor in a Jewish high school, Chemel believes meditation's benefits transcend stereotypes of age and lifestyle. From teenagers to middle-aged professionals and seniors, or for those with health problems – the program includes the option to lie down – meditation helps develop a positive attitude, lower blood pressure, control racing thoughts, and recognize defeating, negative or anxious thoughts.

"In our society, we focus on what we say, on what we do, but not our thoughts. We don't necessarily realize we have the ability to control our thoughts... Through meditation, one begins to get control back in... deciding what kinds of thoughts to accept."

Doctors and therapists can confidently recommend health-based meditation regardless of clients' religion and time commitments. "Before, [they] didn't really have anything other than a couple of complicated medical-based programs that involved tremendous discipline and commitment. For your average person who doesn't have a lot of time, our program is something quick and easy."

For more information, visit healthbasedmeditation.com or email info@healthbasedmeditation.com.

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Clinic takes multidisciplinary approach to sleep problems

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

When Dr. Adam Moscovitch first dabbled in sleep disorders some 25 years ago, he wanted to explore the relationship between sleep problems and mood disorders.

Dr. Adam Moscovitch

"I had an interest in seasonal affective disorder, and research showed there was a connection between sleep deprivation and depression."

But once the Calgary-trained psychiatrist delved further, he discovered that sleep deprivation is a complex sub-specialty.

"I was very excited about this field. There are more than 80 different sleep disorders."

He went on do a three-year fellowship at Stanford University before returning to Calgary to set up the Canadian Sleep Institute.

Three years ago, Moscovitch, "moved to Toronto for love," as he puts it," and today he heads the Somni Sleep Clinic (491 Bathurst St., Suite 203, 416-784-1430) and is the acting senior consultant for several sleep labs in the GTA.

He stresses that a disorder is not an occasional sleep disturbance, but rather a sleep problem that persists over several months. "It has a significant impact on one's physical, psychological, educational or occupational functioning."

The Somni clinic offers a multidisciplinary approach to figuring out an individual's sleep problem.

"We look at physical, environmental and psychological causes," he says.

"We can address the problem following an assessment. There are usually three or four different things contributing to the individual's problem."

He says there's an overlap between sleep problems and depression and anxiety disorders, as well as chronic pain conditions such as fibromyalgia.

According to Moscovitch, sleep disorders connected to insomnia are also common among people who do shift work or who work long hours.

He says that through his clinical research in occupational sleep disorders, he has become a leading expert in fatigue management in workplaces that provide transportation services or are shift-work facilities.

"In our 24/7 society, the importance of managing fatigue can have serious implications on productivity and safety."

Sleep apnea, a breathing problem that interrupts sleep, is the most common condition studied in the sleep lab, he says.

"Sleep apnea disrupts breathing several hundred times a night. A person may not have a clue that they have the condition, although they may be aware that they snore."

Some consequences of sleep apnea include sleepiness, memory problems, irritability, and falling asleep during the day, but ultimately a person with untreated apnea is at risk for cardiac complications, he says.

While obesity is a common risk factor for sleep apnea, the condition manifests itself in other situations.

A jaw structure with a receding chin, large tonsils and nasal stuffiness can cause sleep apnea, says Moscovitch, noting that there is a greater incidence of sleep apnea in kids now that fewer tonsillectomies are performed in childhood.

"You can even see apnea in infancy."

Pediatric sleep apnea can affect a child's performance at school, he adds

People with sleep apnea often get a special sleep mask that keeps their airways open all night so they can have a more restful sleep, or they can be treated with a dental appliance, depending on the severity of the condition, he says.

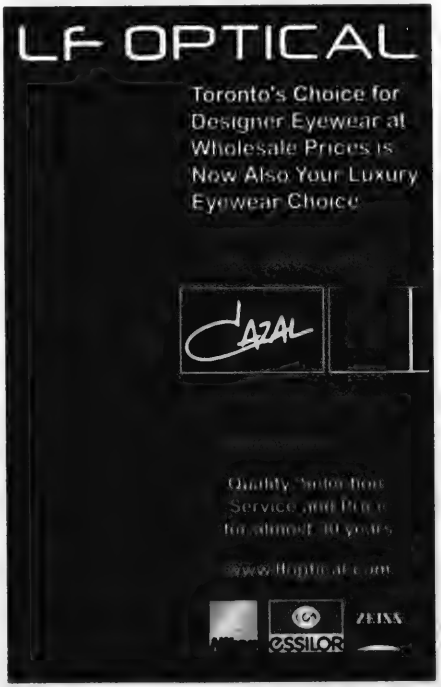
Treatment for a sleep disorder is often multi-pronged, Moscovitch says, pointing out that symptoms of a sleep disorder can include difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep or waking up early or a combination of all these symptoms.

Treatment involves assessing underlying the condition, identifying the causes and tailoring the treatment, he explains.

Sometimes the plan entails shifting a person's body clock. Behaviour therapies may also be applicable to various sleep-related problems.

Sometimes medication is required.

"In most cases, the use of medication should be a temporary measure," says Moscovitch. "In 10 to 15 per cent of cases, we accept the long-term use of medication."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This Week

National

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Toronto student in teen pageant. *Page 13*

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Purim is almost here. Time for some holiday treats. *Page 32*

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Israel keeps close eye on Syria

Joshua Davidovich
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel is keeping a close eye on Syria and will act if it sees any indication that weapons are being transferred to Hezbollah, military experts said in an interview published Saturday.

A reported Israeli attack on a Syrian weapons convoy could be only the first volley in a series of upcoming strikes against Damascus and Hezbollah if the embattled regime tries to transfer weapons to the Lebanese terror group, former military intelligence head Amos Yadlin told the *Washington Post*.

"Any time Israel will have reliable intelligence that this is going to be transferred from Syria to Lebanon, it will act," the paper reported Yadlin saying.

He added the caveat that the decision to strike would still be made on a case-by-case basis.

Hezbollah has reportedly been preparing for the possibility of more attacks, the pan-Arab London-based daily *al-Quds al-Arabi* reported last Friday, citing an increase in Israeli fighter jets flying over southern Lebanese airspace and carrying out "mock raids."

Continued on page 34

Israeli soldiers defend the border with Syria on the Golan Heights. *(Israel Sun photo)*

Rabbi David Hartman (1931-2013)

Educator, activist dies at 81

Stuart Winer
Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Rabbi David Hartman, founder of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem and the first rabbi of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem in Montreal, died Sunday at the age of 81 after succumbing to a long illness.

Funeral services were held Monday morning at the institute, followed by his burial in the Har Menuchot cemetery.

Rabbi Hartman was a leading thinker among philosophers of contemporary Judaism and an internationally renowned Jewish author.

Born in 1931 in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, N.Y., Rabbi Hartman attended Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin and the Lubavitch Yeshiva.

In 1953, having studied with Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, he received his rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University in New York. He continued to study with Rabbi Soloveitchik until 1960, while pursuing a graduate degree in philosophy with Robert C. Pollock at Fordham University.

Continued on page 33

Trumah
Candlelighting: 5:25
Havdalah: 6:33
Greater Toronto Area

Rabbis praise Pope Benedict XVI – please see page 33

CANADA

Mogul Remembered

CALGARY — Real estate mogul Jack Singer, who once bought filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola's ailing Zoetrope Studios at auction, was remembered Feb. 5 at his funeral at Calgary's Beth Tzedec Synagogue. Singer, who died Feb. 2 at 95, built an empire that included more than one million square feet of office space in downtown Calgary, as well as thousands of apartments and land in Western Canada and the United States. He bought Coppola's studio for $12.3 million in 1984. His son, Alan, still runs what's now called Hollywood Center Studios. Singer became involved in Hollywood in 1981 when he loaned Coppola $3 million to finish the film *One From the Heart*, a flop that sank Zoetrope.

More Jail Time

MONTREAL — One of two men who took part in attacks on two Jewish institutions was sent back to jail last week for breaking conditions, trespassing and uttering threats. Omar Bulphred, now 27, pleaded guilty to firebombing the chassidic Skver community's Toldos Yakov Yosef school in 2006 and trying to ignite an explosive outside the Snowdon YM-YMHA in 2007. No one was hurt in either incident. He was released last June and pledged to keep the peace, but in July, he was charged with trespassing, uttering threats and breaking his conditions for peeking into homes and threatening one of the owners, the *Gazette* reported. He pleaded guilty. His lawyer said he suffers from Asperger's syndrome.

Teen Honoured For Subway Rescue

OTTAWA — Gov.-Gen. David Johnston awarded a Star of Courage last Friday to a Toronto teen who saved himself and a friend from death after a mentally unstable man pushed them into the path of an oncoming subway train.

Asaf Shargall

Asaf Shargall, then 14, and friend Jacob Greenspon, who turned 15 that day, were on the platform at Dufferin station in February 2009 when a man shoved them onto the tracks just as a train was entering the station.

Shargall took cover in a small alcove, but rushed back out to pull his friend into the secure location as the train rolled past. Both survived, although Greenspon, son of then-*Globe and Mail* editor Ed Greenspon, later had two damaged toes amputated. Shargall sustained minor injuries.

The man, then 47, was found to be not criminally responsible because of a mental disorder. He had tried to push a third boy, a friend of the other two, onto the tracks, but he managed to keep his balance and not fall.

The three teens and two other friends were heading home after playing paintball to celebrate Greenspon's birthday that day.

WORLD

French Attacks

MARSEILLE — A 20-year-old Jewish man wearing a Star of David pendant was mugged and robbed twice outside Marseille's main train station. Two men on a scooter approached him Feb. 4 outside the station and one tore the golden chain from his neck. They called him a "dirty Jew" before fleeing, with one of the men carrying the pendant. A group of young men nearby then approached and hurled anti-semitic insults at the victim before stealing an MP3 player and 100 euros. They also reportedly hit the man. Police were treating the case not only as a robbery but as an antisemitic attack.

France saw a 45 per cent increase in antisemitic incidents in the eight months after the attack at Ohr Hatorah school in Toulouse, where an Islamist radical murdered four people last March, although relatively few in Marseille. Meanwhile, a knife-wielding woman, 51, was arrested Feb. 5 after threatening a 16-year-old boy outside the same Toulouse school.

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Leo Baeck launches tuition subsidies

Up to $5,000 per student of eligible families

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Leo Baeck Day School has announced a tuition subsidy of up to $5,000 per student to middle-income families who find the cost of day school daunting, but don't qualify for tuition subsidies.

The one-year pilot project, dubbed AlephBaeck, will be available for 40 to 60 new students entering the school's Thornhill campus in September.

The first of its kind at a Jewish day school in Ontario, it will be funded by a one-time gift from an anonymous donor.

Day school affordability is "a major issue," Eric Petersiel, head of school, told *The CJN*.

At the North American Jewish Day School conference Feb. 3 to 5, which Petersiel attended in Washington, D.C., tuition affordability was "a topic of every conversation," he said.

"Jewish day school gets better and better, and fewer people can afford it," Petersiel added.

According to Petersiel, in Canada, only Montreal has a program that helps middle-income families with Jewish day school tuition. It's a community-wide program, he said.

Leo Baeck, Toronto's only Reform day school, is defining "middle income" as between $150,000 and $250,000 for parents with one child. If parents have two children at the school, middle income rises to between $200,000 and $300,000; then to between $250,000 and $350,000 for families with three or more children at the school.

Families can receive the full $5,000 in their child's third year if they commit to three years at the school. If they take the amount in the first year, it drops to $3,000, and $4,000 if they take it in the second year.

AlephBaeck is debuting in Thornhill, because the school has a higher percentage of middle-income families there than it does at its branch on Arlington Avenue, south of Eglinton Avenue, Petersiel said.

Continued on page 20

Eric Petersiel

Educator urges Jewish education 'tax'
See page 31

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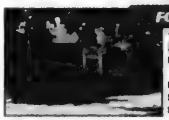
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Israel has lost a teacher

Rabbi David Hartman

From the editor's desk...

Some years ago, a group of journalists visiting Israel under the auspices of the American Jewish Press Association, dropped in on Rabbi David Hartman at the institute he founded in the name of his father, Shalom Hartman, in the peaceful and lovely German Colony neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

The institute, founded in 1976, was already deeply entrenched in the Jewish world as a rare academy of study, learning, the respectful exchange of ideas and an overarching commitment to mankind's betterment.

It warmly welcomed the flint and spark of heartfelt debate even as it welcomed the many inquisitive, seeking debaters who came to its elegant premises from all over the world.

The visiting group consisted of 20 reporters and editors from North America, all but one, American.

Not surprisingly, there was a wide disparity among us in our respective levels of knowledge about Judaism, Jewish history, Israel and Israeli history. But we shared in common the "mission" of our work, namely, trying to inform and perhaps even to educate the wide range of humanity that comprised our readership.

It was this mission that Rabbi Hartman seized upon and emphasized when he spoke to us. We were "filters," he said, through which the news of Israel was visible and understandable to our readers. As a result, he emphasized, our responsibility was one of truth, if not always clarity. He urged us to be honest, courageous, principled and as well-informed as possible.

He sat at the front of the room, clearly suffering from pain in his back, answering our many questions. Not all questions sparkled with insight. Nevertheless, Rabbi Hartman responded politely, patiently, courteously, wholeheartedly.

History had invested all of us, he suggested, with the task of building an authentically Jewish society in Israel and fostering the development and growth of authentically Jewish individuals, based upon faith and tradition, in a country that disqualified no one for his or her differences.

The end of our meeting with Rabbi Hartman was genuinely sad for most of us. We wished we could prolong our visit, even by a few minutes. But that was impossible given his physical discomfort.

All of us in the group knew we had been uniquely privileged to sit with and talk to a very special individual. It was quickly evident that Rabbi Hartman was a scholar, theologian, philosopher and essayist. But, first and foremost, he was a teacher.

And a doer.

Inspired by the events of 1967 and by his abiding belief that human beings must act on earth to bring about God's heavenly will for His creations, Rabbi Hartman moved his family from Montreal to Jerusalem in 1971 to join in the paradigmatic Jewish aspiration of building Zion and perfecting the world.

That was the last time I saw Rabbi David Hartman.

The news last Sunday of his death brought an abrupt, lingering jolt of sorrow and grief, even though his ill health was widely known.

In 1999, Rabbi Hartman wrote *A Heart of Many Rooms: Celebrating the Many Voices within Judaism*. The book took its title from a talmudic teaching: "So make yourself a heart of many rooms and bring into it the words of the House of Shammai and the words of the House of Hillel." It was dedicated to the pre-eminence of inclusion, empathy, understanding and tolerance within the Jewish People as a paramount value of life.

In the preface of the book, Rabbi Hartman made plain his hope for life in Israel: "In spite of the growth of militant fanaticism, I still cherish the conviction that a committed halachic Jew need not feel threatened by different understandings and interpretations of normative Judaism. *A Heart of Many Rooms* expresses my continuing belief in the possibility and necessity of building educational bridges between different sectors of the population in Israel and throughout the Jewish world. If we fail to build these bridges, we are in danger of splitting Israeli society and of creating sectarian forms of Judaism in the Diaspora."

Israel has lost a teacher. Many have lost a teacher and a friend. Rabbi Hartman's family, of course, lost much more. May God comfort his family as He must also comfort Clal Yisrael.

Rabbi Hartman's memory will surely be for blessing – strength, inspiration, courage and dedication to a life of ethics, justice and loving-kindness.

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SeeJN

EMIL GRUNZWEIG REMEMBERED: Naftali Raz places flowers at the site where peace activist Emil Grunzweig was killed 30 years ago in Jerusalem. The Peace Now movement last Sunday marked the 30th anniversary of his death. Friends, family and supporters attended a ceremony outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem, at the site where the deadly hand grenade was thrown at Grunzweig during a protest of Israel's ongoing military incursion in Lebanon. *(Flash90 photo)*

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Israeli flag vandalized at York's Multicultural Week

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Hillel at York is praising York University for condemning the vandalism of an Israeli flag that was part of a display for the university's Multicultural Week.

On Feb. 7, one day before the closing ceremonies of the event, which celebrates diversity at York, representatives of the university's security service told Hillel they took down an Israeli flag that had been draped over a railing in York's student centre alongside flags from around the world after discovering it was covered in red paint, said Tamara Caplan, Hillel at York's director.

In a statement that was mass emailed to the York community, the university said it supports freedom of expression and peaceful discussion, but the vandalism went too far.

"York University is unwavering: this type of conduct is unacceptable, is contrary to our values and will not be tolerated. Toronto Police Service was immediately contacted and we are currently supporting their investigation," said the statement, signed by Rhonda Lenton, vice-president (academic) and provost, and Janet Morrison, vice-provost (students).

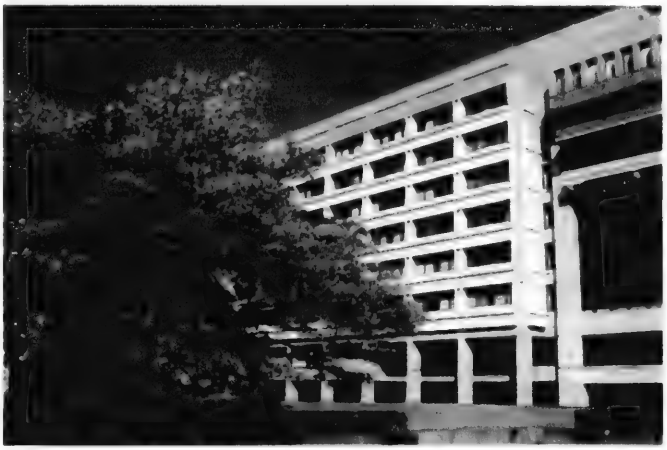
Caplan called the vandalism especially disappointing, given that it happened near the end of what was otherwise a successful Multicultural Week.

The initiative is organized by the York Federation of Students (YFS), the school's undergraduate student union.

"We participated in a lot of events this year, and the reception we received was amazing," Caplan said, explaining that this year, Hillel highlighted Judaism in Morocco. "That's why it was such a shame... The students who organized it felt really welcomed in the community."

Hillel released a statement thanking both the administration and York security for responding quickly to the vandalism.

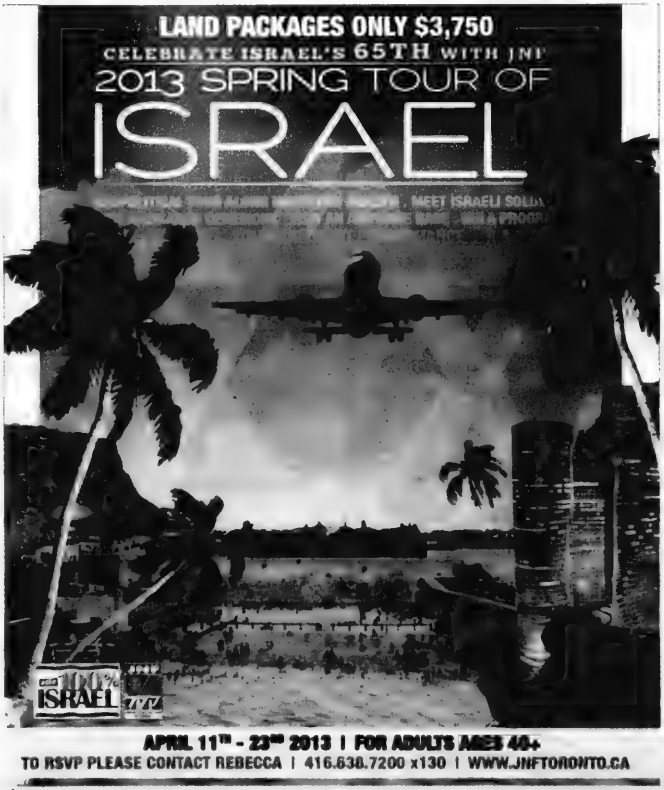
In the release, Jessica Cherkasov, president of York Students for Israel, which is affiliated with Hillel, said that her group replaced the flag shortly after the vandalized one was removed to stress that pro-Israel students will "not be intimidated by such cowardly acts."



Ross Humanities & Social Sciences Building at York University
[Wikimedia Commons photo]

Correction

The article "Observant women too lace'em up to learn hockey (*The CJN*, Feb. 7) contained an incorrect e-mail address. The correct address is MNG-Toronto@yahoo.com. *The CJN* regrets the error.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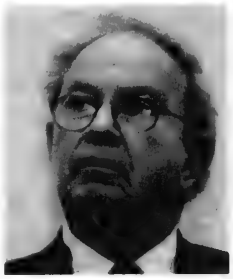
Kwinter becomes Ontario's oldest-ever MPP at 82

Andy Levy-Azjenkopf
Staff Reporter

Provincial governments come and go, but there's been one constant at Queen's Park for the past 28 years – Monte Kwinter.

On Jan. 26, the York Centre Liberal MPP officially became the province's oldest-ever serving member of the legislature. He'll be 82 on March 22.



Monte Kwinter

First elected in 1985 at the already-seasoned age of 55 in the vote that ultimately saw David Peterson become premier, Kwinter won the North York riding of Wilson Heights, defeating incumbent Progressive Conservative David Rotenberg and New Democrat Howard Moscoe. He's retained the seat ever since, most recently against Tory Michael Mostyn in the 2011 Ontario election.

Along the way, Kwinter served in three different ministerial portfolios under Peterson from 1985 to 1990, and between 2003 and 2007, he was premier Dalton McGuinty's minister of community safety and correctional services.

And he's far from done, he said.

Claiming that he retains all the vigour and energy he had when he was younger, Kwinter said he still feels a great sense of commitment and opportunity to "do good" for his constituents and the province, and he confirmed he'll run again in the next election.

"I can make a difference. As long as I feel that way, I am motivated," he said. "I get to the office every day by 8 a.m. and keep a full schedule. I'm not slowing down."

Prior to running for elected office, Kwinter owned a real estate firm and was vice-president of the Ontario College of Art. He also earned a degree in industrial design.

And he's proud of his Jewish heritage, having been raised in Ontario, the son of Polish-Jewish immigrants.

Kwinter said he's made no secret of his religion wherever he's gone. Recounting one story of leading a mission of Ukrainian Ontarians to Kiev, he said he purposely told the mayor's office that he's Jewish. In return, the mayor offered to give him a personal tour of Babi Yar. On the tour, Kwinter said he mentioned how he couldn't believe there was no memorial at the site to the victims of the infamous Nazi massacre there.

He found out later that his remarks had an impact on the mayor, who ordered a memorial built on the site shortly after Kwinter's visit.

Kwinter also helped start an annual tradition at Queen's Park during McGuinty's tenure honouring Holocaust survivors living in Ontario. Since 2003, survivors have been brought to the legislature to receive certificates from the province and tell their stories. The ceremony is held in affiliation with the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem.

The octogenarian politician also has a long-held objection to the province's funding of Catholic schools, but not other faith-based ones, and it's in stark contrast with his own party's position on the issue.

"I'm not a proponent of fully funded religious schools, but there is an inequity," he said.

Kwinter voted against his own party on the issue in the past, siding with the Conservative opposition when McGuinty's government moved to repeal the previous Tory regime's tax credits for parents who send their children to non-Catholic faith-based schools.

Asked whether he might bring the subject up again with the new premier, Kathleen Wynne, Kwinter called it a "dead issue" that no one will touch, considering its divisiveness and toxic electoral effect on anyone raising it at Queen's Park.

He said he'll work with Wynne to lead her and relevant cabinet ministers and businesspeople on future missions to Israel, as he has in the past.

Kwinter helped organize McGuinty's 2010 visit to the Holy Land, which resulted in numerous deals being signed between Ontario and Israel in the realms of brain research, science, green technology and renewable energy.

And he's become the ultimate repository of "institutional memory" Queen's Park and a frequent mentor to up-and-coming MPPs.

Regarding the recent Liberal leadership race and eventual victory by Wynne over her main challenger, Sandra Pupatello, Kwinter said he never endorsed either candidate, because both are equally capable and "it would have been like choosing between two of my kids."

But speaking to *The CJN* last week as Wynne was finalizing her new cabinet, Kwinter said he'd be open to holding a ministerial post if asked.

"My energy hasn't let up one bit," he said about whether the demands of cabinet at his age would be too daunting. "I wouldn't say 'no.'"

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Summit on education

For many years, the elephant in the room of communal Jewish life has been the cost of Jewish education. Tuition fees at Jewish day schools are deplorably and often quite impossibly high for the vast majority of young families. This is especially the case in Ontario, where the provincial government contributes nothing to the non-religious portion of private Jewish day schools. But it is also true in Quebec, where, even with governmental assistance, the tuition costs are severely prohibitive for most young people.

As if exhausted by the many valiant but failed efforts over the years – again, especially in Ontario – to help reduce the cost of Jewish education, the community is no longer even publicly discussing the situation. The elephant sits in the middle of our lives, uncorralled, adversely affecting our future.

But the silence is unacceptable. It is an abrogation of the collective community responsibility that was, not so long ago, the zealously implemented first priority of community leaders. It sends an unmistakable message to young parents that the community is indifferent and uncaring regarding the Jewish education of their children. It shouts, frankly, of community defeat. We must, therefore, break the silence, point to and rein in the elephant and at the very least, publicly resume the discussion. Three events in quick succession over the past two weeks provide the impetus for doing so. They are further compelling evidence that the subject is, and always will be, a high public priority.

In Las Vegas, billionaire Sheldon Adelson and his wife, Miriam, donated $50 million to the three Jewish day schools that comprise the Adelson Education Campus. The schools serve some 600 students from preschool to high school. In Toronto, the Leo Baeck Day School announced a unique tuition subsidy initiative of up to $5,000 per student for eligible families. In Montreal, the Jewish People's and Peretz Schools and the Bialik High School in Montreal (JPPS/Bialik) announced a new policy of tuition reduction and freezes.

All three initiatives are aimed at preventing parents from removing their children from school and bringing new students into the schools. We commend the initiatives and their originators. However, a wider, more comprehensive, more imaginative, wall-to-wall, community solution is necessary to ensure that as many parents as possible can afford to provide a Jewish education to their children.

As a first step in devising such a strategy, we call upon our communal leaders to convene a summit meeting about Jewish education. The summit would examine Jewish education in all its future possibilities and would involve as wide a swath of concerned individuals as possible: businesspeople, academics, educators, policy-makers, parents, grandparents, industrialists, philanthropists, clergy, lay leaders and any one else with wisdom or experience to offer on the subject.

The status quo is an affront to conscience. We owe this search for solutions as much to our parents and our grandparents as to our children and our grandchildren. Inaction is not an option. Community leaders must remove the elephant immediately.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel's Likudnik prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, and its Laborite foreign minister, Shimon Peres, both expressed enthusiasm for a U.S. peace proposal that envisioned some form of autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza "within weeks".

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Absurd position on Israeli election

Many political columnists have suggested that the one reason why Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lost a number of seats in the recent Israeli election is the fact that he made little effort to re-engage with the Palestinians on peace talks. The absurdity of this position is that the only precondition that Israel has placed on reopening peace talks is that the Palestinian Authority recognize the existence of a Jewish state. This, the president of the Palestinian Authority has consistently refused to do. Add to that the publicly stated position of Hamas, the rulers of Gaza who are soon to be reunited with the PA, that Israel must be wiped off the face of the Earth and that Palestinians are entitled to every inch of the State of Israel. It is ludicrous to suggest with that mindset that there is any point in Israel meeting with the PA. There is not one nation on Earth that would negotiate with a group publicly committed to destroying its population.

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

No preconditions

Smadari Meiri dismisses my reference to UN Security Council Resolution 242, which calls for "every state in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized borders free from threats and acts of violence" by noting that subsequent to the 1967 Six Day War, Israel promised to return areas of captured land in return for defensible borders and recognition as a sovereign state (Letters, Jan. 31).

Meiri should remember that on Sept. 1, 1967, 13 Arab states responded to such an Israeli offer with three nos: no peace, no recognition, no negotiations. As recently as Nov. 28, 2010, the "moderates" of Fatah formulated the three nos of Ramallah: no to Israel as a Jewish state, no to interim borders, no to land swaps.

Meiri asks what has Israel done since 1967, other than build settlements and vandalize Palestinian properties. Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt for a cold peace that is quickly thawing into a hot problem. The leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood government, Mohamed Morsi, who refers to Jews as bloodsuckers, warmongers and descendants of apes and pigs, does not sound like a good partner for peace.

Israel returned Gaza and received an ongoing barrage of rockets in return. One can only imagine the predicament that Israel would be in had it returned the Golan Heights. With the Iron Dome, land once again becomes a vital component as a security buffer. Peace will only be possible when the Palestinians appreciate its value and sit down with Israel for direct talks without preconditions.

Sam Mitnick
Cote St. Luc, Que.

• • •

Diversity of Israeli opinion

Kudos to *The CJN* for reporting the remarks of the leading Israeli academic Hanan Alexander, who said, "Israel will benefit from criticism" ("'Abandon romantic fantasies' of Israel: prof," Jan 31). Despite being told by our communal leaders not to criticize the Netanyahu government, and despite Israeli NGOs and political parties other than Likud being described as "fringe radicals" or even "terrorists," the paper has shown courage in impartially reporting the real diversity of Israeli opinion.

Charles Heller
Toronto

• • •

Anshel Wise helped her family

I am writing in response to the SeeJN photograph with the caption headed "Anshel Wise's cigar store and steamship office" (Jan. 31). My father, Louis Goldberg, came to Canada in 1924, leaving his wife and four children in Poland. After working for one year, he found himself short of cash and could not afford to bring his family to Canada. Anshel Wise became aware of this and lent him the remainder of the money interest-free. My father did in fact bring my mother and siblings back as a result of his generosity. My father paid the loan back and remained a faithful client of Wise's for the rest of his life. Wise was an exceptionally generous, outstanding man.

Estelle Budish
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

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In the shadow of Operation Exodus

Dov Harris

Operation Exodus – the effort to help Jews leave the former Soviet Union (FSU) – has long been regarded as the epitome of what happens when Jews are united in a singular cause that speaks to our values, our care for one another and that also encapsulates a transcendent universal message.

The temptation to compare Operation Exodus to the biblical Exodus was understandably irresistible, with its rallying cry of "Let our People go" and seeing with our own eyes the "ingathering of the exiles," but again, naturally enough, there was some cherry-picking to maintain a momentum of success.

For a more complete narrative that invites an even closer parallel between the two exoduses, consideration should also be given to some comparisons that are less flattering yet are teaching moments for the ages.

One such comparison that this essay will attempt to elucidate is virtually a case study of history repeating itself by contrasting an encounter that befell our ancestors in the Sinai desert with our present-day treatment of the most vulnerable of our brethren in the FSU.

Among the programs provided by the JDC to Jews of the FSU, are educational and welfare initiatives involving the old and the young, above, and bringing food to needy families, above right. *(Photos courtesy of the JDC)*

As the Jewish People began their journey to the Promised Land, they formed columns, with the strong at the front leaving the weak, unable to keep up with the pace, bringing up the rear. It was an egregious error, for it exposed a vulnerable flank to the enemy.

Their very first encounter with hostile tribes was the marauding Amalek, who "smote the hindmost of thee even all that were feeble behind thee, where thou was faint and weary" (Deuteronomy, 25, 17-19). For this perfidious attack, we are enjoined to destroy Amalek wherever we find him, not excluding ourselves.

Amalek is not only the murderous antagonist to be destroyed from without. He is also the destructive urge from within that must be destroyed, the urge that is deaf to the cries of the powerless and blind to their travails, the urge the People of Israel succumbed to when they left the weakest behind, – the elderly, the lame and the sick.

We, too, seem to be similarly distracted.

Lying in the shadow of Operation Exodus untouched by the glow of its success, a vast Jewish calamity has gripped thousands of Jews in the FSU. Living life at its extremes, ravaged by poverty, they are the community who remained behind.

The depth of poverty this essay wishes to convey will inevitably fall short of its harrowing nature. When thousands of our people have to make the decision between food and medication, who of us can possibly put ourselves in their shoes? But what lifts their situation to an existential level of self-questioning beyond our concern for fellow beings is how it is possible when we have the resources to lift so many Jewish lives from the grosser indignities of poverty that we fail to do so.

When one-third of our people were taken from us in the most bestial fashion possible, surely the expectation would be that every Jewish life has an added dimension of preciousness, including those possessing no obvious utility other than to return the warmth of an embrace when given the chance?

But in order to act, we must be aware. And in this respect, we have been poorly served by our leadership, though not all the blame rests with them. When all we need to know is a click away in this hyper-connected world, with whom should we remonstrate? Why don't we just click to get the facts?

Our reluctance may well lie in the direction taken in the $60-million budget of our most formidable federation, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, where $350,000, less than 0.6 per cent, is allocated to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the lead organization on the front lines battling poverty in the FSU. That percentage, incidentally, is larger than for any other federation in Canada. Even adding ancillary campaigns such as the Global Seder, the percentage of funds allocated to the JDC by all Canadian Jewish federations is less than 1 per cent.

No more powerful message need be sent to contributors that extreme poverty in the FSU does not make the grade as a priority program.

The rationale is clear.

When set against other pressing issues such as securing a Jewish future for our children, the needs of the elderly Jewish poor in our local community and support for Israel, the profile of the poor in the FSU fades to the margins.

The reality is that local needs are primary. Understandably, the poor in our community should get top billing. But if we also assume that a Jewish life anywhere is as dear to us as a Jewish life at home, shouldn't appropriate support be directed to those in extreme need no matter where they live? None of the poor in our community live the marginalised lives of thousands of elderly in the FSU. There is simply no comparison.

It's a point driven home by a report from Brandeis University's Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies titled *Hardship and Needs of Elderly Hesed Clients: An analysis of clients served by Hesed service centers in Russia and Ukraine*. Published in November 2012 and available online, it's an objective analysis that contrasts life for an elderly Jew living in poverty in the West to an elderly Jew living in the FSU.

It cannot be denied that even if federations in Canada doubled the percentage of their transfers to the JDC to 1.5 per cent of all funds raised (or approximately $1.3 million), it would not solve the problem of extreme poverty and would perhaps be characterized as an exercise in futility. But consider that for the recipients of the additional assistance, it would be anything but futile! Should we not settle for this as a beginning?

And should this sum strain federation budgets, why would we not consider a separate annual campaign promoted at a level matching the need? Have our contributors ever failed the Jewish People when given the facts? Would they not hear the cries of the powerless? Would they be blind to their travails?

It all comes down to a basic question: how are we to understand the scandal of poverty among our elderly in the FSU – as an indictment of a people who looked the other way as our forbears did in the desert, inviting Amalek to do his bidding, or as an opportunity to redress a terrible wrong now decades in the making?

Have we already given the answer by persisting with the status quo? Are we the generation who without putting pen to paper has written its epitaph on Operation Exodus as an incomplete legacy forever tarnished by our indifference?

Dov Harris retired two years ago from United Israel Appeal of Canada, where he served as director of financial resource development in the regional communities of the UIA.

Jewish Italian parliamentarian quits politics

JTA

ROME — Jewish Italian politician Fiamma Nirenstein, vice-president of the committee on foreign affairs in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of Italy's parliament, has announced that she is quitting politics.

Nirenstein, who is returning to her journalism career, said she will be making aliyah and plans to apply for Israeli citizenship. "Everybody can see that unfortunately antisemitism is still growing worldwide, and Israel is the only warm homeland for the Jewish People," she told the Italian newspaper *Il Giornale*.

Born in 1946 in Florence, Nirenstein has written many articles and books on the Jewish People, antisemitism and Israel. She is known in Italy and Europe for fighting terrorism and racism, as well as for her efforts to get the European Union and the Italian government to ban Hezbollah and Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps within the EU's territories and to officially list them as terrorist organizations. She is also chairwoman of the International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians.

Fiamma Nirenstein

"Israel is today the best country able to offer culture, sociality, democracy, morality, a country where people adopted a lifestyle simple and natural," and where its people are united as a family in "their fight for survival, and in their great love for their country... Love for life in Israel is everywhere," she said.

In related news, antisemitic incidents in Britain rose five per cent over the previous year, making 2012 the third-worst year on record.

The Community Service Trust, British Jewry's security unit, reported that there were 640 reported antisemitic incidents, compared to 608 in 2011.

Sixty of the incidents were classified as "violent antisemitic assaults." The majority of the incidents, however, included verbal attacks and graffiti. Social media also was a source of many of the incidents.

In Hungary, manwhile, antisemitism is causing an influx of Jewish immigrants to Austria, the head of Vienna's Jewish community said.

Ariel Muzicant, a former leader of Austria's Jewish community of approximately 8,000, told *JTA* that his community has begun offering assistance to Hungarian Jews wishing to leave. The community is now assisting some 20 families that are either in Hungary and preparing to leave or newly arrived in Vienna.

– With files from JNS.org

Two mayors, two Jewish experiences

His gravestone, like his life, evokes the complexities of the Jewish experience in America. Born a few years before the Great Depression to parents who had come to the United States from Poland, former New York City mayor Ed Koch's life exemplified the roller coaster ride of an immigrant family pursuing the American dream. He rose from the poverty of the Depression era to political power and stature. His family integrated into American culture, but maintained a strong identification with their Jewish heritage. A decorated infantryman during World War II, Koch was deeply affected by the Holocaust. He remained in Germany after the war to assist in the denazification process.

One of only three New York mayors to serve three terms, Koch is credited with reinvigorating the city, bringing it out of bankruptcy. Not without controversy, he came down hard on crime and grime. In the days after his death, as reflections and reminiscences filled the media, certain words were repeatedly used to describe him: outspoken, combative, canny, opinionated, blunt, brash and prickly. In a videotaped interview with the *New York Times* conducted five years ago and released after his death, he was more succinct: "I'm just this little Jewish kid from the Bronx!"

Asked in the interview about his legacy, he responded: "I want to be remembered as a proud Jew who loved the people of the city of New York and did his best to make their lives better." His burial site exemplifies the complicated relationship among those commitments. He elected to be buried in Trinity Cemetery rather than in a Jewish cemetery, and for the most New York of reasons: location. Trinity is in the heart of Manhattan. Almost as a counterbalance, inscribed as an epitaph on his tombstone are the last words of murdered journalist Daniel Pearl, "My father is Jewish, my mother is Jewish, I am Jewish." Below that appears the assertion that Koch was "fiercely proud of his Jewish faith," "fiercely defended" New York City, and that he "loved his country."

Koch was not the first Jewish mayor of New York. He succeeded Abe Beame, another child of Polish immigrants. But as I thought about Koch's individualized and complex negotiations of identity and values, I was reminded of yet another mayor who exemplified a different set of circumstances in the Jewish experience.

Like Koch, Fiorello LaGuardia served for three terms, from 1934 to 1945. LaGuardia's parents, too, immigranted to the United States, in his case from Italy in the late 1800s. Like Koch, LaGuardia was from the Bronx, and both graduated from the same law school (although decades apart). Although LaGuardia's mother was a Jew from Trieste – a descendant of the prestigious Luzzatto family of scholars, rabbis, and poets – Fiorello and his sister, Gemma, were raised as Episcopalians. The family made frequent visits to Trieste, an important centre of Jewish life for centuries. Around the turn of the century, the family moved back to Italy, although Fiorello returned to New York.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

As mayor of New York, LaGuardia was among the earliest outspoken critics of Hitler and National Socialism. As early as 1934, he warned against the threat that the Nazis posed to Jews. His sister, Gemma, who had remained in Italy, married a Hungarian Jewish man, and they eventually moved to Budapest. The Gestapo arrested Gemma and her husband soon after the German invasion of Hungary and transported them to Mauthausen. Because of her brother's position, Gemma was seen as a potentially valuable political hostage. Gemma was transferred to the women's camp, Ravensbrück. Although, like her brother, Gemma didn't think of herself as Jewish, she wore the yellow star on her clothing.

After the war, Gemma was reunited with her daughter and young grandson who, it turned out, had also been in Ravensbrück. Eventually, she learned that her husband had not survived Mauthausen. I first learned of Gemma LaGuardia Gluck's story when I visited Ravensbrück in the mid-1990s. Her memoir, originally published in 1961, was reissued in 2007, edited by Rochelle Saidel, who has researched the Jewish prisoners of Ravensbrück.

LaGuardia and Koch make an interesting pairing: one not Jewish but swept into Jewish history by virtue of family and conscience, the other, flamboyantly Jewish, embracing Jewish history in his own eclectic way.

Israel's post-election agenda

Israel's new government is in the process of being formed. When you read this, it may already be in place. In a talk in Jerusalem last month, Toronto-born veteran journalist Jim Lederman suggested three priorities for the prime minister: next year's budget, electoral reform and conscription for haredim and Arabs.

First, the reason why Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu advanced the elections was probably because he knew the next budget would entail punishing cuts in public spending. By going to the polls before bringing the bad news, he may have hoped to save his political skin.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Though he's still at the helm, the elections cost him dearly. Of the 31 mandates for the combined list of Likud and Yisrael Beiteinu, only 20 belong to the former, one more than newcomer Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid party and seven less than Netanyahu's Likud had before the vote.

Finance ministers court unpopularity in hard times. Former Labor cabinet member Ophir Paz Pines, writing in *Ha'aretz* soon after the election, urged Lapid not to take the portfolio. His stated reason was Lapid's inexperience, but he may also have had in mind the pitfalls.

Someone will have to bite the bullet, which will be particularly difficult after the unexpected resignation of Stanley Fisher, the universally admired governor of the Bank of Israel.

Second, there's a growing realization in Israel that something must be done to bring about electoral reform. Until now, most parties have resisted changing the present system, fearing it will work against them. The influence now gained by Lapid and his apparent embrace of bold ideas may nevertheless force a change.

Though Canada's first-past-the-post system disenfranchises many voters, it makes for stable government. By contrast, Israel's proportional representation system is probably more democratic, but it makes governing much more difficult. Hence the protracted and tortuous coalition negotiations, with their concomitant horse trading.

A combination of the two systems may be the answer. Israel could be divided into 60 ridings. The candidate with the most votes in each would represent it in the Knesset. The other 60 would be chosen by proportional representation.

Whether or not the parties in power would support electoral reform for the good of the country, rather than protect their own interests, will depend on the persistence of "the new kid on the block," Lapid.

Finally, although Lapid's campaign stressed the imperative for Israel's haredi and Arab citizens to serve in the army or do community service like everybody else, I understood Lederman to say that, despite the urgency, it should only come third on the government's agenda.

Army service for everybody is complicated, due to potential security risks in allowing all Arabs to serve as the Bedouin and the Druze do now, and because integrating those who now claim to be yeshiva students entails many practical obstacles.

The broad coalition Netanyahu envisages is likely to include the two haredi parties, Shas and Yahadut Hatorah. Both vehemently oppose army service for their boys and are determined to resist such legislation. The question is if Shas, always anxious to be in the government – and thus have easier access to public funds – will cave in.

However, the IDF itself may not be too keen to have to provide special facilities for haredi soldiers. Though a small number already serve, to conscript many more may cause headaches for army commanders.

Significantly, Lederman's order of priorities didn't include peace negotiations with the Palestinians. Although about two-thirds of Israelis are said to favour a two-state solution, most politicians have so far maintained that Israel has no Palestinian partner. The strong support for the settlements, reflected not only in the presence of the Habayit Hayehudi party but also in ideologies espoused by other lawmakers, remains a serious obstacle.

Even the Labor Party's election campaign concentrated on internal social issues, saying virtually nothing about peace. One of the few public figures to speak about it during the campaign was President Shimon Peres. Some saw it as deliberate criticism of the prime minister. But in his address when accepting Peres' offer to form the next government, Netanyahu did speak of his readiness to negotiate with the Palestinians.

Yet the real push to restart negotiations will probably have to come from U.S. President Barack Obama. There are signs that it's on the way.

Of course, because politics in general and Israeli politics in particular are fickle, the above "predictions" may turn out to be embarrassingly inaccurate.

Palestinian unity attempt flounders yet again

It's beginning to sound like a broken record.

For the past few years, Fatah and Hamas, the two rival factions in the Palestinian national movement, have tried in vain to create a single Palestinian government in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Since the collapse in 2007 of the short-lived Palestinian national unity government, formed as a result of the Mecca Agreement, Fatah, a secular organization, and Hamas, an Islamic fundamentalist group, have signed three reconciliation accords.

All of them have imploded, dashing hopes that the Palestinians can settle their differences.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Recently, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi intervened in an attempt to broker a unity deal, inviting Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority, and Khaled Meshal, a Hamas leader, to Cairo for talks.

They arrived in Egypt in the wake of significant developments in the Palestinian arena last November, December and January.

First, the United Nations granted the Palestinian Authority non-member observer status.

Second, Hamas and Israel fought an eight-day border war during which Israel bombarded targets in Gaza and Hamas fired rockets deep into Israel's heartland.

Third, Fatah and Hamas exchanged two goodwill gestures. Fatah allowed Hamas to stage a rally in the West Bank town of Nablus to mark the 25th anniversary of its founding. Hamas reciprocated by permitting Fatah to hold a rally in Gaza for the first time since the summer of 2007, when Hamas violently seized Gaza from Fatah in a mini civil war.

Following the Gaza rally, billed as a show of unity by both Fatah and Hamas, Fatah leader Nabil Shaath declared, "The climate is excellent for reconciliation." Responding to these overlapping events, Morsi invited the antagonists to send representatives to Cairo.

On the eve of their meeting, Marwan Barghouti, a leading Fatah figure serving five life sentences in an Israeli prison for his role in terrorist attacks against Israelis during the second intifadah, issued a statement from his cell imploring both sides to end their dispute. As he put it, "We need reconciliation now and without delay."

The discussions in Cairo focused on ways to implement a reconciliation accord signed in April 2011. No progress was reported, and Abbas and Meshal left Cairo empty-handed, leaving two separate and feuding Palestinian entities in place in the West Bank and Gaza.

The divisions that keep Fatah and Hamas constantly at odds are substantive.

Israel, of course, is a key sticking point. Fatah, a major component of the Palestinian Authority, has accepted Israel's existence within the pre-1967 armistice lines. Hamas rejects a two state solution and continues to call for armed struggle in a bid to create a single Palestinian state in place of Israel.

Toward the close of 2012, Ahmed Halabiyeh, head of Hamas' Jerusalem department, called upon Palestinians to launch a third uprising and resume suicide bombings against Israel.

At around the same time, Meshal, following a visit to Gaza, vowed that Hamas would never recognize Israel and try to "free the land of Palestine inch by inch."

Abbas, a moderate, has urged the Hamas leadership to recognize Israel, disavow terrorism and respect previous agreements signed by the Palestinian Authority and Israel. Hamas has balked, but has been amenable to observing a long-term truce with Israel.

Another area of contention turns on Hamas' armed wing, the Izz Al-Din Al-Qassem Brigades. Fatah has demanded its dismantlement, but Hamas has stoutly rejected this condition.

One of the thorniest issues yet to be resolved concerns the Palestinian Authority's security co-operation with Israel, sanctioned by the 1993 Oslo accords. Hamas staunchly opposes this partnership, which has been instrumental in quashing terrorist plots.

Fatah and Hamas are also at loggerheads over the issue of political arrests. Since their momentous falling out in June 2007, just months after the Mecca Agreement was signed and sealed, their respective security forces have been arresting each other's operatives in the West Bank and Gaza, contributing to an atmosphere of mutual bitterness.

Fatah and Hamas have also clashed over four internal issues, beginning with the question of who will lead a national unity government. Would it be Abbas, Yasser Arafat's designated successor? Or would it be Ismail Haniyeh, the prime minister of the Hamas regime in Gaza?

Remarkably enough, Fatah and Hamas cannot even agree when presidential and parliamentary elections should be held.

Nor have they been able to reach a consensus as to how the Palestine Liberation Organization – established in 1964 and universally recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians and currently led by Abbas – would be reconstituted.

Finally, Fatah and Hamas have yet to decide whether Hamas would be admitted into the PLO, and if so, what role it would then play in that umbrella organization.

These differences are not likely to be resolved within the foreseeable future, if indeed at all.

But as Fatah and Hamas struggle for primacy, Hamas appears to have gained the upper hand in the battle for hearts and minds in the West Bank and Gaza.

The reasons seem clear.

Although the Israeli Air Force battered Hamas in the last round of fighting, Hamas fought Israel to a virtual draw, thereby gaining street credit in Gaza and the West Bank. Under the terms of the ceasefire negotiated by Egypt and the United States, Israel eased its blockade of Gaza, a clear tactical victory for Hamas.

Khaled Meshal

On a strategic level, Hamas has become stronger now that the new Muslim Brotherhood government in Egypt has lined up firmly behind it. Morsi's predecessor, Hosni Mubarak, was hostile to Hamas and worked with Israel to keep Islamic fundamentalism in check.

Fatah, notwithstanding its success in upgrading its status at the United Nations, has grown correspondingly weaker. Although Abbas has renounced violence and clearly accepted Israel's existence, he has not made any real headway toward achieving Palestinian statehood. And due to a lack of funding from foreign donors, the Palestinian Authority government in the West Bank faces a dire financial crisis.

Israel's position on Palestinian unity seems contradictory.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has warned that a Palestinian unity agreement would put an end to a two-state solution. By the same token, Israel has observed that the split within Palestinian ranks jeopardizes the chances of peace. As Avigdor Lieberman, Israel's former foreign minister, noted, "We are ready to move forward, but we do not know who represents the Palestinians – Hamas or Fatah."

At present, this remains an unanswered question.

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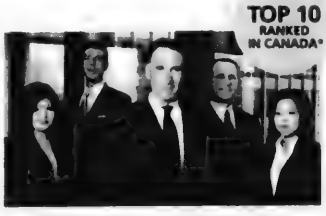

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Agencies told to forge links with other groups

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The Jewish community is compelled by Torah values to forge links with other ethnic groups, Rabbi Baruch Frydman Kohl told a recent conference hosted by JVS Toronto.

The day-long event, titled Building Bridges, showcased the cross-cultural initiatives of organizations with ethnic roots.

Glenys Lindenberg, vice-chair of the agency's board of directors, said the aim of the conference was to respond to the emerging needs of the broader community through collaboration with others, "and [to build] on our success in meeting the needs of the Jewish community."

The Jan. 31 conference, held at the Toronto Reference Library, heard a keynote address by Rabbi Frydman-Kohl, senior rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation, as well as a panel discussion with community leaders.

Also at the conference, the first Building Bridges Innovation Award was presented to Mazon Canada for demonstrating leadership and innovation in building bridges with other communities.

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said that Judaism has something precious to offer others, "and we have the obligation to carry that forward. [At the same time] we also benefit from the commonweal."

Presentation of the award to Ida McLaughlin, left, National Executive Director of MAZON Canada by Karen Goldenberg, former president and CEO of JVS Toronto

He said the Jewish community needs to build a broad bridge, "which is anchored in values that define our essence."

Community groups all share the same concerns about family, medical care, jobs, shelter, and care of the elderly, "just to name a few," he said. "We may differ in how we approach education and prayer, but we should respect the dignity of difference. The Torah tradition has core values that mandate us to build bridges to sustain others."

At the same time, the rabbi said, we have to maintain the Jewishness of our own agencies. "A high percentage of our funding now comes from government [sources], but we have to challenge the agencies to strengthen their Jewish core. Staff and rabbis should celebrate together, and they should respect Shabbat and kashrut, and develop programs for students of Jewish day schools."

The challenge, he said, "is to balance our concern for creative Jewish continuation, and for the participation in the world around us. We need boundaries, and we must build bridges."

Mario Calla, executive director of COSTI Immigrant Services, said his agency's historical roots lie in the Italian community.

"We have maintained services that are specific to those religious and cultural needs, but we have evolved into a multicultural agency," he said.

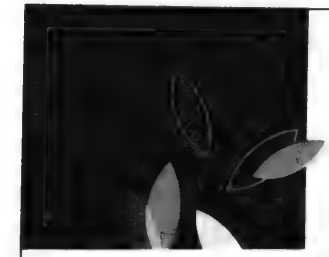
"When we looked for extra resources, we had to open our doors to other communities. We needed to balance the relationship between our [historical roots and the needs of others.]"

For multiple identities to work, he said, "we have to nurture them respectively. The name COSTI is vague enough to include everyone, but it remains a recognized brand for Italians."

Mark Gryfe, who has held senior professional positions at four organizations, including Baycrest and Mount Sinai Hospital and who now heads Gryfe Philanthropic Solutions, said that each organization must determine when to reach out and build bridges.

"If the organization is considering it, it has to ask 'Why?' Is it to share knowledge, or to access resources. It needs to evaluate where the organization is in its evolution," Gryfe said.

"Building bridges is undoubtedly a good thing, but if the reasons are not clear, it could run risks. [Organizations] should never lose sight of the things that are important. They need to build bridges, and have their boundaries respected."



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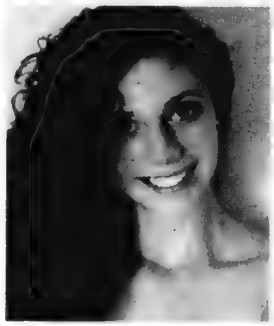
Student to compete in teen pageant

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

A Toronto student, Brittany Danishevsky, will represent the city in the Miss Teen Canada-World pageant finals this summer.

The 17-year-old Newtonbrook Secondary School student was crowned Miss Teen Toronto-World at the Holiday Inn Airport in January.



Brittany Danishevsky

In July, 70 finalists from across Canada will compete for the Miss Teen Canada-World title, with the winner representing the country at the Miss Teen International Pageant in Chicago.

Danishevsky was born and raised in Toronto and is a first-time pageant contender. She competed in the evening gown and swimwear categories and had a personal interview. Each competitor also attends seminars and workshops designed to boost confidence and enhance skills such as public speaking, community outreach and image development.

Contestants are not judged only for their physical beauty, but also for their personality, public speaking, stage presence, fitness, fundraising, platform, community involvement and social media.

Danishevsky is a dedicated volunteer and is passionate about youth mental health.

"By raising awareness, I hope to change negative stigma in order to ease the healing process of those suffering," she said in a phone interview. "I have created my own organization called Chance Through Dance, a not-for-profit where we provide workshops for youth and teach them how to use dance to deal with adversity."

Chance Through Dance is organizing workshops with the City of Toronto, YMCA, Covenant House and North York Women's Shelters.

"I believe youth today struggle because they are not heard," Danishevsky said.

The Grade 12 student is president of the school's athletic council and is on several school teams including volleyball and cross-country.

She is also the choreographer for the dance team. She learned to dance when she was six and used to do competitive Latin dancing until age 14. She then switched to studio dances, such as lyrical and hip hop.

"My organization evolved through my love of dance. It was my way of expressing myself," she explained.

As part of the preparation for the national Miss Teen Canada pageant, contestants have to raise funds for the contest's official charity, Free the Children.

"The contestant who raises the most, together with the crowned Miss Teen Canada-World, will get a trip to volunteer in a Third World country, which is a huge dream of mine. My plan is to hold a fundraiser that showcases Chance Through Dance, with performances by youth, where all ticket proceeds will go toward Free the Children.

"I believe I have a path to travel and I am meant to help others in my life. The most important reason I chose to do this pageant is for volunteerism, so I can perform youth mitzvah and help others," Danishevsky said.

You can contact her at missteentoronto2013@gmail.com or on her missteentoronto2013 Facebook page.

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George Brady receives an award from the government of Germany. Seen from left are Czech Ambassador Karel Zebrakovsky, George Brady, German Ambassador Werner Wnendt, Brady's wife, Teresa, Czech Consul Vladimir Ruml, member of the German Federal Diet Hans-Ulrich Klose and Brady's daughter, Lara. ***[Paul Lungen photo]***

German government honours George Brady

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

He's had numerous newspaper articles written about him and his wartime history, along with a best-selling children's book, radio interviews, video documentaries and speaking engagements the world over. And last week, George Brady's star climbed even higher as the government of Germany honoured him with a civilian decoration.

Brady, now 85, whose story of survival and remembrance was captured in the book *Hana's Suitcase*, received the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. The medal was awarded to Brady because of his work toward remembrance, reconciliation and outreach, said the German consul general in Toronto, Sabina Sparwasser.

Brady, 85, was joined by his wife and children for a brief ceremony at the German Consulate. Dignitaries from the German and Czech diplomatic missions, including both countries' ambassadors, were also present.

In presenting the award, Sparwasser said, "Your extraordinary achievement is to have turned the horror, brutality and loss that you suffered as a child at the hands of the Germans and in the name of Germany into a message of remembrance, love and hope."

Noting the reluctance of Holocaust survivors to come to the German Consulate for documentation, Sparwasser said, "I do not understand, George, how you could find it in your heart to reach out to Germany. I asked you once, and your answer was as simple and powerful as you are: 'The hatred has to stop somewhere.'

"You have given us the most generous of gifts – the gift of friendship," she continued.

"Being here today, I hope, feels like a triumph for you – your struggles to survive the Holocaust, your efforts to honour the memories of those who perished, and, perhaps most astonishingly, your determination to put aside hatred and work for greater tolerance and reconciliation among the peoples of the world."

Speaking to *The CJN* just prior to receiving the award, Brady said, "I think it's an incredible turn of affairs. If you think about it, 70 years ago I was practically being killed."

He said the award shows German officials remembered the past, "are sorry about what happened and are trying to make up for it."

Brady's story first appeared on the front page of *The CJN* more than 11 years ago. George and his sister, Hana, were children in wartime Czechoslovakia who were imprisoned in Theresienstadt. Hana was deported to Auschwitz, where she was killed. A replica of Hana's suitcase was retrieved by Japanese Holocaust educator Fumiko Ishioka, who contacted George and set off the chain of events that led to the book, documentary and, most recently, the award by the German government.

UJA Federation, Uof T join forces on Holocaust Remembrance Day

Professor Doris Bergen gives compelling lecture on expressions of guilt in survivor accounts

By Daniel Koren

On January 27th, 2005 – the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau – the United Nations decreed that date would would be known as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, to remember the victims of the Shoah.

Since than, every member state of the UN participates in promoting educational awareness on this day, in a bid to prevent further genocides.

This year, in a joint effort between UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, and the Centre for Jewish Studies at University of Toronto, attendees had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Doris Bergen, Chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe Professor of Holocaust Studies at University of Toronto.

In attendance sat some of Canada's key political figures, including former MP Mario Silva, Mark Adler, MP, and Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, who gave a compelling address on Canada's commitment to Holocaust education, and its new leadership role in the field by chairing the International Alliance of Holocaust Remembrance (IHRA) in 2013. Honey Sherman, Chair, and Mira Goldfarb, Executive Director of the Neuberger Holocaust Centre, commended Canada's involvement and announced that the Centre's Holocaust Education Week 2013 would be presented together with the University of Toronto in conjunction with the IHRA international delegates conference. UJA Federation's Holocaust Education Week has been recognized for its educational achievements by the IHRA for the last two years.

(l-r) Tony Comper; Mario Silva, Canada's incoming Chair of the IHRA; Elizabeth Comper; Honey Sherman, Chair of UJA Federation's Sarah & Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre; Minister Jason Kenney; Mira Goldfarb, Executive Director of the Centre.

In her address, Dr. Bergen analyzed and identified aspects of guilt, blame and shame found in various survivor testimonials and excerpts from biographies. Beginning with a passage from Italian literary icon Primo Levi, Bergen made her way across various survivor accounts that depict their remorse and regret at some of the decisions they were forced to make during their painful ordeal. She poignantly contrasted these with the absence of remorse and reflection in many perpetrator accounts.

Bergen concluded her lecture with a moving and thought-provoking theory; "Perhaps it's important to remember survivors not as heroes or role models but as human beings: imperfect, unable to see the future, and knowing of the uncertainty of the choices we make. Perhaps it's that recognition of humility that is the most important lesson we can take from thinking of guilt and blame."

UJA Federation's PJ Library continues outreach to York Region's young families

There's nothing like sitting around a roaring campfire, eating 'smores' and singing camp songs.

But in February?!

Summer comes alive February 17th from 4-6 pm at the Garnet Williams Community Centre in Thornhill as Jewish summer camps join PJ Library in the launching of its newest initiative, *PJ Kids go to Camp*. The fun fair will include an afternoon of free activities and entertainment for young families featuring camp style games, crafts, songs, story-telling and of course, camp snacks. The sing along around a 'faux' campfire will be sure to provide visitors with an authentic camp experience in the middle of a cold Toronto winter.

The event, in partnership with the Ontario Council of Jewish Camps and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, will also give families the opportunity to learn more about the myriad of Jewish not-for-profit camps in Ontario. Participating camps include Camp George, Camp Gesher, J. Academy, Camp Kadima, Camp Northland BB, Camp Ramah in Canada, Camp Shalom, Camp Solelim, Camp Moshava and the Jack & Pat Kay Centre Camp, the lone day camp represented. Camp staff will be leading the fun at all activities.

The impact of Jewish summer camp cannot be ignored. According to a recent survey by the Foundation for Jewish Camps, the influence of summer camp on the ways in which adult Jews choose to engage with the community can be felt long after the last sunset of the summer. Camp attendance increases the likelihood of adult participation and identification in the Jewish community, and in the practice of Jewish behaviours in their lives, from Shabbat candle lighting to using Jewish websites, as well as the appreciation of the value of Jewish charity.

PJ Library, a program of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, has been at the forefront of outreach to young Jewish families in York Region since its launch in the region in May 2010. The program is part of an international award-winning program that offers free, high-quality Jewish books and music each month to children between the ages of 6 months to 5 ½ years old and provides monthly family programming. Over 1800 families are currently part of the local PJ community. PJ Kids programs will focus on the 6-9 year olds who have 'graduated' out of PJ Library programming.

PJ Kids Go To Camp is a free event, however registration is required at www.pjlibrary905.ca.

For more information about PJ Kids Go to Camp, Sunday February 17th from 4-6 pm please contact pjlibrary@ujafed.org.

U.S. ambassador shares her success stories

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

Some people dream of being successful actors. Others dream of becoming doctors or novelists.

Meryl Frank had a very specific dream: she wanted to be the U.S. ambassador to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. She never thought her fantasy would become a reality, but it did.

In graduate school, she studied political science and international relations. She also had four children in the span of seven years and became a stay-at-home mom.

Frank eventually got involved with her local school board, because she was upset with her son's school and realized she'd have to do something about the problem herself.

Through her school-board activities, she met the mayor of her borough, Highland Park, N.J. He was a two-term mayor and she had no political experience, but that didn't stop her from running against him for mayor, which she did with help from her friends.

"We were women that would meet at 10 o'clock at night because we had to put our kids to bed," Frank said during a recent lecture at Beth Tzedec Congregation organized by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center.

"They were college professors, they were secretaries – they were women that wanted to help. In fact, the opposition called us 'the mommies.' What they didn't know is that mommies are very smart. Mommies know how to organize. Mommies know other mommies."

To the surprise of many residents, Frank ended up winning the election by a landslide. "This was such a big landslide in an area in New Jersey that is known for corrupt politics, that it was a half page in the *New York Times*," she told an audience of mostly women at the Toronto synagogue.

Frank served as mayor of Highland Park for almost 10 years, from 2000 to 2010.

After President Barack Obama won his first election in 2008, one of Frank's friends suggested she should go after the position of ambassador to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. "I put an application in online. I am not kidding you, I put it in online," she said.

By then, Frank had already been involved in both local and national politics, and had helped advocate for national and regional legislation, including the Family and Medical Leave Act, signed by president Bill Clinton.

She said Obama's office sent her name to then secretary-of-state Hillary Clinton, who had worked with Frank. Before she knew it, the job she dreamed of having was hers. She was appointed to the position in 2009.

Frank, now a retired ambassador, said it was an honour to speak at the United Nations on behalf of her country. "You say everything that is, in fact, dictated by the White House and the State Department – which is the way it should be," she said. "Because if you say something, and it's not the policy or you're misunderstood, this changes world politics."

She did, however, make an exception when she was invited to speak to the UN General Assembly. It was the 15th anniversary of the World Conference on Women, and Frank was the only female representative speaking on behalf of a region – all the other representatives were men.

Frank said that she said something along the lines of: "I am so honoured to be here to speak on behalf of my country. But I am doubly honoured to be the only woman." Luckily, the room erupted in applause, and she knew she wouldn't be in trouble for saying something that wasn't in her speech.

"The fact that I was scared because I said something that wasn't in the script… told me that maybe this dream was not what I really wanted," she said. "Maybe I was better at something else."

Meryl Frank
[Photo courtesy of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center]

The "something else" turned out to be teaching and empowering other women. Frank, who has also served as president of the Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress, now works with organizations that talk to women around the globe about leadership.

Frank talked about some of the unsung heroes she's met through her travels. One is the first Bedouin woman to become a member of parliament in Jordan.

"Being a Jew is why I do what I do," Frank said. "It's very clear to me that I have in my marrow, because I'm a Jew, an understanding of a need for social justice."

After her lecture, she told *The CJN*, "I am viewing the world on the cusp of change… I feel honoured to be a part of it and to help ease the transition. To help women ease into that transition."

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Rabbis upgrade marriage counselling skills

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Three Canadian rabbis are among 40 participants in Yeshiva University's new rabbinic marriage counselling course.

The year-long online lecture series began in October. It focuses on the rabbi's role, including collaboration with couples, families, and mental health professionals in formulating and implementing a counseling plan, according to a news release from YU, the New York institution often referred to as the flagship of modern Orthodoxy.

Rabbi Aaron Greenberg

The course, which includes two daylong seminars at YU, covers relationship stages from dating through death and divorce.

Instructors include mental health professionals – clinical psychologists, social workers, and a sexual counsellor – and authorities in Jewish marital law. Ottawa's Rabbi Reuven Bulka – spiritual leader of Congregation Machzikei Hadas and a PhD in psychology – is on the faculty.

The curriculum includes "important but often ignored topics" such as abuse, blended families, adoption, illness, death and homosexuality, Rabbi Jacob Schacter, senior scholar of YU's Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), said in a news release. The CJF is running the program with the university's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Rabbinical Theological Seminary.

"Our hope is that this course will cultivate a rabbinic culture that is grounded in confidence, receptiveness to new ideas, and a true understanding of the need to become close partners with mental health professionals," Rabbi Schacter said in the release.

Rabbi Levi Mostofsky, the CJF's director of continuing education and the co-director of the course, told *The CJN* that while YU's rabbinical school has formal coursework in pastoral psychology, the new continuing education course is different, because "the rabbis are out in the field and have engaged with some of these issues... They have a more sophisticated view... It's a whole different conversation."

Participating rabbis are based in North America, Australia and Israel.

Rabbi Mostofsky added that the course explores the rabbis' continuing role as well as their "unique rabbinic role," which can include community education on issues like abuse.

Rabbi Mark Fishman, assistant rabbi of Congregation Beth Tikvah in Montreal, told *The CJN* he is taking the course to improve his listening and counselling skills as he prepares to take over as senior rabbi in July, when Rabbi Mordecai Zeitz retires.

Rabbi Fishman, a 34-year-old native of London, England, hopes to create a "marriage institute" at Beth Tikvah. He currently runs an informal program at the shul for young married men, called "Men in the Kitchen," which consists of cooking classes supplemented by "positive communication techniques."

Rabbi Aaron Greenberg, who runs a young adult service at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation as part of the Heshe and Harriet Seif Jewish Learning Initiative on Campus, said he deals with many young couples who are dating or about to get married.

The YU course appealed to him because it's something he "always wanted to do," he said. "You want to fine-tune your skills."

Most Orthodox rabbis will not officiate at a wedding unless the couple has had some type of counselling ahead of time, Rabbi Greenberg noted. He usually meets with 25 grooms a year, and his wife works with the brides.

Rabbi Greenberg lauded the course's faculty as "the best of the best... What's great about the course is that you really have an opportunity to focus on issues that are affecting the entire Jewish community."

As well, he added, networking with professionals in the field is "really important."

Rabbi Rafi Lipner, the only YU alumnus of the three Canadian rabbis, said he finds the course "extremely valuable."

The founder of The House, a drop-in learning centre for young adults, Rabbi Lipner became spiritual leader of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation last summer.

He has officiated at about two dozen weddings through The House, where couples who are dating or engaged can take part in a "relationship" series.

As a rabbi, he said, "you want to develop a relationship when things are going well and hope that you're a resource when things are tough."

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EU's Hezbollah policy has a steep price

Bulgaria's release of a report blaming Hezbollah for the bombing of a tourist bus in the city of Burgas last July that killed five Israelis and the Bulgarian bus driver has focused attention on the European Union, which, to date, has refused to label Hezbollah a terrorist organization.

Bulgaria, an EU member, went to extraordinary lengths, with American and Israeli forensic assistance, to determine that Iranian-backed Hezbollah was almost certainly responsible for the attack prior to announcing its verdict, out of concern about the pressure this would put on other EU members.

On Feb. 5, the *New York Times* noted: "[Bulgaria's] announcement could force the European Union to reconsider designating the Lebanon-based group as a terrorist organization and cracking down on its fund-raising. That would upend Europe's policy of quiet tolerance of the group."

This led Walter Russell Mead, the respected strategic analyst, to remark on his *American Interest* blog that, if the *Times* is right, "Europe may now be in the process of discovering a spine."

Mead's hope may be a long time coming. For it seems that, even though Hezbollah carried out a deadly attack on EU soil, this may not be sufficient reason to cause other EU members, primarily France and Germany, to call a spade a spade. (Designating Hezbollah a terrorist organization requires unanimity among all 27 EU member states, but support from influential France and Germany is key.)

The Associated Press reported on Feb. 6 that, according to a spokesperson for German Chancellor Angela Merkel, "consequences will have to follow" if the evidence against Hezbollah is confirmed (although such consequences were not specified). *AP* noted that since Hezbollah has "almost 1,000 members" in the country collecting funds for the group, a legal ban would have major consequences that Germany might not be prepared to tackle.

In the Feb. 6 *Jerusalem Post*, Herb Keinon argued that despite Hezbollah's well documented involvement in global terrorism since the twin bombings in Argentina in the 1990s, the Europeans have decided to look the other way. (Two exceptions, as Keinon notes, are the Netherlands and Britain, the latter of which only labels Hezbollah's "armed wing" a terrorist organization).

Keinon remarked cynically: "The EU chose, and still continues to choose, to avert its eyes, not because of a lack of facts, but because of the interests and political considerations of some EU member states. And these interests and considerations will not change because of the Bulgarian report."

In a study for the American Jewish Committee on Hezbollah's activities in Europe, Yehudit Barsky drew attention to the westerners in Lebanon, including German and French citizens, who were kidnapped and held hostage by Hezbollah from 1985 to 1990. Following that, it appears a *modus vivendi* was reached whereby Hezbollah was allowed to operate relatively freely in Europe.

In the Feb. 6 *Times of Israel*, Raphael Ahren wrote: "Among policy analysts, it is indeed clear that the French are behind the EU's refusal and had actually been pressuring Bulgarian authorities not to name Hezbollah so as not to up the pressure on them" and possibly incur a violent response.

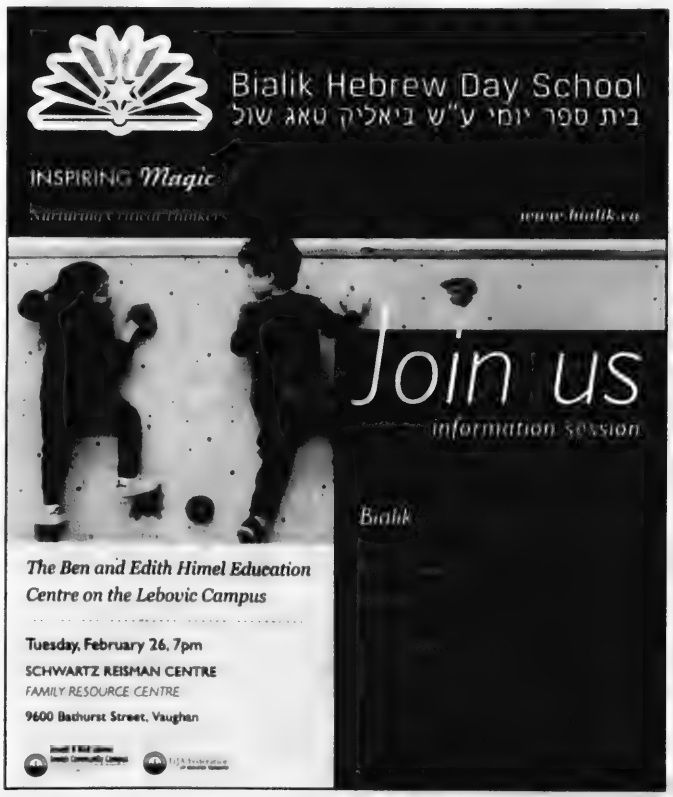
Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah

Ahren interviewed counter-terrorism expert Matthew Levitt, who said: "The Europeans feel that if you poke Hezbollah or Iran in the eye, then they will do the same to you. If you leave them alone, then maybe they will leave you alone."

France, Levitt explained, is particularly worried about the fate of its almost 900 troops who are part of UNIFIL, the United Nations Forces in Lebanon. After all, in 1983, 58 French paratroopers were killed in a Hezbollah truck bombing in Beirut, and between 1985 and 1986, 13 people were killed and 250 injured in a wave of 15 bombing attacks in Paris carried out by its operatives. France doesn't want to risk returning to those days, nor does it want to risk losing its "influence" with the Lebanese government, now dominated by Hezbollah.

The price of keeping this feckless status quo, however, may be too steep – as demonstrated in Burgas last summer.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.



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Teach kids Israel's history, prof urges

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

If parents explain Zionism to their children alluding only to the Holocaust, and not talking about early Zionists' "voluntary choice to take destiny into [their] own hands," those parents are not doing "any service at all" for the next generation, according to historian Ken Stein.

Ken Stein

The Atlanta-based professor was in Toronto recently to speak at a program called Israel and the Diaspora: challenges we face together. The Jan. 31 event at the Park Hyatt Toronto was sponsored by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Israel engagement initiative and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

Stein teaches at Emory University, where he established the Institute for the Study of Israel. A professor of Middle Eastern history, political science and Israeli studies, he was an adviser to former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and is president of the independent Center for Israel Education, which he founded in 2007.

In her introduction, Micki Mizrahi, an Israel engagement committee member, said it's "hard to respond when Israel is being verbally attacked. That's why Ken Stein is here tonight."

Jewish youth here are distancing themselves from Israel, Stein said. "We have to do a better job amongst our peers and amongst our youth, and if we did that, I think we'd have less complaints on the university campuses."

He likened Zionism to American baseball: "It has to do with not having a home field, but playing always away games until you actually built a field of dreams of your own."

Among Israel's accomplishments, which Stein termed "extraordinary," he noted gay and lesbian rights, and women's "absolute equality and freedom to choose."

As well, he asked, as part of a series of rhetorical questions, "Which country in the Middle East puts its values over its interests?

"What country in the Middle East is a strategic asset of the United States and North America and all the democracies, particularly at this moment when the Middle East is going through a spin cycle, and that spin cycle could last decades?

"Those are pretty good accomplishments for a country that's only 65."

He also noted that Jews have gone from being powerless to acquiring power, and that the Jewish experience as a minority "has shaped how we behave."

"Jews now want to protect their prerogative to make their own choices. Our great-grandparents couldn't do that, and that's why we so hold fast to the need to do so."

He spoke of Israel's right to self-determination, including the pursuit of Hezbollah, and an Israeli Supreme Court ruling in favour of a Palestinian farmer whose land had been confiscated by the IDF.

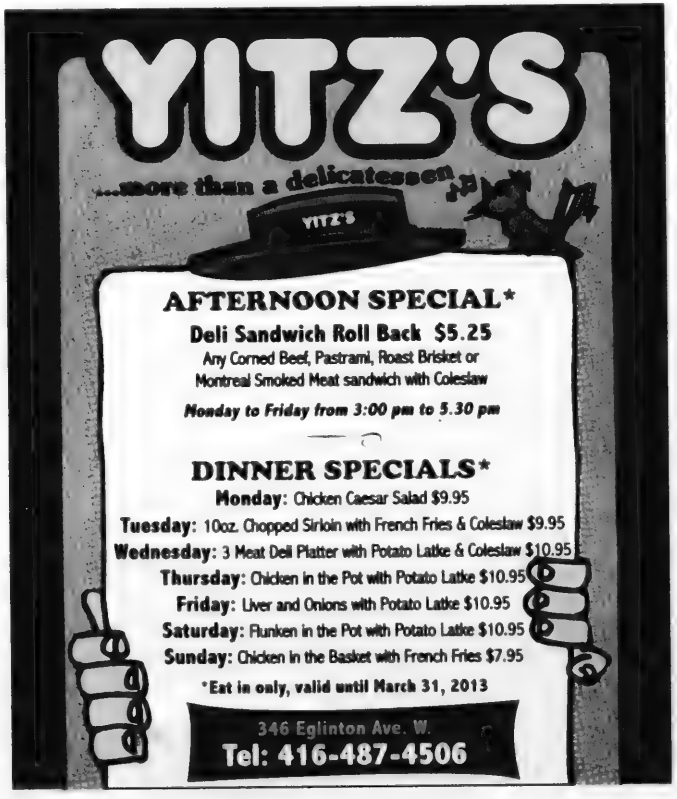
"We have to teach our kids that the preservation of choice is terribly important for us as Jews wherever we live, and that it binds us as much as parshat hashavuah," Stein said, referring to the weekly Torah portion.

Israel is in a tough neighbourhood, he noted. "The neighbourhood's not going to change."

In a question-answer session following his speech, Stein said that parents start to educate their children about Israel too late and have abrogated responsibility for Jewish identity to institutions.

If young people don't know Israel's history – including the struggle and the threat from neighbouring countries – and feel good about it, then "we have been lazy," he said.

Having Israelis in the classroom is terrific, he said, but it's not a substitute for parents reinforcing the messages at home.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Tuition subsidy for new students

Continued from page 3

The program is for new students entering nursery, junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, or grades 1 or 2.

For the past five years, Petersiel said, the school has been following up to see why some parents inquire about the school, but don't choose it. "Finances being the number 1 reason has risen threefold in the last five years alone," he said.

Tuition for all-day preschool for the 2013-2014 year is $13,900.

"The more students in the school, the lesser the burden on everyone," Petersiel said.

While the school population has dropped this year by about 10 per cent in Thornhill, there are 100 new students at the south campus, and a combined total of 915 students at both campuses.

"Because we've grown," Petersiel said, "we have been able to keep [next year's tuition] increase under three per cent."

For further information, go to alephbaeck.ca

PHYSICS CHALLENGE

Senior high school students from around the world are invited to form teams and take on the challenge of the Weizmann Institute of Science's Shaiheveth Freier Physics Tournament. The object is to build a safe using simple materials and a locking mechanism that operates on the principles of physics. Winners of the local competition, along with their coach, travel to Israel to compete internationally. Seen from left are this year's team from The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel campus: Erin Mandel, Bailey Bernknopf, Ron Haber, Mark Sirkin and David Chesney.

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גידי קורן וחברים

לילה במאי- תיאטרון המפגש

תיאטרון המפגש הינו התיאטרון היחיד בשפה העברית בטורונטו, חו לו העונה החמישית שהוא מביא לקהל הישראלי והיהודי הצעות ישראליות מקוריות שזוכות להצלחה גדולה ולתגובה נלהבת של הציבור שלנו. התיאטרון נתמך על ידי מרכז שוורץ-ריסמן של הפדראציה והשנה נוסף לו גם תיאטרון ילדים בעברית שיעלה באביב את ההצגה "אנה פרנק".

השנה מעלות הבמאית יעל פיינגולד והמפיקה תמי ברמן את הצגתו הבלתי נשכחת של יהושוע סובולאצקי יהושע "לילה במאי", דרמה משפחתית שמתרחשת בירושלים בליל ה- 22 במאי, ביום לפני שהכריז נאצר על סגירת מיצרי טיראן.

שלוש הצגות תתקיימנה ב CITY PLAYHOUSE ביום שבת בערב, וביום א' ה 24 בפברואר ב1:30 וב- 7:30 בערב. כרטיסים אצל תמי 905.764.7817

ההצגה מתאימה גם לאלה שאינם דוברים עברית, כי היא מלווה בשיקופיות- תרגום בגוף ההצגה. מאחר ומתקיימות רק שתי הצגות אני מציע לכם לא לחכות בקניית הכרטיסים לרגע האחרון, כי רבים יישארו בחוץ. אבל שישאר בינינו.

עלונדון-עתונות ישראלית במיטבה

יש בלונדון, אנגליה עיתונאית ישראלית מדהימה שמוציאה לאור עיתון ישראלי ברמה מעולה. שמה של הקוסמת הוא ענת קורן (איך לא). היא וצוות העיתונאים שמסביבה מנצלים היטב את העובדה שללונדון מגיעים תכופות כל המי ומי בישראל, וכן היא יכולה לעדכן את קוראיה בראיונות עכשויים. סמנו לכם את הלינק של עלונדון

http://dmag.col.org.il/pub/alondon/index.html -

ותתעשרו בעוד מקור מידע אמין ומבדר. אבל שיישאר בינינו.

כדאי לראות

הסרט IMPOSSIBLE מביא את סיפורה האמיתי של משפחה בריטית, הורים ושלושה בנים, שמבלים את חופשת כריסמאס שלהם באתר חוף מקסים בתאילנד, כשצונאמי נוחת על החוף ללא התראה מוקדמת. די היססתי אם ללכת לסרט, כי כללית אני לא אוהב סרטי אסונות ואימה. אבל טעיתי- מעבר למראה האירוע עצמו, שאותו ואי כבר ראיתם ב"בקרוב", זהו סרט נוגע ללב ומאוד אמיתי על יחסי אנוש, ועל איך שאנשים מוצאים כוחות עליונים שהם לא ידעו שיש בהם. גם המבוגרים, אך בעיקר שלושת הילדים, משחקים בצורה נוגעת ללב, אך לא קיצ'ית, וגורמים לקהל להרטיב מטפחות וניירות טישו.

שמונה בסולם קורן.

גזעני בית"ר ירושלים

כשעולה שחקן ערבי למשחק נגד בית"ר ירושלים- משמיעם אוהדי בית"ר נהמות של קוף. לא עוזרים עונשי ההתאחדות, הם בשלהם. עכשיו החליט בעלי הקבוצה גייזאמק להביא לבית"ר שני שחקנים מוסלמים מצ'צניה- והתגובה הגזענית שכוללת קללות ונאצות מהדהדת ביציעי איצטדיון טדי. איך זה שיהודים, בעיקר מעדות המזרח, שסבלו כל כך קשה מגזענות בארצותיהם, הופכים לכל כך גזעניים בעצמם! ואיך זה שאנשים שטוענים שישראל הראשונה האשכנזית גזענית כלפיהם, נוקטים באותה גישה שעליה התלוננו כלפי ערבים!

אם יש לכם הסבר מניח את הדעת- אשמח לפרסמו.

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikren.com

Have an allergy-free Purim!

Jewish holidays and food. No surprises there. But if the treats that are exchanged and left at the doorstep on Purim – including home-baked goods with unexpected ingredients –the glorious holiday could bring some unwelcome surprises for people with food allergies and sensitivities. Today, advice for a merry and safe Purim.

"The other day someone asked what my plans are for Purim. I think, like every other parent of food-allergic children, my heart skipped a beat and sunk to my feet. *Not this time of year again!*" writes Sara Atkins. "Purim should be filled with fun, excitement and laughs, but for a family dealing with food allergies, it's pure fear." Atkins then explains how with preparation and some clever food substitutions she was able to transform Purim into a holiday her children would actually look forward to. [http://bit.ly/purimfood1]

DebbieN faced a different challenge: how to bake up a batch of low-carb hamantashen without artificial sweeteners that will be safe – and appealing – to a child with diabetes. The problem with hamantashen is that they deliver the carbs, but "they don't have enough fiber or protein to slow down the sugars and avoid a spike in blood glucose. In short, not high-quality nutrition." She finally found one that makes sense: substituting almond meal for some or most of the flour. Check out her blog for dough and Debbie's tricks to stretch those carbs. [http://bit.ly/purimfood2]

As for the filling, Nancy Pascal says, "Low-carb jam works well and tastes delicious. Sugar-free chocolate chips are very good when hot, but not as delightful when cold, so you can try placing the hamantashen in the microwave for a few seconds before eating." [http://bit.ly/purimfood3]

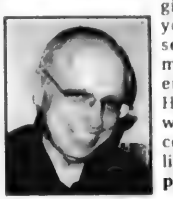
Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

Many recipes call for flour, which of course is a show-stopper for anyone with celiac disease, an intolerance to gluten. That's where Nancy Lapid comes in with not one but six gluten-free hamantashen recipes, including a dairy variation that calls for butter, cream cheese, sugar, vanilla extract and an (optional) egg. [http://bit.ly/purimfood5]

No eggs? No problem. According to the (perfectly named) site, Allergy Shmallergy, here's your substitution for two eggs: "1/4 cup applesauce and 1-1/2 tsp. Ener-G egg replacer combined with 2 tbsp. water or soy milk." [http://bit.ly/purimfood6] Leslie Shupak's No Egg Hamantashen takes more of minimalist approach and sticks to the basics: flour, baking powder, salt, margarine, sugar, water and vanilla extract. [http://bit.ly/purimfood7]

Aside from hamantashen, you should also take into consideration food allergies and sensitivities as you pack up the mishloach manot gift baskets or plan your menu for the seudah, the festive meal eaten at the end of the holiday. Here's a discussion with menu ideas if certain foods are off limits. [http://bit.ly/purimfood9]



Atkins shares her feelings about the holiday – after taking the necessary precautions. "That fear will never go away as long as the kids are still allergic. But the fear that they will be turned off from Judaism because the celebrations have only brought them heartache is gone, and because of that, my heart skips a few less beats and doesn't sink as far into my feet when I hear it's Purim time once again."

Highway@rogers.com

Thanking God with blessings

Around eight years ago, I decided to try my hand at cooking by preparing a *dafina* (Moroccan cholent) for my congregation.

I surfed the net, found a recipe and followed it carefully. To my surprise, the *dafina* was delicious. My wife asked who made the *dafina*, and when she found out it was me, she told me I was hired! It was the beginning of a new hobby.

For me, cooking is a time of meditation, especially when I'm alone and it's quiet. It's a time of introspection where I realize the abundance that HaShem provides us with every moment. How do we thank God for this abundance?

There are many ways to express our appreciation for His bounty, and reciting brachot is certainly one of them.

A brachah is a formula specified by Jewish law by which we thank God. It can be long or short, but it invariably contains the name of God and a phrase beginning with the words "*Baruch Atah*" ("Blessed are You").

Many biblical commentators question this terminology, for how is it possible, they ask, for a person to bless God, who lacks nothing? What do we mean when we declare that God is "*baruch*"?

The Chizkuni (13th-century France), says in Bereshit (24:27) that the word "*baruch*," when used in relation to God, is an expression of greeting or praise.

The Rashba (1235–1310, Spain) posits in a responsa that a brachah is the acknowledgement that He is Ruler over all, and everything comes from Him. As the Talmud states, "A person must bless [God] for the bad just as he must bless Him for the good (Brachot 60b)." The Rashba continues by explaining that the word "brachah" comes from the word "*breichah*," meaning reservoir of water (i.e., the source of everything).

Sephardi Window

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Rabbi Chaim Volozhin (1749-1821, Lithuania), says in *Nefesh HaChaim*, that the expression "*baruch*" means multiplicity and abundance.

Rambam (1135-1204, Spain) explains in a wonderfully clear manner in *Yad Hachazakah*, when treating the subject of brachot, that the wording of the *brachah* was instituted by Ezra and his court (circa 350 BCE) and that anyone who deviates from the wording of a *brachah* is mistaken. The exception to the aforementioned blessings' origin are the biblically commanded *Birkat Hamazon* and *Birkat HaTorah*.

The Rambam teaches that the purpose of brachot is to acknowledge the awesome reality that God is the Creator of everything. Human nature causes us to believe, mistakenly, that the beautiful lunch we enjoyed today, the great car we saved for years to buy or the library we've built over the years all belong to us.

But the fact of the matter is that all of these things really belong to God and are on loan to us. Reciting a *brachah* acknowledges this truth.

We are so fortunate. Let us seize the many opportunities we have each day to thank God for what we have.

Disconnecting to connect

Class Act

Daniel Held

After waiting four months for the kinks to be ironed out, I download iOS 6, Apple's new mobile operating system. The update includes a slew of features –Facebook integration, photo sharing, etc. Most exciting is "Do Not Disturb," a setting to pause the torrent of bings, bleeps, dings and vibrations that come with the digital age.

My life is abuzz with the sounds of my iPhone, iPad and computer: a ping for email, a buzz for Facebook messages, a tone for Skype calls, and the occasional ring of a phone. Sometimes it seems that hardly a minute goes by without some jingle.

I've started searching for moments of silence. Two weeks ago, I declared 5 to 7:30 p.m. – from when my daughter comes home to her bedtime – to be email-free hours. We still Skype with grandparents and answer texts, but I try to avoid emails.

This week, I'm experimenting with a plan to check email only once an hour. Fighting the Pavlovian urge to flip to Gmail every time I hear an email ping, I'm waiting until the last 10 minutes of each hour to sort through new messages. This system is an attempt to raise productivity and retain focus for longer stretches. We'll see how it goes.

Taking time out stems from the fourth commandment: "Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; on it you shall not do any work." (Exodus 20)

Inspired by Shabbat, Reboot – an organization devoted to inspiring under-connected Jews to generate projects that impact the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds – has pioneered the National Day of Unplugging. The annual event (this year it's on March 1-2) encourages people to take a brief respite from their digital devices – to disconnect in order to connect.

But Shabbat is more than the "Do Not Disturb" function. Reboot's Shabbat Manifesto offers 10 principles designed "to slow down lives in an increasingly hectic world": 1. Avoid technology; 2. Connect with loved ones; 3. Nurture your health; 4. Get outside; 5. Avoid commerce; 6. Light candles; 7. Drink wine; 8. Eat bread; 9. Find silence; 10. Give back.

The manifesto takes the Jewish particularism of Shabbat and makes it universal. Reboot calls it "a modern spin on the ancient day of rest for people of all denominations." Kiddush becomes "drinking wine." "You shall not work" becomes "avoid commerce." Hamotzi becomes "eat bread." Prayer becomes "find silence."

There's certainly something appealing about paring Shabbat down to its universalistic appeal. Universalism is what enables a White House Passover seder, Chanukah to become the holiday of lights, and a mitzvah to be common parlance for a good deed. At the same time, pursuing the universal to the exclusion of the particular is what makes kashrut, Shavuot and Israel irrelevant to so many.

If Shabbat is only about unplugging, then I celebrate it every day from 5 to 7:30. But there's more. I wonder what could be added to the Shabbat Manifesto to remind us that, at its core, Shabbat has both universal appeal and a particularistic source – "the seventh day is a Sabbath of the lord your God."

Penny ante

Rabbi Erwin Schild

Guest Voice

Gevalt! My fundamental human right to practise my religion without government interference has been violated! I raise my voice, or more realistically, I press my computer keys in protest and indignation.

My outrage is directed at the abolition of the one-cent coin. The penny, like the ancient "pruta," is to be no more.

Jews associate their daily prayer services with the giving of tzedakah. In my synagogue, the Adath Israel Congregation, as in almost every shul, a *pushke*, a charity box, is circulated during the service so that the worshippers, while praying for their own needs, may perform a meritorious deed by giving a little to charity. It is a token gift, requiring no cheque or credit card, though I must mention that one of our daily worshippers drops a five-dollar bill into the box each morning.

My contribution is much more modest. Like the majority of our worshippers, I extricate some coins from my pocket. However, the amount of my small gift is calculated on the basis of "gematria," the numerical values of a Hebrew word that guide my gift in a mystical way.

I take out my coins and combine several coins to amount to 36 cents, which is twice "chai," "life," a silent prayer for life and health for my wife and me. Or I may find a quarter and three pennies, for 28 or "*koach*," strength, a blessing that I certainly need. Sometimes I make it 32 cents, the number value of "*lev*," the heart, symbolizing my prayer for the health of my heart that I cannot take for granted.

Rabbi Erwin Schild

So you see that I need pennies. I cannot do without one-cent coins. I can compose 30 with a quarter and a nickel, and 30 is "*lamed*," which is a word related to learning and teaching, but I need a little more choice.

I therefore appeal to the government to rescind this haughty abolition of the humble penny. If that is not possible, then I demand the introduction of a new 18-cent coin, to be called the "chai," possibly with the images of Queen Esther and Mordechai (not the editor of *The CJN*.) I will then use two of these every morning for double chai, or as an alternative, combine one new coin with a dime for 28 which means "*koach*", strength. Or I would combine our new coin with three dimes, so that it would amount to "*moach*," brains, and that's something we all need.

Happy Purim!

Rabbi Erwin Schild is rabbi emeritus at Adath Israel Congregation in Toronto.

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Program supports Jewish social innovators

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Leaders of non-profits who participate in a new initiative called Genesis will get skills training to help their organizations achieve success, as well as free office space for their groups.

Launched by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto on Jan. 31, Genesis will help five "incubator" organizations at a time, selecting new residents each year.

The first group consists of the Annex Shul, the JED Institute, the Jewish Business Network, Project A.I.M. and Shoresh Jewish Environmental Progams.

Genesis supports "Jewish social innovation" through offering mentorship and skills training, focusing on a different skill each month through workshops and instruction from a mentor

The initiative is "about building a Jewish community that's relevant to the next generation," said Genesis director Alexandra Kuperman.

Spiritual leader of the Annex Shul, Yacov Fruchter, a non-denominational, independent minyan that serves young professionals and families, said, "We're trying to figure out how to build and how to become sustainable." He added that having access to free office space is especially helpful.

Rabbi Rafi Lipner of The House runs Genesis' speaker series, which brings successful people in the non-profit world to an event where they speak about their work, sharing with the public the wisdom they've gained through experience.

Speaking at Genesis' launch, Rabbi Lipner discussed Jewish social innovation.

"Innovation is doing things differently... Social innovation realizes we are here to serve others," he said, adding there's no set definition for "Jewish social innovation," specifically whether it means the innovation is for Jews or innovation that stems from Jewish values

Paul Alofs

The launch featured the first speaker in the series: Paul Alofs, president and CEO of the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation, which recently received a $50-million donation from Emmanuelle Gattuso and her broadcast mogul husband, Allan Slaight.

Alofs shared his wisdom on "passion capital," which he called the most important aspect of success. He described the seven building blocks to finding passion capital: defining your organization's creed, culture (meaning nourishing your passion), courage, building your brand's reputation, finding resources, planning a strategy and persistence.

"Passion capital is the world's most valuable asset," he said, adding that if you have passion capital, it will eventually lead you to success in raising money.

On Feb. 28, four-time Olympic gold-medal speed-skater Johann Olav Koss will share wisdom from his experience as CEO of Right to Play, a non-profit that brings sports to disadvantaged communities around the world. April 4 will feature Marc Kielburger, co-founder of Free the Children, and on May 30, Elisha Muskat, CEO of Ashoka Canada, will speak.

Having these great speakers and professionals to guide the Annex Shul is a huge help, Fruchter said, adding that he especially hopes to learn fundraising strategies and board governance.

"[These organizations] started to do the work... because in their heart they believe it's what they have to do," Kuperman said. "Genesis is working to support these change-makers."

The participating organizations get temporary office space in the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Student Life, sharing the building with Hillel of Greater Toronto.

This arrangement is perfect because many of the non-profit organizations are targeting young adults, and so perhaps young people who are graduating might feel inspired to continue their involvement in the Jewish community through joining one of the resident organizations, Kuperman said.

"If you leave Hillel and you don't know where to go next, I think that's a real loss," she said. "It's a connection point, which I think is really important."

Although the program picks only five resident organizations annually, other non-profit groups can find help through Genesis, but without the free office space. Anybody can attend the Genesis speaker series, and Kuperman said she has a mailing list of organizations that seek assistance. Interested organizations should approach Genesis to be placed on the mailing list since they will be called for submissions in the autumn when Genesis accepts applications for the next round of residencies, she said.

Groups must fit certain criteria, such as being established in and having a track record in Toronto, and they must include several people.

For more information, visit the website ujagenesis.com.

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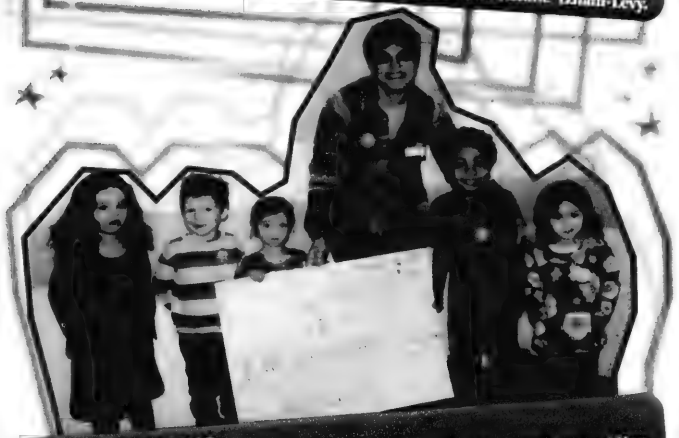
'TOURING' ISRAEL

The shinshinim (Israeli emissaries) at Robbins Hebrew Academy's Beth Tikvah campus introduced students in kindergarten to Grade 2 to an Israeli TV program that shows two people visiting various places throughout Israel. Together with the shinshinim, students created their own passports to use while travelling in Israel. Pictured, clockwise from front left, are Aitan Hamou, Libby Glazman-Bakous, Makenna Gillick, Nico Finkielsztein, emissary Shoval Rozenberg, Liat Assraf, Liam Klein and Ronnie Tznani-Levy.



FUN FUNDRAISING

The Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Nursery School held its second annual Hop, Skip and Jump challenge last week. Children aged 18 months to five years hopped, skipped, jumped and ran around the track for 30 minutes and raised more than $2,200. Proceeds will help children from low-income families attend educational programs at the centre. Pictured from left are Mya Eisenstat, Levy Baker, Shana Colman-Peck, director of early childhood education Cathy Indig, Levi Rosenberg-Van Gameren and Julia Kalman.

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Mazel Tov
מזל טוב

Mazel tov with much love to the Stattner Twins, Mildred Halpern of River Vale, N.J., and Bea Taylor of CSL, celebrating their 90th birthday, Feb. 22.

To our amazing parents and role models, Rabbi Avraham & Raquel. Mazel tov upon your 20th anniversary. We love you. Yaacov, Gavriel, Yonatan and Ezrah.

Irith Hochfelder, Giora Hochfelder, and Michael & Susan Stern along with their families are thrilled to announce the upcoming marriage of Sharon & Aaron.

Mazel tov Gertrude Toulch Staviss who celebrates her 90th birthday Feb. 19. From your children, Harold & Aviva and grandchildren, Reuby Phillice and Marney Sarah.

Happy 65th anniversary Dad & Mom, Ben & Barbara Stark, and happy 92nd birthday to Mom. Love, Elsa & Ted Stringer, Lori, Michael, Sarah.

Happy fifth birthday Kennedy! We love you more and more every day! Love, Grammy & Z (Heather & Gary Abrams), Jaycee, Adam and Ryker Klein.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

What's New

Deadline reminder: Feb. 15 is the deadline for the issue of Feb. 28 and Feb. 25 is the deadline for the issue of March 7. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 14

LOAVES OF LOVE

Chabad of Markham holds a challah-baking workshop. $10, girls under 16 admitted free. RSVP 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

Sunday, Feb. 17

CAMP FUN FAIR

Jewish summer camps and PJ Library hold a camp fun fair with games, crafts, snacks and storytelling, 4-6 p.m., Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Free event but registration required at www.pjlibrary905.ca.

SHAAR SHALOM SINGLES

Shaar Shalom Singles invite you to listen and dance to a performance by **James Reagan**, 7:30 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 2 Simonston Blvd. $10. Call **David** 416-224-9494.

END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS

Rabbi Michael Dolgin discusses end-of-life planning, 10:15 a.m., Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave.

PURIM WITH JEWISH JAZZ

Friends of Yiddish present "A Freleykhen Purim with Jewish Jazz," featuring **Jordan Klapman, Sharon Smith**, 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah. RSVP to: **Sandy**, yiddish18@yahoo.ca or 416-458-1440.

RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin discusses "The State of Israel in Light of the Arab Spring and the Iranian Threat," 8 p.m., Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, 613 Clark Ave. W.

Tuesday, Feb. 19

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Rabbi Michael Dolgin, Rev. Emmanuel Kwadwo Ofori, Prof. Liyakat Takim discuss "A History of Human Trafficking," 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

WOMEN IN JEWISH HISTORY

Rabbi Philip Scheim, Michael Rubin teach a course on "Exploration of Women in Jewish Tradition and History," Tuesdays, twice a month to May 21, 10 a.m., Beth David Synagogue. Call 416-633-5500 to register.

PARENTS OF IDF SOLDIERS

A meeting for parents of lone soldiers serving in the Israeli army or whose children are considering serving will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue area. Call **Perla**, 416-482-1390 or perla@riesenbach.com

SCROLL OF ESTHER ARTIST

Laya Crust, manuscript artist, discusses her illustrated Megillah, 8 p.m., Darchei Noam Synagogue, 864 Sheppard Ave. W.

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

Beth Tikvah Synagogue shows the film *Sarah's Key*, 2 p.m. $5.

Wednesday, Feb. 20

PURIM LECTURE

Hillel Horovitz discusses "Purim: Living in the Matrix," 8 p.m., Bnai Torah Congregation, 465 Patricia Ave.

Continued on page 27

HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE
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Continued from page 26

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Fabric artist **Noelle Hamlyn** discusses her work, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. $5.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Bethlehem, Zechariah and Isaiah," 8 p.m., Beth Torah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Other News

VENDORS WANTED

Vendors are wanted for a May 9 Girls Gone Glam event. It is hosted by Yasmin chapter of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO. For more information, please contact yasminchapter@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to deliver meals to seniors. Call **Karen Sacke** at Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

FALSEHOODS IN THE TORAH

Join Mekorot for Peace or Justice: Falsehood in the Torah, taught by **Shayna Kravetz**, Mondays Feb. 25-March 11, 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-877-2050.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

PURIM FUN

Pride of Israel Synagogue holds a Purim Extravaganza with children's entertainer **Lenny Graf. Feb. 23**, 6:45 p.m. Pre-register at 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Beth Emeth Synagogue Players present *Motown Megilla* **Feb. 23**, 8 p.m., and **Feb. 24**, 2 p.m. Tickets $5.

Beth Jacob Synagogue holds a Purim party **Feb. 24**, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Call 416-638-5955 to reserve by Feb. 17.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds an adult Purim party at the shul, **Feb. 23**, 7 p.m. A youth carnival will be held **Feb. 24**, 1:30 p.m. $10/$20.

Chabad of Markham presents Cirque de Purim, **Feb. 24**, 2:30 p.m., with the acrobatic group Zero Gravity. Megillah at 2 p.m. $10/$6 before Feb. 15. 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

City Shul holds a family Megillah reading and party, **Feb. 23**, 6 p.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St.

Morris Winchevsky School holds a family Purim celebration, **Feb. 24**, 11 a.m., 918 Bathurst St. $10/$5.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, holds a family Purim festival, **Feb. 24**, 10:15 a.m., St. Andrew's Junior High School, 131 Fenn Ave. A Purim Showcase for Na'amat will be held **Feb. 24**, 5 p.m. at the Pilot Tavern, 22 Cumberland Ave. $25/$10. 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Danforth Jewish Circle holds a Purim festival with skits and food, **Feb. 24**, 2 p.m., Eastminster Hurndale Room, 310 Danforth Ave. RSVP info@djc.com.

Temple Sinai presents *iPurim*, an interactive Purim comedy, **Feb. 23**, 7 p.m. **Feb. 24**, Family day at the Toronto Zoo, Purim in ZOOshan, 9:30 a.m. To reserve, call 416-487-3281.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Casino Royale evening **Feb. 23**, Megillah reading at 6:30 p.m., program to follow. **Feb. 24**, Megillah reading at 9:30 a.m., followed by a Purim seudah and carnival at 11 a.m. $7/$12. RSVP by Feb. 14 for all events, 416-221-3433.

JF&CS GROUPS

Registration is required for all programs. Groups and workshops are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Temple Sinai Social Club 65+ Sylvia Goldenblatt reviews *The Imposter Bride*, Feb. 21, 1:30 p.m. $7/$9. 416-487-3281.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, March 13. Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m.; Thursdays line dancing 10 a.m.; social bridge 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Feb. 19, **Avi Shachar** presents an update on Israel, 10 a.m.; Feb. 21, **Darren Mankasingh** discusses meditation, 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons for Seniors is a discussion group meeting at Beth Tzedec Synagogue, March 11, 1:30 p.m.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Register now for positive-aging group series with **Phyllis Fien** starts March 5.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Concert with Judy and David on Family Day, Feb. 18. Call ext. 4235.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Purim Carnival and Circus Show, Feb. 24, 10:30 a.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Opera with **Iain Scott** runs Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Feb. 14, *Don Carlo*, Feb. 21, *Eugene Onegin*.

Film lectures on "Produced and Abandoned Films," with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Art Appreciation with **Osnat Lippa**, "The Impressionists," Feb. 12-March 5.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Shalom Singers resumes Feb. 21, 10 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Purim lunch and learn, Feb. 15 noon with **Sharoni Sibony**.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *The Barber of Stamford Hill* and *The 10th Man*, Feb. 17, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Al Green Theatre. Ext. 606.

Jordan Swartz offers a vegetarian cooking class, with the food being shared with the hungry, Feb. 20 or Feb. 27, 7 p.m. Ext. 0

Purim carnival Feb. 24, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. features games, musicians and Megillah reading. $10.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers, Feb. 25-April 29.

Register now for the MNJCC Theatre Lab, March 7-May 30. Develop skills while rehearsing pieces from new Jewish theatre.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Paintings by **Irit Epstein** on display in the gallery until Feb. 18.

60X60 Dance Toronto, presented by **Tova Kardonne** and Vox Novus, March 10, 8 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. The show links 60 composition and dance works by 60 different composers and choreographers each 60 seconds long, in a one-hour performance. $20.

The Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Jewish Parenting Class sponsored by Beit Rayim Synagogue, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3025.

Seniors' bagel breakfast, March 15, 9 a.m. Seniors coffee hour, March 1, 1:30 p.m. Call **Staci**, ext. 3037.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 32

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Earle Iverson	Jan 22/13	89 Skymark Drive.
Norman Green	Jan 23/13	54 Foxbar Road
Sam Gelman	Jan 24/13	18 Newcastle Cresent
Shirley Gold	Jan 22/13	55 Carscadden Drive
Steve Winter	Jan 26/13	9800 Yonge Street
Fannie (Faye) Corbin	Jan 25/13	525 Chaplin Crescent
Pauline Atkins	Jan 28/13	306 Finch Avenue, East
Julia Markowitz	Jan 26/13	1166 Bay Street
Alvin Rosenberg	Jan 25/13	67 Clarendon Avenue
Faye Seltzer	Jan 26/13	1 Lunau Lane
Lewis Frank	Jan 26/13	866 Sheppard Ave. West
Bob Smolkin	Jan 25/13	229 Strathallan Wood
David Gillman	Jan 25/13	77 Citation Drive
Bella Haber	Jan 27/13	63 St. Clair Ave. West
Marcelle Feldman	Jan 28/13	30 Fashion Roseway
Bella Rosenfarb	Jan 29/13	541 Finch Ave. West
Brian Cross	Jan 27/13	6000 Bathurst Street
Mindy Cross	Jan 28/13	6000 Bathurst Street
Ziva Weizman	Jan 31/13	868 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Cesia Zaifman	Jan 30/13	67 Corksfield Avenue
Varda Hall Berenstein	Jan 30/13	85 Skymark Drive
Debbie Risman	Jan 30/13	65 Skymark Drive
Edith Knopf	Jan 29/13	350 Lonsdale Road
Rita Birenstok-Cumming	Jan 29/13	271 Ridley Blvd.
Samuel Tomkin	Jan 31/13	1 Malabar Place
Nat Hennick	Jan 31/13	18A Hazelton Avenue
Bernie Pont	Jan 31/13	5351 Yonge Street
Henry Dickler	Jan 31/13	525 Lawrence Ave. West
Gloria Mandel	Jan 31/13	63 Burbank Drive

HEBREW BASIC

Sabina Jablonski	Jan 29/13	541 Finch Avenue West
Leah Schain	Jan 29/13	5935 Bathurst Street

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Jazwicki, Leopold	Jan. 24/13	
Engel, Betty Bertha	Jan. 25/13	Private
Vilenskaia, Maria	Jan. 26/13	3036 Bathurst St
Shriqui, Rachel	Jan.25/13	3560 Bathurst St
Engel, Elizabeth	Jan. 26/13	3555 Bathurst St
Weisz, Mike	Jan. 26/13	Private
Shapiro, Alice	Jan. 26/13	860 Steeles Ave. W
Heliasov, Zilpa	Jan. 29/13	
Saitowitz, Sam	Jan. 29/13	55 Anser Ave
Shabes, Joseph	Jan. 29/13	106 Roberta Dr
Adler, Regina	Jan. 30/13	1111 Steeles Ave. W
Baranikin, Haim	Jan. 30/13	22 Alexis Blvd
Craus, Miriam	Jan. 30/13	41 Kimbergate Way
Cadesky, Abraham	Jan. 31/13	100 Observatory Lane
Levy, Hanna	Feb. 2/13	7440 Bathurst St
Buckspan, Arthur	Feb. 1/13	104 Robinwood Trail
Attia, Helena	Feb. 2/13	1221 Simcoe St. N
Lowy, Fany	Jan. 25/13	Private
Botnick, Marvin	Feb. 4/13	54 Fontainbleau Dr

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Stephen Kanee ז"ל died January 18, 2013, at the University of Minnesota Medical Center in Minneapolis. Born in Winnipeg on March 17, 1941, the only child of Sol and Florence Kanee, Stephen grew up in a household devoted to the arts, surrounded with love and nurtured by his aunts and uncles and grandparents, especially by his dear Bubba Rose Kanee.

His father introduced him to fishing at an early age and Stephen enjoyed happy childhood summers out in the boat at their cottage in Lake of the Woods. Stephen's mother ignited in her son his lifelong passion for theater, art and music. Stephen said it was Florence, along with his Bubba Rose, who gave him the inner strength to follow his heart into the dramatic arts.

His apprenticeship in the family flour milling business took him to London, where his interest in theater led to an internship at the avant-garde Royal Court Theatre. In 1974, now a student at the University of Minnesota Theater Department, he was awarded a McKnight Fellowship in Directing, which brought him to the Guthrie Theater.

At the University, he met and fell in love with MaryAnn Lippay. They married in 1981, and their life together became a celebration of love, wit, music, food, art, travel, family and friends. They were a truly devoted and joyous couple, and counted themselves lucky to find each other and the love they shared.

Stephen, who was mentored at the Guthrie by Michael Langham, scored his first success with his production of Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker*. It was followed by the first Guthrie production of *A Christmas Carol*, which brought together for the first time playwright Barbara Field, scenic designer Jack Barkla, lighting designer Duane Schuler, costume designer Jack Edwards, and composer Hiram Titus. *A Christmas Carol*, became a perennial Minneapolis favorite over a 35 year run.

For the Guthrie, while he served as Associate Artistic Director, he also directed *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Catsplay, Hamlet, Great Expectations, The Tavern, On the Razzle, The Birthday Party*, and I.B. Singer's *Teibele and Her Demon*, which was later moved to Broadway.

Elsewhere, he directed for the Cricket Theatre, the Houston Grand Opera, the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Meadowbrook Theater, and Park Square Theatre, among others.

Stephen was a gifted and adventurous director, highly theatrical in style, aware of the music and nuances of his texts. His use of the challenging Guthrie thrust stage was masterful. Under his direction, there never was a bad seat in the house.

When in 1980 the opportunity arose to pursue his life long ambition, teaching, he accepted a faculty position at New Mexico State University, which he held for five years. He then returned to the Guthrie to help steer the theater through a period of transition.

In 1986, he realized his dream to join the faculty of the University of Minnesota Department of Theater Arts and Dance. As an Associate Professor and Head of the Directing Program, he directed *Old Times, Spring Awakening, Mrozek's Tango, Two Gentlemen of Verona, The White Devil, The Dybbuk, The Visit*, and many others, at Rarig Center and on the Showboat. His theater wisdom and advice helped guide and inspire theater professionals all over the country.

He retired from the faculty in 2003. Stephen said the happiest, most stimulating times of his career were with his students.

Stephen and MaryAnn shared their time between their Minneapolis and Santa Fe homes. In Santa Fe they loved the Opera, the creative arts and natural beauty of New Mexico. They supported and volunteered at the Santa Fe Care Center. In Winnipeg, Stephen carried on his family's support of community and in particular was his interest in the Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, established at the University of Manitoba by Sol Kanee's close friend and colleague.

In addition to his beloved, MaryAnn Lippay Kanee, he is survived by his cousins Andrea and Stan Levich and family of Minneapolis, Susan and Merle Reekers of Creve Couer MO and family, Richard and Donna Borden of Spokane WA and family, Brian Kanee of Winnipeg and family, and in Toronto, Bonnie and Peter Druxerman and family, Danny and Anye Schachter and family, Robert and Judith Kanee and family, Allan Kanee and Thea Weisdorf and family, and Jeanette Delevie. He is also survived by brother-in-law and fishing partner Drew Lippay and wife, Renee of Portland OR, nieces and nephews, Chris and Julie Lippay and family of Pullman WA, Matthew and Amy Lippay and family of Portland, Aletha Lippay and Adam Goyt and godson Xavier of Fargo ND, by surrogate sibling Barbara Field, and his extended family of loving friends. Special thanks for the love, support and comforting presence of Robert Kanee.

The family is grateful for the care and dedication of the nursing staff of the UMMC Cardiovascular ICU. Contributions in memory of Stephen may be made to the Kanee Mauro Scholars Endowment Fund at the University of Manitoba, (204) 474-9195 or The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, (204) 477-7520. A Memorial Celebration is planned in Minneapolis for the spring.
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Mulcair blasts Ottawa's foreign policy

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — New Democratic leader Thomas Mulcair blasted the Conservative government for abandoning the mediating role that defined Canada's foreign policy throughout the 20th century.

Mulcair told a Montreal audience of 250, mainly from the business and academic worlds, that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has "renounced" the major role Canada once played in upholding peace in the Middle East, as well as in the development of Africa and climate change.

Thomas Mulcair

He charged that the government has done so for the Conservatives' political gain.

Mulcair, who spoke in French, was the guest speaker at a Feb. 7 luncheon of the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations, a non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1985.

The abandonment of the role of mediator is "the source of a whole series of setbacks suffered by Canada abroad," said Mulcair, who particularly deplored this government's failure in its bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council in 2010.

"The Harper government has broken with a foreign policy that was producing results, a policy that was the object of a wide consensus for decades," he said

"They have turned their back on the open and progressive multilateralism for which Canada was renowned and that permitted it to play a preponderant role on the international stage," Mulcair added. "In its place, they have exploited our foreign policy, simply to respond to partisan considerations.

"The interests of a small ideological group has taken precedence over the public interest, and low petty politics has taken precedence over the exercise of true leadership and the realization of a long-term vision."

Mulcair accused the government of an "ideological blindness" that is "costing us collectively very dearly."

He called the Security Council seat loss a "historic humiliation."

"Let's be clear: the reasons offered by the Conservatives to justify this failure have nothing to do with reality. It is false to say that Canada was defeated because we stand too firmly for democracy or human rights," said Mulcair, noting that Germany and Portugal were successful in their bids for seats at that time and that some of Canada's strongest allies voted against its bid.

Mulcair also deplored Foreign Minister John Baird's subsequent "unprecedented attack against" the UN. "He even described Canada's traditional approach as a 'digression' in our country's history.

"This is a rupture when the minister charged with defining our foreign relations sees the role of mediator assumed by Canada over the course of the last 60 years as a 'digression,' indeed even as a mistaken course."

The Harper government's policy, Mulcair said, reflects the mentality of the 1940s, when the world was divided between "black hats and white hats."

Canada, he claimed, has lost influence in the world that was considerable for a middle power, because the reputation it had for independence and acting on principle has been rejected by the Conservatives.

Mulcair said Canada could have done much more to support the reform movements that emerged during the Arab Spring, but did not because it no longer has an institution to promote democracy abroad.

He regretted the government's "sly" dismantling of the Montreal-based International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, better known as Rights and Democracy.

He said the government has not kept its promise made during the 2011 election campaign, and repeated in the speech from the Throne, to create a new agency.

"Today, we can say that [Rights and Democracy's] dismantling was a historic blunder," Mulcair said. "Once again, the Conservatives do not understand the difference between partisan interests and principles."

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UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Temple Sinai is seeking a

Director of Education

Temple Sinai, an inclusive and caring Reform congregation, seeks an innovative, collaborative and creative Director of Education who is committed to lifelong learning. The position requires a dynamic teacher who can lead groups and inspire individuals. The new member of our team should be able to listen to the needs of our Temple family and strive to deliver meaningful, effective educational programs that are accessible and exciting.

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- Collaborate with and support rabbinic staff who have primary responsibility for the vision, direction and execution of adult and extended learning programming
- Inspire our students and our Temple family through teaching and personal example
- Represent Temple within the Jewish and extended community-at-large in educational activities and philanthropic events

■ Qualifications

- University degree (post graduate preferred) in education or social work
- Experience teaching multi-levels within a Jewish educational institution, including curriculum development
- Experience in educational leadership and/or principal capacity preferred
- Strong administrative and communication skills to turn ideas into compelling and successful realities.
- Knowledge of current learning technologies and modern innovative teaching methodologies
- Experience in working in a Reform, synagogue and working with volunteer leaders is an asset

Applicants are invited to send their resumes in confidence to Shari Zuckerman at zuckermanshari@gmail.com by Friday, March 1, 2013.

www.templesinai.net

Concert features music created in internment

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — At Vancouver's Chutzpah! Festival later this month, Suzanne Snizek and a team of musicians she has assembled will perform music composed and performed in internment by musicians Hans Gál and Franz Reizenstein.

This is music that has never previously been performed in Canada and it represents not just the musical ability of its composers, but the way their internment during the Holocaust moved them and informed their work.

Snizek, a faculty member at the University of Victoria's School of Music, became interested in suppressed music in 2006, when she was a doctoral student at the University of British Columbia.

"I'd always been interested in the issue of detaining people without charge and internment in general. When I googled 'internment and music' up popped Hans Gál and his experience in British internment camps," she recalled. "It was completely shocking to me because, though I was aware of the Holocaust and its historical context, I didn't know about the British internment camps."

The 46-year-old teacher read about Gál and his personal history, listened to his music and loved it. "Suppressed music," by composers who were persecuted or driven into exile, became the subject of her doctoral thesis and is a course she teaches today.

Susanne Snizek

Hans Gál was an Austrian refugee of Jewish origin who had fled to the United Kingdom, only to find himself among thousands classified as "enemy aliens" in 1939. In the spring of 1940 there was mass internment of these individuals, 50-year-old Gál included. At the time he was an established composer who had experienced major success in Germany in the 1920s. He was director of the Mainz Conservatory of Music in Germany until Nazi anti-Jewish legislation forced him to step down.

During his internment, Gál wrote a technically challenging trio for flute and two violins.

"The strange instrumentation reflects the limited instruments and competent players he had in the camp," Snizek said of Gál's *Huyton Suite*, named after the internment camp where it was written. "Even in a non-internment concert situation, the piece is musically difficult."

The trio was performed several times in Central Promenade Camp, an internment camp on the Isle of Man.

Gál also wrote and co-performed a musical revue titled "What a Life!" to reflect the overall internment experience. "It's a fascinating first-hand portrayal of internment from the internees' viewpoint," she said.

Snizek and seven other musicians will perform "What a Life," the *Huyton Suite* and a partita (an instrumental suite) for flute and piano by Franz Reizenstein. Before his internment in U.K. camps, Reizenstein had studied in London with a leading English composer, Ralph Vaughn Williams. Williams later helped secure the release from internment of many of the musician internees, including Reizenstein, his former pupil.

As part of her doctoral research, Snizek travelled to London and met with Reizenstein's son, who had just come into possession of 15 large boxes of music manuscripts and concert programs.

"It was his father's entire paper legacy," she said, adding that the first box they opened contained concert programs from the internment camp. "It was quite amazing."

Listeners will find "What a Life!" to be particularly interesting, Snizek said, because it demonstrates the actual conditions of internment. "Each movement represents an aspect of their day-to-day life in internment. One is the ballad of the German refugee, another is the barbed wire song, the women's song, the cleaning up song and the keep fit song," she said. "The ballad is very contemplative, but the whole revue, though it has its serious moments, was intended to entertain, so the tone is pretty light."

The three pieces by Gál represent the work of this should-have-been-famous composer, Snizek said. "It was only because of the Nazis dismissing him that we don't know of him today."

The performance will take place at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver on Feb. 24 at 7 p.m.

After she catches the ferry back to Victoria, though, Snizek plans to continue learning about suppressed music.

"I'm hoping I can get funding and time to go back to the Isle of Man and continue to do research, hopefully for a book on the subject," she said.

Israel's Arab Citizens: The Untapped Potential
The Second Irwin Green Conference

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

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Educator urges Jewish education 'tax'

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Jewish community should consider levying a "tax" on all Jewish families to offset the rising cost of Jewish day school education, says one of the most experienced administrators in the field.

Evie Blanshay, who was executive director of Hebrew Foundation School (HFS) from 1979 until last year, said in an interview upon her retirement that Jewish families, whether or not they have children in the system, should be asked to contribute to some kind of community-wide fund.

Such a fund, she said, would benefit middle-income parents, in particular, who are increasingly finding it difficult to pay the fees, which at HFS, an elementary school in Dollard des Ormeaux, are now $7,000 to $8,000 a year per child.

Evie Blanshay

Blanshay, who is continuing to serve the school as a consultant, said Jewish education should be regarded as a benefit to the community as a whole, and therefore the responsibility of all its members.

"The finances are a huge obstacle, especially if you have two or three or four children. The low-income are helped and the rich don't need it. It's the middle income that is being squeezed," she said.

"And time is of the essence. Every year that [assistance is unavailable], another child goes without a Jewish education."

She believes many parents are not sending their children to a Jewish day school, or at least not enrolling them in a Jewish high school after they graduate from elementary, for financial reasons.

HFS is the only Jewish day school on the West Island, an area commonly described as a growing, younger community.

Yet, HFS' enrolment has declined from a peak of "well over 500" to 325 today, she said. The former figure included the nursery, which was an integral part of the school at that time, while the latter does not include the $7-a-day centre de la petite enfance, housed at the school.

Money is not the only obstacle, she acknowledges. "There is not the same commitment among parents to Jewish education that there was 30 years ago," she said. "In my day, there were three things you did first: get a roof over your head, put food on the table, and provide your children with a Jewish education…

"People today are not prepared to give up everything for a Jewish education. Many think an afternoon school or tutoring one or two hours a week are enough."

She emphatically does not agree.

The situation is likely only to worsen, because teachers at most Jewish schools are unionized, she said, and are paid salaries that are line with those of their public sector counterparts.

"Salaries account for 85 to 90 per cent of the budget. And there is no tax break for parents, except for a little on Judaic studies in federal taxes."

Montreal school makes changes to stem enrolment drop

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL—In its 100th year, Jewish People's and Peretz Schools and its Bialik High School (JPPS/Bialik) is overhauling its curriculum and reducing or freezing tuition in an effort to stem declining enrolment.

The school, founded on the ideals of Labour Zionism in 1913 and notable for its respect for Yiddish, will in the future be taking a more "inclusive and pluralistic" approach to Jewish identity. It will put a greater accent on Hebrew competence and add Sephardi culture in its instruction.

After a months-long consultation with parents and other "stakeholders," the board of directors on Feb. 5 announced a "new direction" for the school.

At the elementary level, JPPS will be instituting an enriched science program called S.T.I.M (Sciences, Technologie, Ingeniérie, Mathématiques), which will be taught in French, designed to meet a desire by parents, said JPPS principal Adina Matas.

Tuition is to be reduced to $5,000 for kindergarten and $6,000 for Grade 1, from the current fee of close to $8,000, she said.

Tuition will remain the same next year for the other elementary grades, and at Bialik, where fees are about $10,000.

JPPS' enrolment was particularly hard hit by confusion over a Federation CJA-endorsed plan announced two years ago to merge JPPS/Bialik and United Talmud Torahs/Herzliah High School, said Matas.

"Three years ago, we had more than 100 students more than the 350 we have now, because of the instability," said Matas. "Parents are telling us they want to know where we are going. They want things clear and transparent."

Ninety per cent of those who dropped out – many also because of the rising cost – have gone to the public system, she said.

She said the Judaic component at the elementary level won't change much, except for greater stress on speaking and reading Hebrew. Some Judaic subjects may be taught in English.

Yiddish, which has been reduced over the past decade, will be taught more for its cultural value rather than for language acquisition, Matas said.

JPPS/Bialik also hopes to stanch the drop-off after elementary school. Matas said that today, 55 to 60 per cent of JPPS graduates go on to a Jewish high school, whereas at one time, it was as high as 85 per cent.

Many parents are opting for non-Jewish private schools, and same-gender schools are especially popular right now, she said.

The big change at Bialik will be the addition – by 2014-2015 – of an international baccalaureate program for academically motivated students in grades 7 and 8, and enhancements to the French curriculum, including the opportunity for younger students in the English section to take courses intended for those whose mother tongue is French, said principal Ken Scott.

Bialik's current enrolment of just under 460 students is considerably below the peak of years ago, said Scott.

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Traditional foods celebrate Purim's fun and mystery

Judy Bart Kancigor
Special to The CJN

Every Jewish school student knows the characters: Achashverosh, the foolish king; Vashti, the spurned wife; Haman, the wicked first minister; Esther, the brave and beautiful maiden; and Mordechai, her honourable protector. Their tale of intrigue is told in the Scroll of Esther (Megillah) as an annihilation plot is foiled and our people saved.

Purim, Feb. 24 this year, is the holiday of merriment, mirth and trickery. To celebrate our deliverance, sweets are the order of the day. Gifts of cakes and fruit (mishloach manot) are exchanged. For Ashkenazim, no Purim celebration would be complete without three-cornered hamantashen, traditionally filled with poppy seeds, while Sephardim enjoy honeyed pastries called *oznei Haman* (Haman's ears).

Bulletin! *Tashen* means "pockets," and Haman never wore a three-cornered hat! (You just can't believe anything you hear these days.)

Matthew Goodman, the *Food Maven* columnist of the *Forward*, says in *Jewish Food: The World at Table* that these Purim sweets were originally called *mohntashen*, meaning "poppy seed pockets." Over the years, the word morphed into *hamantashen* ("Haman's pockets"), which supposedly held the lots *(purim)* he cast in order to choose the date for the slaughter of the Jews.

Marlena Spieler offers hamantashen with three fillings in her latest cookbook, *Recipes From My Jewish Grandmother* (Lorenz Books), apricot, poppy seed and prune.

What is it about Purim and poppy seeds anyway? András Koerner says in *A Taste of the Past: Daily Life and Cooking of a 19th-Century Hungarian Jewish Homemaker* that although poppy seeds have long been associated with the holiday, they were used during Purim well before the baking of hamantashen. A religious 12th-century poem by Abraham Ibn Ezra, Koerner says, recorded the eating of poppy seeds and honey for the holiday.

On Purim we also eat dishes with a filling, "alluding to the many intrigues, secrets and surprises unfolding in the Purim story," historian and cooking expert Gil Marks writes. In addition, he says, there is a tradition that "Esther, in order to keep kosher, ate only vegetarian foods while living in the king's palace."

Marlena Spieler's Sephardi Stuffed Onions, Potatoes and Zucchini, a vegetarian stuffed dish, is therefore doubly appropriate for the holiday. "The vegetarian filling… is tomato-red, Yemenite-spiced and accented with the tart taste of lemon," she writes. "They are good served as an appetizer as well as a main course."

Photo from *Fast and Festive Meals for the Jewish Holiday* (William Morrow & Co.)

Spieler travelled widely as a young adult, lived in Israel for a year, and was working as an artist in Greece when she started including recipes with her drawings of food. A publisher offered to publish the recipes (minus the drawings!), launching her career as a food writer, broadcaster and columnist.

These days Spieler divides her time between San Francisco and London, where she is a frequent guest on the BBC. Her column, *The Roving Feast*, is carried by the *New York Times* syndicate and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Recipes From My Jewish Grandmother is a truly international culmination of Spieler's curiosity about our people and our food.

SEPHARDI STUFFED ONIONS, POTATOES AND ZUCCHINI

4 potatoes, peeled
4 onions, peeled
4 zucchini, halved widthwise
2-4 garlic cloves, chopped
3-4 tbsp. olive oil
3-4 tbsp. tomato paste
1/4 tsp. ras al hanout or curry powder
large pinch of ground allspice
seeds of 2-3 cardamom pods
juice of 1/2 lemon
2-3 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
6-8 tbsp. vegetable stock
salt and ground black pepper
salad to serve (optional)

Bring a large pan of salted water to a boil. Add potatoes, then onions, then zucchini to boiling water and cook until almost tender but not cooked through (about 10 minutes for potatoes, 8 minutes for onions and 4-6 minutes for zucchini). Remove vegetables from pan and cool.

Hollow out cooled vegetables. Preheat oven to 375.

Finely chop cut-out vegetable flesh and put in bowl. Add garlic, half the olive oil, tomato paste, ras al hanout or curry powder, allspice, cardamom seeds, lemon juice, parsley, salt and pepper and mix well. Fill hollowed vegetables with stuffing mixture.

Arrange stuffed vegetables in baking pan and drizzle with stock and remaining oil. Roast 35-40 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm or cold with salad, if desired.

For more tasty recipes, go to cjnews.com

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Pope Benedict announces that he will step down

JTA

ROME — In a shocking announcement, 85-year-old Pope Benedict XVI said Monday that he will step down from the papacy at the end of the month because he can no longer carry out his duties at his "advanced age" and with his – apparently – failing health.

Following the announcement, a spokesman for Israeli Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger wished the Pope well and said relations between Israel and the Holy See had become the best ever during Pope Benedict's papacy.

In today's world, the Pope said Monday afternoon in a declaration in Latin issued by the Vatican, "subject to so many rapid changes and shaken by questions of deep relevance for the life of faith, in order to govern the bark of Saint Peter and proclaim the Gospel, both strength of mind and body are necessary, strength which in the last few months, has deteriorated in me to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfil the ministry entrusted to me."

The declaration continued, saying that Pope Benedict, "well aware of the seriousness of this act and with full freedom," renounced the papacy "entrusted" to him by the cardinals on April 19, 2005, and will no longer be Pope as of Feb. 28.

Though the Pope's brother told the German news agency DPA that Benedict had been weighing the decision for months, the announcement came as a shock. This is the first resignation of a reigning pope in modern times. The last pope to resign was Gregory XII in 1415, who was trying to end a civil war within the church.

The former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected Pope after the death of Polish-born Pope John Paul II. John Paul had made bettering relations with the Jewish world and Israel one of the cardinal points of his papacy.

Rabbi Metzger praised Pope Benedict's outreach to Jews and other religious groups during his tenure. "During his period, there were the best relations ever between the church and the chief rabbinate and we hope that this trend will continue," Reuters quoted Rabbi Metzger's spokesman as saying. "I think he deserves a lot of credit for advancing inter-religious links the world over between Judaism, Christianity and Islam." He wished Pope Benedict "good health and long days."

The FCJE, the umbrella organization representing Spanish Jews, said in a statement issued shortly after the announcement that it "respected" the Pope's decision.

"As pope, Benedict XVI acted with great intellectual rigour that undoubtedly contributed to Catholic-Jewish relations," the statement read. "We wish the Pope a long life and encourage him to continue working for peace between peoples after leaving the post."

Pope Benedict XVI receives a gift from the chief rabbis of Israel during the Pontiff's visit in 2009. Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger, left, and Sephardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar present Pope Benedict with a sculpture of the Western Wall.

[Israel Sun photo]

A man of 'vision and action'

Continued from page 1

After serving as a congregational rabbi in the Bronx, N.Y., from 1955 to 1960, Rabbi Hartman accepted the position of spiritual leader at a predecessor shul of what later became Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem in Montreal. While serving as rabbi, he also taught and studied at McGill University and received his PhD in philosophy.

In 1971, Rabbi Hartman immigrated to Israel with his family, a move he viewed as an essential part of his mission to encourage a greater understanding between Jews of diverse affiliations – both in Israel and the Diaspora. In 1976, he founded the Shalom Hartman Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, dedicating it to his father.

The institute serves as a centre for scholars in the study and education of classical Jewish sources and contemporary issues of Israeli society and Jewish life. It administers two high schools, the Charles E. Smith High School for Boys on the institute campus, and, more recently, a girls' high school, also in Jerusalem, as well as other learning programs.

Rabbi Hartman served as a professor of Jewish thought at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he taught for more than two decades. He was also a visiting professor of Jewish thought at the University of California at Berkeley in 1986-87 and at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1997-98. As an author, he won two National Jewish Book Awards, for studies on Maimonides and on innovation in traditional Judaism.

He was awarded the Avi Chai Award (2000), the Yakir Yerushalayim Award (2001), the Hebrew University's Rothberg Award for Jewish Education (2004), and honorary doctorates from Yale University, Hebrew Union College and the Weizmann Institute of Science, the latter of which recognized "his life's work to revitalize Judaism and strengthen Jewish identity among Jews the world over; above all, of his gift of vision and action, faith and scholarship, toward building a more pluralistic, tolerant and enlightened Israeli society."

From 1977 to 1984, Rabbi Hartman served as an adviser to education minister Zevulun Hammer, and he has been adviser to a number of prime ministers on the subject of religious pluralism in Israel and the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora.

He is survived by his ex-wife, Barbara Hartman, and their five children.

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10 women arrested at Western Wall

JTA

JERUSALEM — Ten women participating in a women's prayer service with hundreds of worshippers and supporters at the Western Wall were arrested for wearing prayer shawls.

Those arrested Monday morning included Israeli-American Rabbi Susan Silverman, sister of comedian Sarah Silverman, and her 17-year-old daughter Hallel Abramovitz; Anat Hoffman, chairwoman of the Women of the Wall, who has been arrested several times in recent months, and two U.S. rabbis, Debra Cantor of B'nai Tikvoh-Sholom in Bloomfield, Conn., and Robin Fryer Bodzin of the Israel Center of Conservative Judaism in Queens, N.Y.

The women had gathered at the back of the women's section, as they have at the beginning of every new Jewish month since 1988, for Rosh Chodesh services for the new Jewish month of Adar. It was the largest number of participants for the monthly event since its inception, organizers told Israeli media.

The women were joined on the other side of the mechitzah, the barrier that separates the sexes at the Wall, by a number of male supporters, including six former Israel Defence Forces paratroopers who had been among those that liberated the Western Wall during the Six Day War in 1967. One of the paratroopers was Yitzhak Yifat of Jerusalem, who is famous as one of the three paratroopers in the iconic photograph of three soldiers standing at the Western Wall shortly after its liberation. Yifat is the middle paratrooper in the photo by David Rubinger.

The arrests reportedly were made at the end of the service, after most of the participants and media had left the Western Wall Plaza. Police had stood on the sidelines as the women prayed and then danced in a circle holding their prayer shawls, according to *Ha'aretz*.

The women's prayer group moved its Torah reading from the Wall to outside the Old City of Jerusalem police department, where the arrested women were taken.

In 2003, Israel's Supreme Court upheld a government ban on women wearing tfillin or tallit prayer shawls, or reading from a Torah scroll at the Western Wall.

Women participating in the Rosh Chodesh service have been arrested nearly every month since June for wearing prayer shawls or for "disturbing public order."

Women conduct their service for Rosh Chodesh Adar at the Western Wall wearing prayer shawls. Some were subsequently detained by police. *[FLASH90 photo]*

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Missiles 'pose a very big problem'

Continued from page 1

On Saturday, the Lebanese army said Israeli "spy drones" had clocked more than 17 hours over Lebanese territory in the past day.

Yadlin told the paper that Israel was looking out for four types of weapons: ballistic rockets, air-defence arms, land-to-sea missiles and chemical weapons.

Hezbollah reportedly already holds some of these weapons within Syrian territory, but cannot move them without risking Israeli action.

Yadlin said that the risk of escalation became greater as President Bashar Assad's rule grew more tenuous.

"As the Syrian army becomes weaker and Hezbollah grows more isolated because of the loss of its Syrian patron, it makes sense that this will continue," he said.

Israel has denied foreign media reports that it hit a weapons convoy or a research site outside Damascus late last month, though officials have hinted at Jerusalem's involvement. According to some reports, Israeli planes hit a convoy of Russian-made SA-17 anti-aircraft missiles on the way from Syria to Lebanon. Syria reported that a research site at Jamarya, north of the capital, had been struck, and footage from the site seemed to show a bombed-out building and charred vehicles, including what appeared to be a transport vehicle for an SA-17 battery.

An unnamed military official told the *Washington Post* that the anti-aircraft missile could "pose a very big problem for the Israeli air force.

"There are more tangible indications that such weapons could reach Lebanon," as the fighting continues, the official said.

Yadlin, who now heads the Institute for National Security Studies, told a security conference last week that Israel would likely come out more secure after the dust settled from the Syrian civil war.

TimesofIsrael.com

Former Supreme Court justice dies

JTA

JERUSALEM — Rabbi Menachem Elon, a former Israeli Supreme Court justice and an Israel Prize winner, has died.

Rabbi Elon, who served on the high court from 1977 until his retirement as deputy chief justice in 1993, died on Feb. 6 in Israel. He was 89.

He was renowned as an expert on the subject of the applicability of Jewish civil law in a Jewish state. In 1973, he published a book on Jewish civil law that is considered an important work in the field.

In 1979, Rabbi Elon was awarded the Israel Prize for Hebrew law.

Rabbi Elon was born Menachem Fetter in Dusseldorf, Germany. His family fled to the Netherlands in 1932 before immigrating to then-Palestine in 1935.

He studied at the non-Zionist Hebron yeshiva, but was attracted to the religious-Zionist movement and became one of the founders of the religious kibbutz Tirat Tzvi in the Beit Shean Valley. He was ordained as a rabbi and served in the Israel Defence Forces as a military prosecutor.

Rabbi Elon worked as a law professor and a professor of Hebraic and Jewish law at Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

In 1983, he lost to Chaim Herzog in his bid to be president of Israel.

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Cdn. citizen one of two suspects in Bulgarian attack

JTA

A Canadian man with links to the terrorist organization Hezbollah was one of two people implicated in a terrorist attack in Bulgaria that killed six, including five Israelis, a Bulgarian official said last week.

Hezbollah also financed the bomb attack on a tour bus full of Israelis last July, Bulgaria's Foreign Minister Tsvetan Tsvetanov told reporters on Feb. 5, following a six-hour cabinet meeting.

The people directly behind the attack were part of a Hezbollah cell that included two operatives using passports from Australia and Canada.

"I can confirm that the individual in question is a dual national who resides in Lebanon," Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird told reporters Feb. 5.

"Canada commends Bulgaria for its thorough investigation of last summer's heinous attack in Burgas," Baird said. "That Bulgaria has found convincing evidence of Hezbollah involvement in this carnage is, sadly, not surprising. It is yet more evidence of the depravity of Hezbollah. We urge the European Union and all partners who have not already done so to list Hezbollah as a terrorist entity and prosecute terrorist acts committed by this inhumane organization to the fullest possible extent."

Unveiling the results of the six-month inquiry in Sofia on Feb. 5, Tsvetanov said: "We have established that the two were members of the militant wing of Hezbollah," adding: "There is data showing the financing and connection between Hezbollah and the two suspects." The pair had lived in Lebanon since 2006 and 2010 respectively, the AFP news agency quoted Tsvetanov as saying.

On Feb. 6, Jason Kenney, minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism told *CTV News* that the alleged Canadian accomplice first immigrated to Canada when he was eight, obtained citizeship "about three or four years after that" and then returned to Lebanon at age 12.

He said the individual had returned to Canada on a few occasions since then but was not "a habitual" resident of the country.

In the wake of accusations that it was involved in the Burgas terror attack, Iran is recalling its ambassador to Bulgaria.

Iran also reportedly will downgrade its relations with Bulgaria, according to reports.

Last Friday, Iran's ambassador to Bulgaria denied Iranian involvement in the attack.

"This has nothing to do with Iran," Gholamreza Bageri told reporters. "We are against any form of terrorism and strongly condemn such actions."

Iran has accused Israel of staging the attack. Israel has blamed Hezbollah and Iran.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu thanked Bulgaria for its investigation and findings in a statement on Feb. 5 and asked the EU to finally list Hezbollah as a terrorist entity.

"There is only one Hezbollah, a single organization with the same leadership."

He added: "The attack in Burgas was on European soil against a member of the European Union. We hope the Europeans will draw the necessary conclusions as to Hezbollah's true nature."

AMIA objects to truth commission with Iran

JTA

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — The president of the AMIA Buenos Aires Jewish centre said the truth commission agreed to by Argentina and Iran "will allow a third bombing in Argentina.

"This pact is viewed by some people as a step forward. This may be a step to the precipice," Guillermo Borger said. "It will allow a very unfortunate third attack."

The confrontation between Borger and Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez came to a head on Saturday as Fernandez took to the national television airwaves and Twitter to defend the deal.

"I read with concern the statements made by Guillermo Borger, president of AMIA, on deal with Iran. What do you know to make a statement so terrible?" Fernandez asked on Twitter. "If there was an attack planned related to the agreement with Iran, who is the mastermind and the material author?"

Argentina's senate will be the first legislative chamber to discuss the memorandum of understanding signed Jan. 27 with Iran on the 1994 AMIA bombing, which killed 85 and wounded hundreds. Fernandez has summoned the Argentinian congress to a special session Feb. 28 on the pact, which would create a truth commission allowing judges to question Iran's suspects in Tehran.

Borger is strongly rejecting the agreement, relating it to new dangers to Argentina, after expressing satisfaction with the pact following a meeting with Foreign Minister Hector Timerman at the AMIA building on Jan. 29. Other Jewish leaders and victims' families also were in the meeting with Timerman.

When the announcement of the memorandum was made, Borger said he was opposed because "we don't trust Iran."

Israel and the United States have objected to meetings between Argentina and Iran, and the bilateral agreement.

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Boycott of SodaStream could hurt Palestinians

Ben Sales
JTA

MA'ALE ADUMIM — For proponents of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement (BDS), SodaStream would appear to be a straightforward target.

The Israeli company, which sells a popular kitchen gadget that turns tap water into carbonated drinks, has a large factory in a West Bank settlement. When SodaStream announced that it would run an ad during the Super Bowl, the pro-Palestinian boycott campaign against the company reached a fever pitch.

But for hundreds of Palestinians, SodaStream isn't a target – it's their employer.

On a recent afternoon, women wearing hijabs hurried to their shifts at the plant in Ma'ale Adumim, a suburban settlement about 15 minutes west of Jerusalem. Some 500 West Bank Palestinians work at the site, in addition to 400 Arabs from eastern Jerusalem and a mix of 200 Israeli Jews and foreign workers, including refugees from Africa.

The Ma'ale Adumim factory has an on-site mosque and synagogue, and Jewish and Arab employees share the same dining hall. SodaStream has two other facilities in Israel, one in Ashkelon, the other in the Galilee town of Mount Tabor. The Galilee factory employs several hundred Israeli Arabs.

"Everyone works together: Palestinians, Russians, Jews," a Palestinian employee named Rasim at the Ma'ale Adumim site told *JTA*. Rasim has worked at the plant for four months and asked that his last name not be published. "Everything is OK. I always work with Jews. Everyone works together, so of course we're friends."

For SodaStream CEO Daniel Birnbaum, treating Arabs and Jews equally is a doctrine, not a convenience.

"We practise equality and full co-operation both on the job and off it," Birnbaum told the Arab publication *Al Monitor* in a recent interview.

When he was invited to the Israeli president's residence recently to receive an award, Birnbaum brought with him a few Palestinian employees and insisted on undergoing the same rigorous security checks to which they were subjected, Birnbaum told *Al Monitor*. When it came time for Birnbaum's speech, he broke with protocol and publicly upbraided his host, President Shimon Peres, for the unequal treatment that his Palestinian workers had received, including strip searches down to their underwear.

The SodaStream factory in Ma'ale Adumim *(Flash90 photo)*

"We are committed to continue serving as a bridge and to sowing hope," Birnbaum said in his speech. "Who knows as well as you, Mr. Peres, how important it is to remain optimistic that one day, there will be peace?"

SodaStream's case, some say, is one example of how boycotting an Israeli company doing business in the West Bank can end up hurting the very goals that boycott proponents say they are trying to achieve: Palestinian rights and Israeli-Palestinian peace.

"The SodaStream situation is extremely complicated because it's a clear case of where the owners are making real efforts to engage the Palestinian workers with fair wages and in management positions," said Kenneth Bob, president of the liberal Zionist group Ameinu, which supports the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank but still opposes boycotts of settlement products.

"At the same time, it does on some level strengthen the occupation because it's a factory over the Green Line," the boundary between Israel and the West Bank, he added.

Advocates of BDS say supporting SodaStream amounts to supporting Israel's occupation of the West Bank and that boycotting the company is an effective way to support Palestinian national aspirations.

"In the absence of global and international political pressure for Israel to abide by international law, BDS hopes to use nonviolent pressure to get Israel to stop the occupation," said Kristin Szremski, a spokesperson for the Interfaith Boycott Committee, a pro-BDS group. "The boycott of SodaStream felt like it was a great opportunity to raise awareness about settlements and thwart SodaStream's effort to get into the American market."

Szremski dismissed the argument that hurting SodaStream could hurt the livelihood of Palestinians, calling it "a way to obfuscate" the issue.

"The point is not just to make SodaStream go out of business," Szremski told JTA. "Were there no settlements to begin with, Palestinians could be working their own lands. The fact that a worker goes to work every day does not indicate that it is a good thing."

Another Palestinian worker at SodaStream's West Bank site, who gave his name as Mmdoh, said politics don't enter the workplace.

"We don't get into that," said Mmdoh, 34. "I feel normal. I don't have conversations about it."

For its part, SodaStream sees growth on the horizon. Its Super Bowl ad cost about $3.7 million, according to Ad Age, and won notice not just for its exploding bottles of brand-name sodas, but because a version of the ad highlighting digs at Pepsi and Coca-Cola was rejected by CBS, which broadcast the game.

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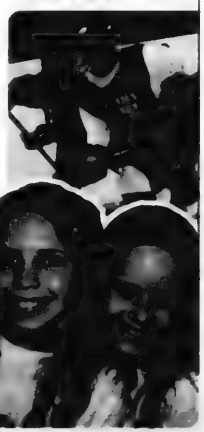

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New Delhi university hosts conference on Hebrew

Compiled by CJN Staff

Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi broke new ground when it became the first South Asian institution of higher learning to host a conference on the Hebrew language.

A three-day inter-disciplinary conference on Hebrew Language and Culture: Reception, Self Conception and Intercultural Relations was held from Jan. 28 to 30 under the auspices of the school's Centre of Arabic and African Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies. It was largely organized by Muslim scholars, according to a report in the *Weekly Press Pakistan* website.

Thirty-nine scholars from a dozen Indian and Israeli institutions presented papers in 16 parallel sessions.

In a keynote address, Israeli Ambassador Alon Ushpiz said, "The impressive depth of the discussions in the conference is a mirror image of the academic passion found in Israel for Indian culture, heritage, history and languages. The key to our mutual academic fascination is the fact that both Israel and India have managed to preserve their ancient heritage while constantly moving forward with the rapidly changing world."

Conference participants said they hoped the event would generate greater interest in Hebrew among Indians.

Tech accelerator helps olim find success in Israel

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Things can get lonely when you're the new kid in town, and for immigrant entrepreneurs looking to start a new business in Israel, loneliness isn't the only problem.

Business is all about connections, and it can take a very long time to build up a network of mentors, customers, lawyers, bankers and supporters who can share their resources to help build success.

What immigrant entrepreneurs need is a shortcut, and that's exactly what they find at The Hive, an accelerator that caters specifically to new immigrants in Israel. The accelerator provides all the usual support services – work spaces, mentors, advice and planning – but for new olim, those services take on a much more important role in the success of their business than they do for native Israelis, who already know how to negotiate the system in Israel.

New olim have much to contribute to Israel, said Cynthia Phitoussi, co-director and founder of The Hive.

"The immigrants in our program give as much as they get," she told *The Times of Israel*. "Western olim have great ideas on solving problems that Israelis should be listening to, ideas that have great potential for the economy of Israel."

To that end, Gvahim, a non-profit that helps new immigrants find jobs and build careers in Israel, started The Hive early last year. The first round included eight companies. The second round, which ended last month, had 10.

Phitoussi said the first round, which ended last May, was an unqualified success. "Five of the eight start-up programs have already raised funds, launched their product, recruited staff, formed partnerships and show significant sales."

Not only do the ideas and projects started by olim from North America, South America, and Europe help the Israeli economy, Phitoussi said, the can-do spirit of western entrepreneurs trying to make it in Israel, against many odds, is a great lesson in Zionism for native Israelis as well.

Recently, The Hive ran a special "graduation event" for investors, enabling the program members to pitch their ideas in the hope of getting on the radar of VCs and angels. Ten start-ups began the second round of The Hive's accelerator program last August, but only one could be chosen as the top start-up by investors: SmartLive, which provides a platform for better and more efficient customer service for companies.

TimesofIsrael.com

Advertising agency plans office in Israel's 'deep south'

David Shamah
Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Lots of companies talk about "developing the periphery," but the Israeli branch of the international McCann Erickson advertising agency is actually doing something about it. And not just in the "comfortable" periphery, such as Be'er Sheva. McCann Digital Israel is opening up a full-fledged ad agency in Mitzpeh Ramon, the "deepest" of the deep Israeli south.

It's a place Israelis flock to for hiking, horseback riding, and animal watching – the kind of place where you could imagine Abraham and Isaac shepherding their flocks. One of Israel's greatest natural wonders, Mitzpeh Ramon (the Ramon Crater) is a geological formation 85 kilometres south of Be'er Sheva caused by millions of years of erosion. It's a centre of tourism in the deep Negev, with more than a half-dozen hotels and bed and breakfasts. Besides tourism, the town's other major industry is quarrying Jerusalem stone. Among the Tourism Ministry's plans for the region is construction of a landing strip for light planes, making it easier for tourists from the centre of the country and Eilat to tour the area.

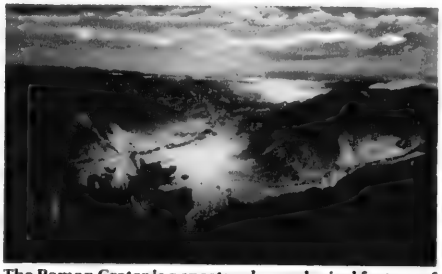
High tech, though, was not on the agenda of any of the government ministries and agencies helping to promote Mitzpeh Ramon. But that's exactly what McCann is doing, with the establishment of the McCann Valley Center for Digital Marketing and New Media. The office is being inaugurated this month with the assistance of McCann Worldwide and Michal Romi, a local entrepreneur.

The office, McCann Digital Israel said, will offer new media services for small and medium businesses all over Israel. Among those services will be management of Facebook and Twitter campaigns (in Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian); branding and design services; building of websites, and social-media advertising campaigns.

The plan is to hire dozens of people over the next few years, until – by 2018 – the office employs 120 people directly, as well as an additional 120 outside service personnel. And McCann Israel isn't opening an office in Mitzpeh Ramon in order to "farm out" back-office work to a group of "discount" employees. The organization is committed to paying the Mitzpeh Ramon staff the same salaries they would be making in Tel Aviv, McCann Israel said.

It's expected that most of the employees will come from Mitzpeh Ramon and other deep-Negev towns. The company plans to open a six-month training program to get qualified candidates (college graduates with some computer experience) up to speed on digital media. The Ministry of Industry, Labor and Trade will help shoulder the cost of the training, but McCann Israel will be responsible for salaries after the program.

The new office, housed in a set of renovated apartments in Mitzpeh Ramon's residential quarter, is set to open later this month, with McCann Israel paying for the refurbishing. At a later stage, the company will go in together with the Ministry for the Development of the Galilee and Negev for construction of a proper office, which will be, the Ministry and McCann hope, the centre of Mitzpeh Ramon's tech quarter.



The Ramon Crater is a spectacular geological feature of Israel's Negev desert and is considered the world's largest erosion cirque or machtesh. *[Flash 90 photo]*

The Ministry for the Development of the Galilee and Negev has taken upon itself the development of affordable housing for workers, said current minister Silvan Shalom. The project, he said, combines "pioneering and entrepreneurship, two important ways to develop the periphery."

While there are many worthy development projects going on in the Negev, Shalom said, this one is special.

"We expect the project to have an important influence on the region, because it offers local jobs, and encourages people to move to the south. We plan to continue working with McCann Erickson throughout the entire project," he added.

Hana Rado, chief operating officer of McCann Israel, said, "We see in Mitzpeh Ramon, and in the entire Negev, an ideal place to build a high-quality, professional community. Even now, at the very beginning of the McCann Valley project, we are amazed to see the level of interest from government officials, as well as from local residents, who see the project as an engine of economic development for the region.

"We hope that the project will provide a wide range of opportunities for young professionals in the south, for Israelis from other areas who wish to work and live there, and for businesses that are searching for challenges, with our objective being the motivating of others to open businesses in Mitzpeh Ramon and the rest of the Negev."

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Historical Israeli play echoes modern themes

The cast of Mifgash Theatre's A Night in May *[Tali Dubrovsky photo]*

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Mifgash Theatre will be bringing to Toronto a play about a family in Jerusalem on May 22, 1967, shortly before the Six Day War.

The play, called *A Night in May*, is written by Israeli novelist and playwright A. B. Yehoshua.

It has been very successful in Israel at the Habima Theatre in Tel Aviv, said Galya Sarner, director of the Israeli Canadian Project at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. She said it's an honour to produce this play for a Canadian audience.

"We believe it will reflect in a very respectful way the typical Israeli family relationship in Israel despite the fact that it's about 1967, a long time ago," Sarner said, adding that it will give Canadians a very realistic picture of Israeli daily life. "The tension, the stress... unfortunately, it does reflect today."

This is the fifth year Mifgash Theatre has been producing Hebrew plays for a Canadian audience. The theatre aims to integrate Israeli immigrants into the Canadian Jewish community through sharing arts and culture. The Hebrew-language theatre company is part of the Schwartz/Reisman Centre's Hamifgash program.

"*Mifgash*" translates into "meeting place," which Sarner said directly references Toronto. "Literally, we took the name and in many ways it can reflect our vision of putting together a Hebrew-speaking community theatre," she said.

Over the past five years, their productions have consistently drawn large crowds from the local Jewish community, but also people who aren't Jewish and simply love Israeli arts, she said.

Although *A Night in May* will be performed in its original Hebrew, there will be English subtitles to make it an inclusive production.

The cast of the production inclues a mix of professional theatre actors and volunteers. Despite their varying backgrounds, they all share a love of art, Sarner said, adding that the theatre has grown and changed throughout the years.

Continued on page 40

TEATRON. Toronto Jewish Theatre
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by James Sherman
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Toronto Centre for the Arts 5040 Yonge St.

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH PRESENTS A FREYLEKHN PURIM WITH JEWISH JAZZ

Jazz pianist **Jordan Klapman** and singer **Sharon Smith** are the feature performers at A Freylekhn Purim With Jewish Jazz, hosted by the **Friends of Yiddish**. Besides music, the afternoon program features refreshments and door prizes. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch). Sunday, Feb. 17, 2 p.m. Guests $10, members free. Please RSVP to Sandy, 416-458-1440 or yiddish18@yahoo.ca by Feb. 14.

• • •

Jewish Film Society: The Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two British film gems – *The Barber of Stamford Hill* and *The 10th Man. The Barber of Stamford Hill* by playwright **Ronald Harwood** was adapted for British TV in 1962. It is a precisely observed character study that is also a snapshot of cultural isolation. With guest speaker **Gerry Arbeid**, the film's producer and screenwriter. Tickets $15, $10, on sale 15 minutes before each screening. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday, Feb. 17, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

• • •

Names in the News: Guitarist **Liona Boyd** was an honoured guest at the lieutenant governor's Closing Diamond Jubilee Gala at Roy Thomson Hall on Feb.6, where she performed and presented Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medals.

• • •

Names in the News II: Winnipeg playwright **Cairn Moore** is the winner of the 2012 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition for her play *Shiksa*. Moore receives $1,000, and a professionally directed and acted workshop reading of her play takes place in Vancouver on Feb. 28.

• • •

Arts In Brief

• The genre-bending Argentine musician **Simja Dujov** explores the fusion of Latin rhythms and mixes them with electro-klezmer, Balkan, Gypsy-punk and more. Dujov performs with **The Lemon Bucket Orkestra's Chris Weatherstone**, fiddler **Jessica Hana Deutsch** and others. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. Feb. 27, 8 p.m. $10, $12, $15. A Koffler Gallery and Ashkenaz Festival co-presentation. www.kofflerarts.org

• Register now for "The Coen Brothers in Nayman's Terms," a series of talks by film critic **Adam Nayman** about the acclaimed filmmakers and their films *Raising Arizona, Miller's Crossing, Fargo, The Big Lebowski, O Brother Where Art Thou?, No Country for Old Men* and *A Serious Man*. $90 for the series, $12 per session. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday evenings, Feb. 25 to April 29. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Tarragon Theatre presents A **Hannah Moscovitch** Double Bill celebrating the work of the acclaimed playwright-in-residence with premieres of her plays *Little One* and *Other People's Children*. A co-production with Theatre Crisis and Theatre PANIK. 30 Bridgman Ave., Feb. 20 to March 24 (previews from Feb. 14). $27 to $53. www.tarragontheatre.com, 416-531-1827.

• • •

At the Galleries: Joseph D. Carrier Art Gallery presents *Organic Alterations*, a solo exhibit of more than 100 paintings by **Ian Alter**. Carrier Villa Gallery, Columbus Centre, 901 Lawrence Ave. W. Feb. 6 to March 4.

• • •

Passages: Varda Hall Berenstein, a professionally trained singer and choir conductor who died recently in Toronto at age 91, was born in Basel, Switzerland, in 1921. During World War II, she travelled to refugee camps and sang for the relatively few Jews who, in fleeing the Nazis, had been allowed into Switzerland.

Berenstein was the first person to sing Israeli songs on Swiss national radio and, after arriving in Toronto in 1949, sang on CBC radio and TV in the 1950s and 1960s. She performed Yiddish and Israeli songs on many occasions for Jewish communities across Canada. One of her fondest memories was singing for then-prime minister Lester Pearson at a Negev Dinner in Montreal.

Berenstein was the first music teacher for the Associated Hebrew Schools and had extensive musical credits within Toronto's Jewish community. She conducted the Hadassah-WIZO choir for many years, as well as choirs at Adath Israel and Beth Sholom synagogues. More recently, she conducted the Chai Singers, a small vocal chorale of senior citizens.

Until her last weeks, she was an engaging and dynamic educator, an advocate for Israeli and Yiddish music, and an oral historian about Jews in Switzerland. Until recently she taught an informal course in her home on "Learning Yiddish Through Songs" and gave talks on "Yiddish Folksongs and the Legacy of Mordechai Gebirtig." Just two months ago she spoke to the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto on "Growing Up as a Jew in Switzerland, 1921 to 1949." She was also a regular in the Yiddish Vinkl, a circle of Yiddishists who meet downtown monthly.

She was predeceased by her husband, **Isidore Berenstein**, with whom she worked as the Canadian representative of Rodenstock, a German optical company. She leaves behind daughter **Rhona Berens** and stepson **Ilan Levy**, their partners and two grandchildren.

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Two fine movies from the Toronto Film Society

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The Toronto Jewish Film Society, based at the Miles Nadel JCC, is bringing two fine British movies to town on Feb.17 at its Al Green Theatre venue.

The Barber of Stamford Hill, a 64-minute feature film, will be followed by *The 10th Man*, a 10-minute short. They will be screened at 4 p.m. and again at 7:30 p.m.

The Barber of Stamford Hill, directed by Casper Wrede and written by Ronald Harwood, is a warm-hearted character study set in London in the early 1960s. It's about a lonely Jewish bachelor who pretends to be a married man with two children.

Figg (John Bennett), 50, is an affable chap who regales customers with stories and aphorisms. The man is loquacious, and as he goes off on a tangent about the dying art of shaving, he launches into a soliloquy about the importance of family and the tradition of Friday night Sabbath dinners.

Figg, beautifully portrayed by Bennett, is in fact imagining a life that has tragically eluded him so far.

On Friday evenings, after the business week has ended, he leaves his shop and catches a bus back to his house, an extremely modest flat where no one awaits him with a smile, a hug or a sumptuous hot dinner.

The only person with whom he can share a meal on Friday nights is a speaking-impaired bachelor, Dober (Maxwell Shaw), who plays a mean game of chess.

But as much as he enjoys Dober's company, Figg longs for something more.

"I'm the kind of fella who should have married," he says plaintively. "A home – this is what a man needs."

As Figg, Bennett is a marvel, conveying conviviality and vulnerability in a single sentence or gesture.

On an impulse, he visits Mrs. Werner (Megs Jenkins), a widow across the street with two children whose husband died a decade ago. They chat, munching on cream cheese sandwiches, and their conversation is about family.

John Bennett and Megs Jenkins in a scene from *The Barber of Stamford Hill*.

"You should find yourself a nice girl and settle down," she says coyly. Her meaning is clear, but it escapes Figg.

When she suggests they should go out dancing, he lamely claims he is busy. Unperturbed by his obtuseness, she tosses a compliment his way. "You would make a good family man." He remains untouched by her overture.

Figg knows he's hopeless. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," he muses as he talks with Dober, played excellently by Shaw.

Wrede directs this black-and-white film with a steady hand and an observant eye, keeping it firm and crisp.

Sam Leifer's *The 10th Man* unfolds in a London synagogue as nine elderly men scramble to find a 10th to form a minyan.

Two of the worshippers leave the shul in search of the missing man, but the only person they manage to waylay is a Communist whose atheism shines clearly through.

They return to the synagogue, mission unaccomplished. "I couldn't find any strays," grumbles one of the searchers.

Much to their astonishment, someone finally turns up, but the stranger defies their expectations.

Wry and sly, *The 10th Man* complements *The Barber of Stamford Hill* exceedingly well.

Theatre will produce show for youngsters

Continued from page 38

"Every year, we have new faces, new volunteers," Sarner said. "I'm getting those phone calls, emails on a regular basis from people who want to support and take part."

New for this year, Mifgash Theatre will produce a show with young actors aged seven to 14, which expands the company's mission of engaging and reaching out to the Israeli and Jewish communities, ensuring that everybody feels welcome and comfortable.

The children will perform in the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*. While the show will be in English, it still fulfils Mifgash Theatre's goals because it will help these kids identify with various aspects of Jewish history, values and thought, Sarner said.

"We chose this play because it features a young heroine that the program's participants and young audience should be able to form an emotional bond with," she said.

Additionally, through the workshops, participants will learn other aspects of producing a play, including set design and lighting.

The children's performance, which has a cast of 20 kids, will open in May.

Meanwhile, audiences will be able to see some of the young actors in *A Night in May*.

The show runs on Feb. 23 and 24 at Vaughan City Playhouse Theatre. For tickets, visit mifgash.ca or call 905-764-7817.

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Correction

In the article "Tarragon presents a Moscovitch double bill" (Feb.7), Paul Lampert and Nikki Landau were identified as co-directors of the play *Other People's Children*. In fact, while they are both co-artistic directors of Theatre PANIK, only Lampert directed the play. *The CJN* regrets the error.

Max Layton follows in his father's footsteps

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

For Max Layton, the rapture has come.

The 66-year-old son of iconic Canadian poet Irving Layton, Max Layton – despite decades spent trying to avoid becoming a poet – has become just that. What's more, he's now a published poet.

Last autumn, Toronto-based Guernica Editions brought out a slim volume of Layton's verse. At a mere 50 poems (of about 100 he wrote), *When the Rapture Comes* is deceptive. While each poem begins with the words "when the rapture comes," the results take the reader to 50 different places, each inhabiting its own quirky, funny, poignant universe.

For example: "When the rapture comes, my father, who died of Alzheimer's, will remember me." And: "When the rapture comes, you who so often predicted it will be the most surprised."

They go on from there, meandering into the full palette of human emotions and foibles. In taut, crystalline words, the poet, like a jazz musician riffing on a well-worn melody, explores vindictiveness, passion, melancholy, hope and lament. There's even some juvenile humour.

Layton is clear on something: the book does not refer to any Christian-style end-times scenario.

Rapture "is just a metaphor for the end of anything... the end of the world, or my own personal life, or the end of our civilization," he said on the phone from his home in Cheltenham, Ont.

By way of elaborating, he deploys another metaphor: "If you put a diamond necklace on a black background, the colours in the diamond sparkle more brightly. And death is a kind of black background against which we live out our lives. It gives our lives colour and meaning."

Layton insists this is not morbid. Rather, he argues that his inaugural effort explores ambivalent attitudes toward death.

"If you really live forever, if there really was a heaven to which you went forever, there would be no purpose, absolutely no meaning to anything that you did," he said. "No act of heroism would mean anything because you couldn't die anyway.

"The only thing that gives actual meaning to our lives is the fact that whatever we do with our life is against the backdrop of the blackness, the nothingness of death."

He puts a Jewish spin on it for the benefit of *CJN* readers.

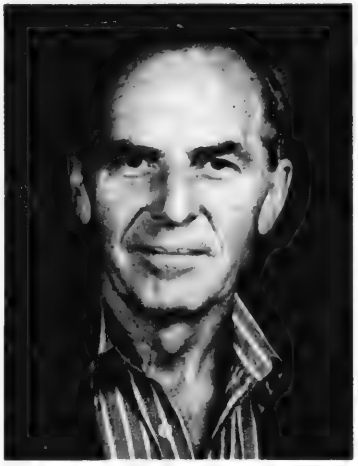
"Most Jews do not believe in an actual heaven. They do not believe that you will be bodily resurrected into some sort of eternal heaven. So, what gives life meaning for Jews? The answer, precisely, is that you really only have one life and it's right here on this earth. And everything you do is against the backdrop that you're going to die and that's the end of you. The only thing that gives your life meaning is doing something which you're proud of while you're alive. And then you can face death with equanimity."

Not all the poems explore death or nothingness. Layton also captures a kind of alternate universe where the end of days will usher in a kind of golden age: "When the rapture comes, seraphs will sing with dybbuks and demons," offers an especially spiritual poem, titled *Choose*. "Everybuddy will call everybuddy bro; Arabs will stop being anti-Semitic."

For all that, he "tried desperately not to be a poet," Layton confessed to an interviewer last summer. "I never wanted to be a writer – at least not the way I wanted to be a logger or a car mechanic or a decent, faithful lover. All those things require an act of will. They are things that one becomes. But being a writer was what I was – behind everything else, informing everything I did – even if I never wrote a line."

Layton's life reads like the stereotypical poet's. He was born in Montreal in 1946 and his parents split up when he was 13. By 16, he was living in a decrepit rooming house with alcoholics and outcasts after his mother and sister moved to California.

After high school, he worked a variety of jobs that would mould his artistic temperament – at a British Columbia lumber camp, laying track in Saskatchewan, picking tobacco and apprenticing as a car mechanic (playing his guitar in coffee houses and on street corners whenever he got the chance. As a child, he had learned some chords from no less than Leonard Cohen).



Max Layton

Settling in Toronto with a BA in English and philosophy, and a new wife, he owned a bookstore, managed a subsidiary of McClelland & Stewart, was a banker and ran his own publishing house. After earning a master's degree in English literature, he wrote a novel (*Some Kind of Hero*) and a book of short stories, and took a long-term job as an English teacher at a Mississauga high school.

At one point, a degenerative eye disease rendered him legally blind. "I couldn't read anymore. I couldn't even watch TV," he recalled. "The only thing I could do was go into my own room and close the door and pick up my guitar. Suddenly in my grief, all kinds of songs started pouring out of me. And that's a kind of poetry."

Heartbeat of Time, a CD of his songs, came out in 2010. "It loosened up the poetic muscle," he said.

"Going blind is a bit like dying," he said, sounding morbid again. But the return of his eyesight was "a very, very miraculous thing. It was like getting a second life."

Asked if he ever showed an early poem of his to his famous father, the son told a bittersweet story.

"I remember it with tremendous affection. My father and I had been estranged for many years. He would come to Montreal to visit. We would meet in a restaurant and talk. Fantastic conversations would go for hours and hours. We'd have one coffee after another.

"One of those times, I brought a poem I had written. I was very proud of it. He very generously went through every single line and showed how if I changed this or that, the poem would be better. He explained his reasoning... the general principles behind the fixing. I was deeply appreciative, but, at the same time, the poem wasn't mine anymore."

He never showed his father another of his poems "because then they wouldn't be mine."

And what would Irving Layton think of Max's new collection?

"I think he would actually really like them. They're clean and they speak to people. They're not navel-gazing. They have a wider purpose and meaning, and they're designed to be read by ordinary people. You don't need a big vocabulary to understand my poems. The poems are witty. There's humour in here. Far from being pessimistic, there's a good laugh in a lot of these poems.

"I think my father would have liked that very much."

Authors & Poets

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Maccabi Canada's soccer program growing fast

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

In a symbolic passing of the torch from one generation to the next, the first ever "elite" Maccabi youth team took on their parents in a friendly end-of-season game.

The contest marked the closing chapter for a auspicious first year for Team Maccabi 2002 (the date refers to the players' year of birth).

Team Maccabi 2002 finished the last six months of the year without a loss. That included playing at least five of the top 10 teams in the province. They finished the year winning the SAAC (Soccer Academy Alliance of Canada) fall tournament, not conceding a goal in five games.

The 2002 team also won the Toronto indoor futsal championship after capturing the league title and was a finalist in the March break indoor competition at the Downsview Hangar.

Not bad for a soccer program that only got off the ground in 2009. Back then, Maccabi Canada joined forces with JCC Chai Sports to create a soccer program aimed at Jewish youngsters in the Greater Toronto Area. Maccabi Soccer is affiliated with the Prosserman JCC and the Schwartz/Reisman Centre.

Starting with a recreational house league that attracted 41 kids, the Maccabi Soccer Club now offers programs in recreational, elite development and rep levels in the SAAC, said Alex Voihanski, managing director of JCC Chai Sports.

The recreational program has grown to more than 400 kids, while the elite and SAAC academy groups bring in another 100 or more. The goal is to attract at least 600 youngsters for the spring and summer sessions, which kick off in April and run through to October, Voihanski said.

While the majority of kids play at a recreational "house league" level, there has been growing interest in the "academy" model.

House leagues "place more of an emphasis on winning, tournaments and games," Voihanski said.

The academy approach focuses on players' skill development and is something like the European approach to soccer, he added.

Maccabi soccer's 2003 team, with head coach Vince Coletta

Kids enrolled in the Maccabi academy program practise three or four times a week and play one game. Even the younger academy players, five and six year olds, practice two or three times a week followed by a game.

The academy provides a natural outlet for youngsters who want to continue to progress as soccer players and play on Jewish teams, he continued. More than half of Maccabi's SAAC team graduated from house league play.

"We didn't want the kids to go somewhere else. We wanted them to stay in our system and develop there and keep them within the larger Jewish community organizations," Voihanski said.

"We get a lot of kids from different backgrounds – Argentines, South Africans, Israelis and Russians," he continued. "That's the passion they have and now they are able to get involved in our program.

"Our MO is building community one game at a time… It's a different part of community-building and one that a lot of people find is fun," he added.

Coaching and instruction are a big part of the program's allure: Jamie Teixeira serves as technical director, while Henrich Svetko is the senior technical adviser.

The list of coaches is likewise impressive: longtime Maccabi Canada athlete Jason Mausberg coaches the boys, along with Gil Vainshtein, Kilian Elkinson, Ilya Orlov, Oliver Spring, and Tomer Chencinski.

Vainshtein was captain of the Maccabi Canada team that competed in the Pan American Maccabi Games last year in Brazil. Elkinson plays for the University of Toronto Blues and was a former TFC reserve player. Orlov represented Canada at the World University Games. Spring was CSL reserve defender of the year last season and is spending the year in Israel, where he is finalizing a contract with a top Israeli club. Chencinski is a professional goalkeeper who has played for TFC as well as the top professional leagues in Finland and Sweden, and has just signed with Maccabi Tel Aviv.

Team Maccabi also fields an adult team that has been quite successful. The team has racked up two indoor league titles and one league cup title. Currently, the indoor team has 10 players who were chosen to go to Israel next summer for the Maccabiah Games. As of last week, the team was two points out of first place in the premier division of the Hangar Sports Leagues.

Maccabi soccer draws youngsters largely from the northern part of the GTA, but Maccabi Soccer is hoping to expand its presence south of Steeles Avenue, even as far as Eglinton. The one factor holding it back is the unavailability of playing fields, Voihanski said.

So, did the 2002 team manage to teach their parents a lesson on the soccer pitch?

In the end, the game ended in a tie, keeping everyone guessing about next year's rematch.

With files from Lorraine Baumann.

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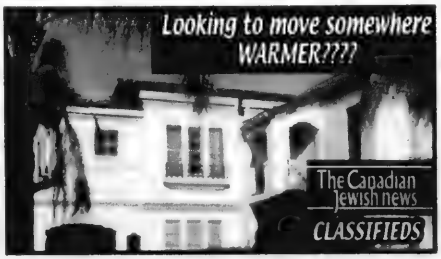

Textbook study undercuts incitement claim

Ron Kampeas
JTA

WASHINGTON — An in-depth comparative study of Palestinian and Israeli school textbooks is offering some conclusions that already are making some Israeli government officials very unhappy: Palestinian textbooks don't have as much anti-Israel incitement as often portrayed.

While this finding might appear to be welcome news for supporters of Israel, it also threatens to undercut one of the central elements of the official Israeli narrative. For years, the charge that Palestinians "educate to hate" has been an Israeli trump card in undermining claims that Palestinian statehood is overdue.

"This obviously cuts down one of the pegs and a linchpin in the argument that the Israel government makes, that the Palestinian Authority is teaching hatred to their kids," said an official who works closely with mainstream U.S. Jewish groups, who declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the matter.

But detractors say the study's methodology rips biased and sometimes inflammatory passages from each cultural context. They say triumphalism is more incendiary in a Palestinian society that they say is more forgiving of terrorism.

Israel criticizes methodology

Israel's Education Ministry said in a statement that "the results of the 'study' reveal that the decision not to co-operate with these bodies was right." The ministry called the study "biased, unprofessional and significantly lacking in objectivity."

Titled *Victims of our own Narratives?* and funded by the U.S. State Department, the study found both Israel and the Palestinians lacking in making the case for the other side's presence in the Holy Land. It also concludes Israeli textbooks are better than Palestinian ones at preparing schoolchildren for peace.

But in the same pages, it praises both Israel and the Palestinian Authority for publishing textbooks virtually free of "dehumanizing and demonizing characterizations of the other."

"Both the Israeli and Palestinian communities should be commended for this important positive aspect of their books," it says. "Extreme negative characterizations of the other of this sort are present in textbooks elsewhere in the world."

The study was launched in 2009 by the Council of Religious Institutions in the Holy Land, a multifaith body that aims "to prevent religion from being used as a source of conflict, and to promote mutual respect," its website says. It comprises the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, the Palestinian Islamic Waqf and the heads of Christian churches in Israel and the West Bank.

The Israeli government did not formally co-operate with the study, while Palestinian Authority officials did.

Yale University psychiatry professor Bruce Wexler convened the study team, which was headed by Daniel Bar Tal of Tel Aviv University and Sami Adwan of the University of Bethlehem. Hebrew-Arabic bilingual research assistants read more than 3,000 passages – 74 from Israeli texts and 96 from Palestinian ones.

They assessed the passages using criteria developed in part by an advisory panel that included Palestinian and Israeli academics and outside experts, including those who have critiqued Palestinian textbooks. Most of the panel, including several Israelis, signed a statement Feb. 3 endorsing its findings. "We agreed that the methods of the study were of the highest scientific standards and agreed on the main study findings," it said.

At least one Israeli member, Arnon Groiss, had reservations about the methodology and said he couldn't endorse the final report, which he said he hasn't seen.

It's unclear whether the study will alter fundamentally the standard Israeli narrative about Palestinian schools laying the groundwork for future conflict with Israel, and the study doesn't absolve either side.

The study found that textbooks in Israel's state schools were likelier to depict Palestinians in a positive light and to include criticism of Israeli actions, while books in Palestinian and haredi schools were overwhelmingly negative in their depiction of "the other." Critics, including some of the Israelis on the panel, said this equivalence fails to take into account how each culture responds to such depictions.

"The problem is [Wexler] makes comparisons between promotion of education for peace on the one side and education that calls for the annihilation of the other side," said Yossi Kuperwasser, director of Israel's Ministry of Strategic Affairs. Kuperwasser added that the study "omits important examples of incitement and delegitimization of Israelis and Jews in official PA textbooks, whether in an intentional attempt to blur the differences between the two educational systems or due to poor research."

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

TV psychotherapist draws on personal experiences

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Stacey Dombrowsky didn't know she wanted to become a therapist until she found herself facing some major life challenges.

"Growing up, I always thought that I just didn't know how to stop eating," said the 37-year-old psychoanalyst and addictions counsellor. "It was debilitating, and it disabled me."

She said her addiction to food became an obsession to the point where she wasn't able to work, and at times, she felt as though she couldn't survive with the addiction.

But then she found a miracle, she said. "I realized I have so much to offer the world – how would I overcome what I'm facing?" She sought help to work through her addiction, and eventually recovered by the time she was 32, but she said it took years and many different methods of treatment before she was able to face her own addiction.

Dombrowsky on the set of her TV show, *Mind Matters*.

These days, Dombrowsky has been devoting her life to helping people with their problems, partly through her own private practice in Markham, Ont., where she treats patients with a variety of issues. For example, her patients might have a drug addiction or an eating disorder, but they might also be facing depression or anxiety. Others are simply looking for support or advice about their personal or professional lives.

Over the past few months, she has expanded the number of people she can help through a weekly live call-in show on Rogers TV called *Mind Matters*, which she has been producing and hosting since September. On the show, she has guests – experts in different fields – and together, they answer viewers' questions based on a given theme each week.

The themes range a lot – from depression to eating disorders, and even dream analysis. Dombrowsky said she believes she has the ability to help with any of these issues partly because she has formally studied some of these areas – for example, she studied addictions at McMaster University – but also because she has experienced a similar problem firsthand.

Treating patients over the phone brings its own challenges, she said. "I don't really know them, [so] I have to use my intuition to guide them." She described the method as taking her own experiences out of the picture, and trying to find the best advice for each caller.

"I think I have mini-births and deaths every day – little transformations… I know how to get through my own challenges," she said. "Today, I understand what it means to pick myself back up and move through it rather than sit through my stuff."

Dombrowsky spoke about the power of healing through non-traditional methods. For example, she described her treatment involving "inner child work." She explained that this means she asks patients to reconnect with their childhood self and say what they think of the childhood version and what the inner child thinks of the adult version.

Stacey Dombrowsky climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in 2011.

"You've never met this person before, but it's a part of you that's there but you didn't know was there," she said. "What comes up is they had that fear and that's how we get over the fear."

She learned some of her techniques at a Toronto school called the Transformational Arts College of Spiritual and Holistic Training. In 2011, while she was in the middle of the program, she faced what she called a near-death experience after she fell off a horse. Although she damaged her body, she said, the experience led her to become more spiritual.

"I'm way more energetically inclined now. I'm way more in touch with my body. I was always intuitive, but now it's reached another height… so I saw that as a good experience."

She said she read up on internal focusing, which taught her how to heal her own body.

"Through that experience, I can now sense what other people are experiencing in their own bodies," she said, adding that she's not saying she has the power to heal people, but rather that she can feel the energy of someone who is open to it.

Six months after her accident, she joined a team of fundraisers on a journey to climb Mount Kilimanjaro to raise money for Markham Stouffville Hospital's child and adolescent mental health clinic. She had 50 days to raise the minimum requirement of $10,000. She said her family immediately told her she was crazy to try to reach the top, especially given the remaining effects of her accident.

"But who I am is somebody who is so determined, absolutely fearless," she said. "I felt it had a purpose to it."

In the end, she was one of six team members who made it to the top.

"It's mind over matter – there was not even a question in my mind that I was not going to make it," she said, adding that the final stretch was particularly gruelling, given that they climbed in the dark.

"That's like going on a Stairmaster at level 20 with 20 pounds of bricks on your back in the dark. If I were to do it during the day, I don't think I would have done it if I could see what I was doing."

But she called it an amazing experience – though not one she plans to repeat.

Dombrowsky said it's her determination that got her through life's challenges, and she would advise anybody struggling with addiction to persevere.

"If you're afraid to see the light, that's when it doesn't happen," she said. "If you continue to look for a way through it… there's no way you can't find peace."

Mind Matters airs live Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on Rogers TV.

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From trees to water

Rarely do Tu b'Shvat and Shabbat Shirah occur on the same Shabbat. But this year was an exception, and the exception led me to an exploration of the subject of trees, which led to the subject of water.

Josh Cooper, CEO of the Jewish National Fund of Canada (JNF), contacted me after reading one of my columns about water. "I bet when you think about JNF all you think about is trees, but do you know what we are doing with water?" he asked.

I had to admit, after spending so much time on the topic of water over the last few columns, I thought I had seen it all, but alas, there was more to be learned.

Sustainable Jew

Fred Winegust

Many of us remember the blue boxes in Hebrew schools in which coins were collected to support the work of JNF in Israel. We may also remember various school-based campaigns to plant trees in Israel.

JNF remains active in local Jewish schools and the community today. But the message and their projects have evolved to meet the needs of Israel and to help the country deal with water in a more sustainable way.

I recently met Avri Kadmon, manager of the information unit for the Land Development Authority at JNF Israel – Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael. (KKL)

Kadmon was on a speaking tour across Canada, helping JNF-KKL get its message out about existing and expanding projects – including research and development – aimed at promoting environmental protection and helping to deal with the water problem in Israel.

He spoke to Grade 8 students at Toronto's Robbins Hebrew Academy in Toronto. They were working on a water project highlighting similarities and differences between Canada and Israel.

After going over statistics on Israeli water supply and consumption, Avri touched on the role that JNF-KKL played in pre-1948 Israel, helping establish the country by draining the swamps and reclaiming land for agricultural purposes.

Kadmon reviewed JNF-KKL's large-scale Israeli water conservation projects prior to the recent arrival of large-scale desalination plants in Israel, including building dams and reservoirs to capture rainwater run-off.

JNF-KKL realizes that a way to address Israel's water shortage is to use high-quality recycled wastewater for agriculture instead of scarce and expensive freshwater. Two hundred and fifty JNF-KKL reservoirs can now hold rain run-off and high-quality recycled wastewater. This helped increase Israel's water supply by 12 per cent, providing half of the water used by the agricultural sector, and freeing up drinking water for domestic purposes, according to the JNF website.

Israel was forced to innovate in wastewater recycling because it has a limited supply of fresh water. Today, Israel recycles 75 per cent of its sewage water. Treating wastewater prevents pollution of aquifers, streams and soil. Israel is aiming at 95 per cent recycling by 2020, and JNF-KKL is helping local and regional councils upgrade their existing wastewater treatment systems. Canada, with an abundance of fresh water, is in the low single digits for wastewater recycling.

Remember those drained swamps? JNF is now working on cutting-edge, environmentally friendly recycling technologies such as constructed wetlands. I guess the swamps have a purpose as well.

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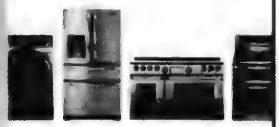

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

El Hashoresh, an organization that runs educational programs to encourage people to learn about Judaism. The organization is celebrating its 25th birthday.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says that Pink Floyd's Roger Waters has fallen captive to Palestinian deception.

The Jewish General Hospital (JGH) has been named one of the best places to work in Greater Montreal, according to an annual competition to find the city's 25 top employers.

The 2013 winners were selected from more than 2,000 applicants, following a detailed review of their operations and human-resource practices. The competition, now in its ninth year, judged eight key areas: physical workplace, work and social atmosphere, health, financial and family benefits, vacation and other time off, employee communications, performance management, training and skills development, and community involvement.

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The inevitability of a broken cellphone

It was difficult for the Jewish People to be disconnected from Moishe while the Jewish leader spent time on Mount Sinai with God. They had a deep sense of abandonment, and therefore constructed the Golden Calf so as to be comforted.

While a broken cellphone is not as daunting as watching your leader walk into a cloud of smoke, it can be somewhat unnerving, even traumatic.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

I am one of those people who are not particularly at home with material things. Throughout my life I have made great efforts to purchase furniture that reflects a grown-up attitude and to design my living quarters in a way that is contemporary and balanced. After many tries, I have finally succeeded in creating a welcoming and warm home, I believe, but I always feel as if I'm a step away from adulthood.

And therein lies my challenge with my cellphone. Like most of us, I began using one a few years ago for work and play. And like most of you, I slowly and so very surely became addicted to that little black electronic device, so much so that it would travel with me from room to room.

I was never alone.

Like my other material things, my BlackBerry would live hard. If I was watching a hockey game, inevitably it would slide off my 1980s Victorian-style couch, ending up on the floor, sometimes in pieces. If I was washing my heirloom dishes, this futuristic device would sit by the suds, vibrating and beeping messages to me about my life – all of which seem so crucial – and getting wet.

Now what I learned early on about the BlackBerry is that, like a cat, it does not see any liquid entity as a comrade.

Once I splashed the BlackBerry with puddles of water while taking a bath and, of course, my screen went wonky despite hours of blow-drying the little devil. Pardon my crassness, but somehow, in some way, on a day like any other, my mobile phone fell into the toilet. What does one do when faced with such a formidable scenario? Reach in, of course, and promptly dump it into a bag of rice – the theory being that it will suck the moisture out of the chips and wires that make up this highly sophisticated phone.

Does it work? Some people tell positive stories, and of course, others can only mourn the loss of a good bag of basmati.

Now that so many of us have developed such an addiction, how do we deal with the future, one in which the inevitability of loss will occur. In simpler terms, what precautions can we put into play with the knowledge that at some point, in some place, our cellphone will break, perhaps by water, or even by the sword? After many discussions with individuals who seem to have an intuitive understanding of how to care for material things, consensus is, there are none.

Like the Jewish People who simply had to watch as Moses ascended Mount Sinai, fearing he might not come back, we have to accept that something as necessary as our cellphones, which go through greater use than any other thing we own, will eventually tumble, fall, somersault, flip-flop, cartwheel and spill right off the sink into a puddle below.

While I wish I could be more hopeful, I can't. The good news is, Moishe returned with the tablets – twice.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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Israel's Jewish population is declining, demographer predicts. *Page 6*

Brides

See inside for our special supplement. *Section B*

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Hundreds protest Iran-Argentina pact

JTA

BUENOS AIRES — Some 300 people attended a protest rally against Argentine-Iranian co-operation in investigating the deadly 1994 bombing of a Jewish community centre.

Among the protesters at the Feb. 14 rally, which took place outside the Holocaust Museum in the Argentine capital, were relatives of the survivors of the bombing of the AMIA Jewish community centre. Israeli and Argentine justice authorities blame Iran for the attack.

"We ask Argentine society's forgiveness for wasting a great privilege that democracy gave us," Reform Rabbi Sergio Berman, who is a lawmaker, said in a speech at the rally. "We had the first Jewish foreign minister and that is why we say sorry."

Rabbi Bergman, a member of the Buenos Aires municipal legislature, recommended the venue for the protest and debate. He noted that Iranian leaders deny the Holocaust.

Argentina's first Jewish foreign minister, Héctor Timerman, on Jan. 27 signed a memorandum with his Iranian counterpart to set up a joint "truth commission," prompting condemnations from members and leaders of Jewish communities in Latin America and beyond.

Continued on page 34

Argentine Foreign Minister Hector Timerman at a press conference in Israel in 2011. *[Flash90 photo]*

Painful memories

Family and friends attend a memorial ceremony at the grave of Ilan Halimi, at the Givat Shaul cemetery in Jerusalem. Halimi, 23, was kidnapped south of Paris in January 2006 by a group called "the Gang of Barbarians" and tortured for over a period of three weeks, resulting in his death. The murder was motivated by antisemitism and theft and heightened fears of the Jewish community in France. *[Tali Mayer Flash90 photo]*

Please see related story on page 35.

Tetzaveh
Candlelighting: 5:38
Havdalah: 6:43

Greater Toronto Area

This edition of The CJN went to press on Friday, Feb.15.

CANADA

Mega Aliyah Fairs

TORONTO — Toronto and Montreal will be among six North American sites for a week of "mega aliyah events" March 3 to 10 organized by Nefesh B'Nefesh with the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Jewish National Fund and Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. The other sites will be Baltimore, Washington, D.C., New York City and South Florida. The events will feature seminars and workshops, as well as personal consultations with staff from all the organizers. Representatives from various Israeli ministries, health funds, shippers, and Nefesh B'Nefesh's "Go North" and "Go South" programs will attend. Nefesh B'Nefesh has helped some 33,000 North American and British Jews make aliyah.

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WORLD

Ejection Probed

NEW YORK — Brooklyn College launched a probe into allegations Jewish students were wrongly ejected from an event co-sponsored by the school's political science faculty in support of the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions movement. Four Hillel members say they were escorted by security out of a lecture organized by a pro-Palestinian campus group earlier this month for no apparent reason other than being pro-Israel. They reportedly had pro-Israel leaflets with them in the lecture hall and organizers asked them to leave when they refused to give them up.

Invitation Rejected

MARSEILLE — The Marseille branch of CIMADE, a French Protestant group that saved Jews during the Holocaust, declined an invitation to the region's main memorial event for Jewish Holocaust victims because CRIF, the pro-Israel umbrella group representing French Jews, organized it with the municipality. The values that led CIMADE to save Jews make it "equally committed to oppose the colonial, discriminatory and bellicose policy of Israel with regards to the Palestinians," the group's regional deputies wrote in a letter to the local CRIF branch on Dec. 21. It also said CIMADE was determined to fight "apartheid." The letter, posted online last week by a group that promotes a boycott of Israel, was a reply to an invitation by CRIF to CIMADE to attend the 70th commemoration on Jan. 20 of the deportation and murder of thousands of local Jews. Marseille had 39,000 Jews in 1939. Only 10,000 remained after the Holocaust. Yad Vashem named Madeleine Barot, who headed CIMADE during the war, a Righteous Among the Nations in 1988. She died seven years later.

More Controversy For Ex-Dior Designer

NEW YORK — A *New York Post* cover story skewered John Galliano for supposedly dressing in chassidic garb for New York Fashion Week.

Galliano, the former head designer at Christian Dior who was fired after making antisemitic slurs in a Paris café, was pictured dressed in what the *Post* claimed was chassidic clothing aimed at mocking Orthodox dress. The photograph ran underneath the headline "Shmuck!"

John Galliano

But the Anti-Defamation League, which recently declared Galliano had rehabilitated himself after his antisemitic outburst, came to his defence, saying his dress wasn't chassidic.

"This is John Galliano being John Galliano," ADL national director Abraham Foxman, said. "His dress is always eccentric and his hair is always worn long. This is, at the very least, ignorance on the part of the reporters and editors at the *Post*, or, at worst, a deliberate, malicious distortion in an effort to sell newspapers."

Some Jewish figures, including Brooklyn Assemblyman Dov Hikind, found the outfit offensive. Hikind told the *Post* that it appeared to be mocking the Jewish community: "The way the socks look, the jacket, the peyos... My question is, who's he laughing at?"

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Hungarian filmmaker fears for his children

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Hungarian Jews are fearful of how openly antisemitic and xenophobic their politicians and non-Jewish countrymen are becoming.

Some are even declaring their fear that the EU state is on the path toward an ultra-nationalistic regime bent on persecuting Jews and Roma, not unlike Germany in the early-to-mid 1930s.

The trepidation being felt by Jews, Roma and other minorities in Hungary prompted an independent Jewish-Hungarian documentary filmmaker, Adam Csillag, to start detailing his government's activities and those of the far-right wing Jobbik opposition party. He's particularly focused on efforts to limit freedom of the press and on antisemitic and anti-Roma activity over the past few years.

Adam Csillag
[Gabriella Csoszo photo]

A recent Canadian billboard campaign in Hungary targeting would-be Roma asylum-seekers to Canada with the message that new immigration laws severely limit their ability to seek refuge from persecution here led Csillag to contact *The CJN* to alert Canada's Jewish community to the situation in his country.

Hungary is on Canada's designated "safe countries" list of democratic nations that it deems to have adequate legal and institutional protection for their citizens.

Csillag said there are legitimate reasons for Roma, and perhaps soon Jews, to seek asylum elsewhere.

"Hungary is lying to Canadian politicians when it says it is democratic," he said. "Jobbik and its paramilitary [groups] are doing terrible things to Roma. I witnessed serial killings of Roma in 2008. The police are against the Roma."

In a recent phone interview from his home in Budapest, with his daughter Anna translating, he said public discourse in Hungary has reached the point where "a disturbing amount" of people are unabashed about insulting minorities, particularly Jews and Roma.

He said he's now advising his daughter and all Jewish youth in Hungary to leave for their own safety and a better future.

Anna, who is half-Jewish on her father's side, confirmed that for the past few years while attending university, her friends and classmates have never been shy about telling her how much they like her "despite" her heritage.

Beyond that, Csillag said, many politicians in both the ruling Fidesz party – led by Prime Minister Viktor Orban – and Jobbik share similar ideas regarding foreigners and minorities on Hungarian soil.

Continued on page 20

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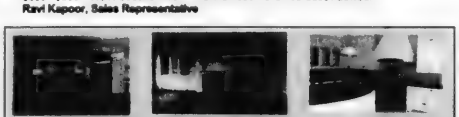
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Plan Ahead

It's not too early to plan your Passover menu.

Find great recipes and ideas in the March food pages of

The Canadian Jewish news

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Iran's deadly tentacles

Most of the world was shaken last week by the news that North Korea had tested a nuclear device deep underground in the northern part of its country. The test caused alarms to sound in government halls around the world, not only in the West. There is a gnawing certainty that North Korean belligerence is dangerous for the entire globe. China, for example, whose border is not far from the site of the nuclear test, and which usually provides diplomatic cover for its southern neighbour, was among the first countries to condemn the North Koreans.

From the editor's desk...

But there was another unsettling aspect of the North Korean test that did not evoke as many alarms – but should have. The North Koreans may have also conducted the test on behalf of the Iranians.

According to Alon Levkowitz, coordinator of Bar-Ilan University's Asian studies program and a member of the BESA Center for Strategic Studies, "the most disturbing question [about the test explosion] is whether the Iranians are using North Korea as a backdoor plan for their own nuclear program. The Iranians didn't carry out a nuclear test in Iran, but they may have done so in North Korea. There is no official information on this... but Iran may have bypassed inspections via North Korea. If true, this is a very worrying development," Levkowitz told the *Jerusalem Post*.

The spectre of Iranian involvement with the North Koreans, however, is only a small portion – albeit very worrisome – of the dark shadow cast by the theocratic rulers of Tehran over large parts of the world.

In an essay published last week in the *Wall Street Journal*, Israel's ambassador to the United States, Michael Oren, chillingly pointed out Iran's deadly reach.

"In 25 cities across five continents, community centres, consulates, army barracks and houses of worship have been targeted for destruction. Thousands have been killed. The perpetrators are agents of Hezbollah and the Quds Force, sometimes operating separately and occasionally in unison. All take their orders from Tehran."

Oren provided a grisly inventory of the Iranian-inspired, planned, funded, and sometimes directed, slaughter.

Two weeks ago, Bulgarian security forces revealed that Hezbollah agents were the perpetrators of the Bourgas Airport attack last summer in which five Israelis and one Bulgarian were killed.

And as we know all too sadly, Iranian operatives were responsible for the murder of 115 Jews nearly two decades ago when the AMIA Jewish community centre and the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, were bombed.

Oren points out that Hezbollah has been tied to drug smuggling in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. In addition, another Iranian surrogate – the Quds Force – was part of the failed plot by the infamous Mexican Los Zetas drug cartel to assassinate a Saudi diplomat in Washington.

As well, "U.S. authorities have implicated Hezbollah in the sale of contraband cigarettes in North Carolina, and Iran has manufactured and sold millions of rounds of ammunition to warring armies in Africa. So while skirting western sanctions, Iran funds terror worldwide."

Western security forces know that Iran has imprinted its inky black mark essentially in every continent.

But it is much closer to Israel's doorstep where it stains its death the deepest.

Despite the multi-cleric parliament of Lebanon, the country is effectively in the grip of the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Hezbollah is Iran's vanguard in south Lebanon.

As reported last week by Israeli analyst Ron Ben Yishai, "some 180 Shiite villages and small towns situated between the Zahrani River and the border with Israel have been converted into fighting zones in which Hezbollah is preparing – above and below ground – for the next conflict with Israel. Hezbollah has some 65,000 rockets and missiles at its disposal."

And despite its once former fierce independence, Syria too, has now become nothing more than a modern version of a biblical Persian satrapy. Without Iranian intervention, the Syrian strongman would have abdicated long ago, or been killed.

And what is the price that the Syrian people are paying for Iran's protection of their president?

As reported last week by the *Times of Israel*, UN human rights chief Navi Pillay disclosed that the number of people killed in Syria's civil war is probably approaching 70,000. Now there are reports that the figure may be closer to 90,000. As if to prove her mettle, Pillay added that the UN human rights council's deep division and inaction over the Syrian conflict "has been disastrous, and civilians on all sides have paid the price." Really.

Korea, Argentina, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Syria – Iran's tentacles are far-reaching and blood-soaked. At our peril, many in the West – especially in the European Union – ignore that reach even as it attempts to grasp further.

–MBD

SeeJN

PURIM PLOTTERS

Junior kindergarten students at Toronto Heschel School, Hayden Bercovic, left, and Samantha Goldstein as Bigtan and Teresh, plot menacingly to overtake King Achashverosh as Mordechai (Ami Ezer) overhears their conversation and sends word to the king to save him.

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Israel's Jewishness has declined, demographer says

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Israel's Jewish population, when compared to its non-Jewish population, has been on a steady decline since the late 1950s, says Israeli demographer Sergio DellaPergola.

Jews in Israel represented 89.2 per cent of its population in 1957 and 84.5 per cent in 1977. Today, however, the figure is 75.3 per cent, he said in a lecture last week at the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto.

By contrast, Israel's Arab population has correspondingly risen, from 10.8 per cent and 15.5 per cent in 1957 and 1977, to 20.7 per cent today, he noted.

Last year, Jews living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea represented 52 per cent of a heterogeneous population consisting of Arabs and foreign workers, he pointed out.

DellaPergola, a professor emeritus of population studies at Hebrew University, is a widely acknowledged expert in Jewish demographics.

Almost three years ago, he told the *Jerusalem Post* that Jews no longer constitute a majority of the population in this area when Israeli Arabs, Palestinian Arabs, foreign workers and African refugees are factored into the equation.

His projections, based on the assumption that the Arab birthrate will continue to outstrip the Jewish birthrate, have raised concerns that Israel's future as a democratic Jewish state will be imperilled by the imperative of demography.

According to DellaPergola, the Jewish birthrate in Israel is significantly lower than that of its minority of 1.6 million Arabs.

For every 20.8 Jewish births per thousand, there are 24.7 Arab births per thousand, he said.

And because the Arab community has a younger population on average, the death rate in the Jewish sector is higher, he added.

Within Israel's Jewish community, haredim have the highest birthrate, he said, noting they're expected to comprise one-third of its Jewish population by 2049, compared to 10 per cent today.

In Israel, 24.1 per cent of Jews define themselves by religion, while 42.5 per cent define themselves by nationality and ethnicity. The remaining 29.8 percent identify themselves by citizenship.

Israeli Arabs define themselves mainly by religion (47.6 per cent), with 25.9 per cent identifying themselves by nationality and ethnicity and 24.1 per cent by citizenship.

Peering into the future, DellaPergola, a former adviser to the Israeli government and the president of Israel, suggested that Israel faces stark choices concerning its religious and ethnic composition. If the West Bank is retained, Israel will likely become a Jewish and non-democratic state, he said.

Alternatively, Israel can morph into a democratic and non-Jewish state.

Listing a third scenario, he said that Israel can remain Jewish and democratic without the West Bank.

Without explicitly saying so, DellaPergola implied that Israel can only continue to function as a democratic Jewish state if it withdraws from the West Bank, whose Arab population is estimated to be 2.6 million.

With more than six million Jews living in the Jewish state today, he went on to say, Israel has the world's largest Jewish population.

Immigration has been the "major engine" for its rapidly expanding Jewish population, said DellaPergola, who was born in Italy in 1942 and immigrated to Israel in 1966.

The United States, with some 5.7 million Jews, ranks just behind Israel in terms of the number of Jews in its population.

More than 80 per cent of the 14 million Jews in the world can be found in Israel and the United States, he said.

In his view, there is a demonstrable correlation between a nation's development and the size of its Jewish population. A more developed country has more Jews, he said.

Today, most Jews live in "first-world" democracies, but a century ago, they resided in underdeveloped societies in eastern Europe and the Muslim world.

During a question-and-answer session, DellaPergola admitted his data has been challenged.

Critics, such as former Israeli diplomat Yoram Ettinger, claim that official Palestinian population figures suffer from empirical and methodological deficiencies.

Still others contend that millions of new Jewish immigrants will pour into Israel in the future and thereby dispel fears that Israeli Jews will become a minority in their own land.

DellaPergola said he does not share these views.

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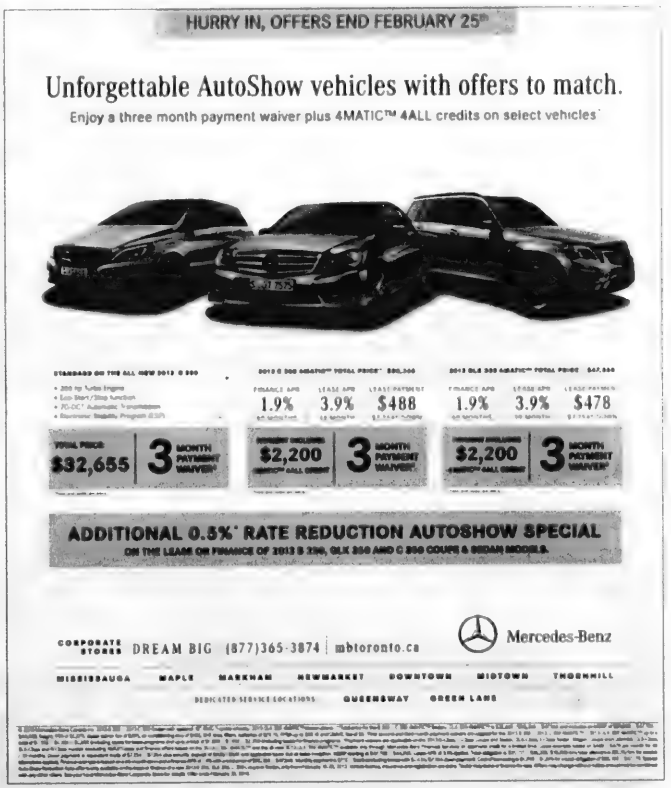
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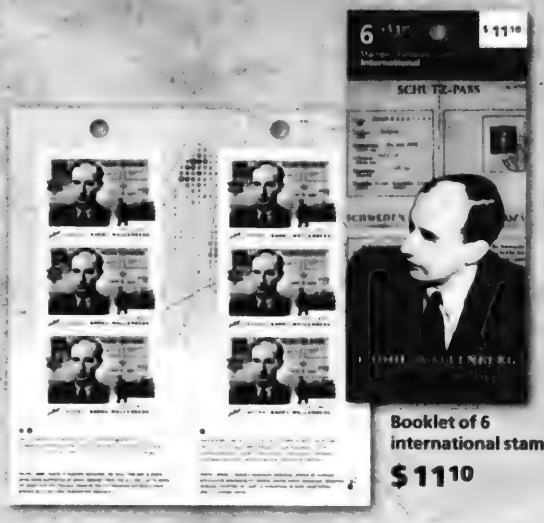

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The responsibility rests upon us all

In the cartoon inset into this editorial, Dry Bones bids us to put on a happy face now that Purim is upon us once again. Although it is a colourfully depicted message, it is also a bit confusing, because it is the mask itself that conveys the sense of happiness, suggesting that the happiness, in fact, is only a mask. Indeed, it leads us to wonder what emotional state may lie beneath the mask?

But we don't need a mask to tell us to be happy on Purim.

Purim tells us to be happy.

Each year for more than two millennia, we have commemorated the story of Purim – Mordechai and Esther's triumph over Haman – in the same, uncomplicated, straightforward manner. We listen to the story of their triumph. We celebrate. We send portions of food to our friends. And we aid the poor.

The mask and the inevitably accompanying costumes are instruments of our celebration, much to the delight of our children and grandchildren. Our happiness is not an artifice. It is a deeply felt sigh.

The experiences of Mordechai and Esther depict a time-travelling truth that has tested the lives of Jews – indeed of all human beings – ever since history was first recorded.

There is evil in the world. There are people intent primarily on harming others, on tearing down what others have built up, on lionizing death rather than sanctifying life. The fact that they have their own boosters and supporters who offer explanations and suggest "root causes" for the evil, or who champion the relative moral merit of the evildoers does not – cannot – deny the existence of the evil.

As those very same millennia have taught us, the only response to the rise of evil is to resist it. The responsibility for doing so falls upon all of us, though it may be difficult, even terribly so.

This is the unambiguous message of Purim, of Mordechai and Esther's example and of the collective triumph of the Jews of Persia.

So we put on our masks and celebrate, confident and hopeful that there is no force that will defeat a people entirely and wholeheartedly committed to resisting evil.

Thus, to echo Dry Bones: be Happy. It's Purim.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

A report by an international panel of historians probing the wartime activities of Austrian president and former UN secretary general Kurt Waldheim contained enough information to start criminal proceedings against him, according to Prof. Yehuda Wallach a Tel Aviv University military historian who served on the panel.

Dry Bones

FROM ANCIENT EMPIRES TO MODERN ISLAMISTS . . .
THEIR CRUEL ATTACKS ONLY STRENGTHEN US . . .
BUT PERVERT AND DESTROY THEIR OWN CULTURES.
IT'S THE SECRET JOKE OF PURIM.
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Transplant recipient thanks community

To the Toronto community: I am eager to share with the community the news of how I'm doing since my allogeneic stem cell transplant last July at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md. Three years ago, I was not sure what my future looked like. After I learned that I needed a transplant, everything in my life became even more uncertain. My family and I are forever grateful for the overwhelming support and love that the community provided us, which enabled me to have this transplant. I have now passed my six-month mark post-transplant. The doctors are thrilled with my progress and feel very good about everything thus far. The transplant team wants to see me for regular appointments up until two years after my transplant. Johns Hopkins is an extraordinary institution with a team of wonderful doctors and nurses who have saved my life and given me more hope that I have ever had. I am so proud of the community that I am part of. Your love, caring and tremendous support will never be forgotten by my family and me. I am looking forward to returning to school in September and to finally feel like a normal student again. On behalf of my family and me, we truly thank you for helping me get to this point in my recovery. May God bless you all.

Courtney Render
Toronto

• • •

Non-Jewish Africans in Israel (1)

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

While the extremist comments and violence directed against non-Jewish Africans who have found temporary asylum in Israel have no justification, the background to the protests must be told ("Stand up for asylum seekers in Israel," Jan. 31). In December 2012, an Eritrean man was accused of raping an 83-year-old woman in south Tel Aviv. That was in the minds of protesting Israelis living in this neighbourhood, after a history of other acts of violence attributed to the refugees. Residents of south Tel Aviv are gripped by fear in their own neighbourhoods. The guest voice accuses "radical government officials" of incitement against the refugees. The "incitement" does not come from government officials. It is grassroots, and it is not racist.

Errors of fact abound in this article. The guest voice states, "Most asylum seekers... are not permitted to work, to access health services, or even to apply for refugee status." Israel, under its Border Crossings Authority, has granted "temporary protection group" status, assistance and work permits to asylum seekers, and health care is never refused in Israel. On Jan. 13, 2011, Israel's Supreme Court decided that fines would not be imposed on employers of asylum seekers. In effect, officially, illegal workers can work.

But, the country's ability to sustain non-Jewish refugees is limited. Uncapped absorption of non-Jewish asylum seekers, approximately half of whom are Muslim, is an impossibility for the demographically challenged Jewish state. The State of Israel was not created to save the world's refugees. What it has done so far for the refugees from Sudan and Eritrea is more than commendable. Their return to their African homelands must be facilitated soon.

Alex P. Korn
Toronto

• • •

Non-Jewish Africans in Israel (2)

The view expressed in the guest voice "Stand up for asylum seekers in Israel" (Jan. 31), is misguided compassion that is not true to Judaism. Similarly, the Israeli liberal newspaper *Ha'aretz* has continuously, in its editorials and opinion pieces, condemned Israel's policy towards Eritrean and Sudanese migrants, while being silent about the racism and hardships encountered by our Ethiopian Jewish brethren. Israel, a tiny country, cannot accommodate all migrants fleeing there. Why are "tolerant" bigger countries, such as Greece, Hungary and Saudi Arabia, not welcoming their Christian and Muslim co-religionists? We should remember that no good deed goes unpunished for Jews. African countries after the Yom Kippur War broke off ties with Israel despite its huge aid to them.

Jacob Mendlovic
Toronto

• • •

Don't blame Israel

In reply to the letter "Israel agreed to return captured lands," (Jan. 31), blaming Israel for the lack of security, I have only two words: "Fogel family." (Five members of the family were slaughtered in their beds by terrorists in the West Bank.)

Elisabeth Gelb
Victoria, B.C.

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'God is pressuring me not to give up'

Rabbi David Hartman, president emeritus of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, died Feb. 10. He was interviewed by Uri Misgav in Yedioth Ahronoth *on Dec. 2, 2011. The article below is an abridged and adapted version of the translation of the interview that appeared on Ynetnews.* The CJN *reproduced it from the Shalom Hartman Institute website.*

Rabbi Hartman: The leaders of Religious Zionism have lost all sense of purpose. Everything has become a war – a war with stones, a war to preserve power. Religion today is controlled by people who do not understand what Jewish revival is, what revolution is, and what we wanted to have here.

Misgav: ***What did they want?***

The revolution was meant to create a new humanity, a humanity that lives in reality and takes responsibility for that reality, working within that reality, not in a fantasy world. Not a world in which passages from the Bible are constantly quoted and fought over – that's nonsense.

This isn't what you dreamed of.

I moved here in 1971 out of a belief that we were creating a new history, a new Jew. So, yes, we have a state, but there is something missing. We are missing people to instil a spiritual vision. The leadership lost the connection to revolution, to awakening, to ethical possibilities. It's killing me.

What is happening to religious Zionism, the stream that is meant to blend Judaism, the Land and State of Israel? How has the moderate voice within religious Zionism become so small and withered?

In America, I received a doctorate in philosophy. I taught general philosophy and Jewish philosophy. I wrote a book about Maimonides, whose greatness was in the way that the Jewish-particularistic and the universalistic coexisted within him. He lived with both of them, and it was impossible to know when he would choose to emphasize one or the other.

Why did that happen?

Religious Zionism is dead. It had a vision, but its leaders were afraid of losing their sense of belonging to Judaism. They thought that if they brought rabbis, everything would be OK. But it wasn't. The haredim? They are being fruitful and multiplying. I have relatives who have 12 or 18 children. I'm happy for them, because I love Jewish life, but I'm not happy about their moral lives.

The 'hardal' world (religious Zionist haredi) is becoming haredi. They think that a religious outlook requires detachment from the world of western culture. They love Israel, they serve in the army, but it doesn't change their minds.

We thought that paratrooper rabbis were the essence of modernism, but jumping from a plane does not symbolize spiritual maturity. It takes time and openness to develop a worldview and free thought. It requires a willingness to listen to different music – something they don't have. OK, so they go to elite army units. It doesn't make them modern people.

Can you comment on haredi soldiers who abandoned a ceremony in which female soldiers were singing on stage?

It's insane, insane. These people emphasize marginal issues. The important thing is loving-kindness. I served as an adviser to Zevulun Hammer, when he was minister of welfare in the first [Yitzhak] Rabin government. There was a debate about F-15s landing on Shabbat. I said, 'Planes are not obligated to keep Shabbat, pilots are. Why are you worrying about the plane and not trying to educate and open the heart of the pilot?' But they lost all contact with the pilot.

A file photo from the mid-90's of Rabbi David Hartman addressing an audience in a typically defiant manner

Except my son-in-law, Aharal'eh Katz, who was killed in Lebanon. He was a spiritual giant. He received a Medal of Honor in the Yom Kippur War. He was the first navigator who was slated to be a pilot commander. He was an ethical man, who woke up early in the morning to pray so as not to impose on anyone else. He flew on Shabbat in place of others. He flew on Yom Kippur in place of others.

It's a different world. You don't see that anymore. They emphasize trivial things. We lost the deeper meaning.

From a halachic perspective, is there a problem with women standing up to sing?

No. The Gemara talks only about a loss of concentration while reciting the *Shema*. If women are singing when you are in the middle of reciting the *Shema*, it will hinder your intent. That's it. No more.

There used to be normal rabbis. Listen to this. You should say *Shehechiyanu* over the fact that there are still rabbis like this. The daughter of this rabbi loves to sing. When his friends came to visit, someone asked him to tell her to stop singing. He replied that according to Halachah, she's allowed to sing, the man is not allowed to listen. He suggested that the guest leave.

Or this. One day, a group of believers came to a rabbi and asked him what they should be focusing on while fulfilling the commandment to burn chametz. He said, 'You should make sure that your wife, who is dragging the sacks of flour, isn't working too hard.' Where has all that gone? What has happened to us?

Why hasn't there been a strong rabbinical outcry against "price tag" (violence perpetrated by youth against Jews and Arabs) activities?

Because the leadership is twisted. Corrupt to the core.

They don't educate toward the sanctity of life. They talk in slogans. They don't say, 'Man is good, for he was created in the image of God.' You can see this in the attitude toward Arabs and you can see it in the attitude toward women. In my book, *The God Who Hates Lies*, there is an attack on the entire world of religious Zionism precisely because of these issues.

When my daughter [Tova] built the [Shira Hadasha] synagogue, people came to me and said, 'But she's a woman.' I said, 'You are willing to go to a female brain surgeon, to let a woman be responsible for your life or death, but when a woman walks into the synagogue, she becomes a little girl? It's ridiculous.'

Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, women have been removed from billboards.

That's insulting to me. I'm embarrassed. This is what has become of the Zionist dream? When I came to Israel for the first time after the Six Day War, Prof. Akiva Simon insisted that I go to a Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz. So I went. I saw that they were building a road in the middle of the kibbutz and asked him why. He explained that they were building a road so that a member of the kibbutz who was paralyzed and lived at the edge of the kibbutz could get to the dining room.

Afterward, people asked me what my most religious experience was in Israel. They thought that I would say, reading Mishnah at the Western Wall. But I said that it was at the Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz, where I saw them building a road for one person. That's a holy place. The entire community makes sure that the individual does not lose his place.

That's what I thought I would see in Israel – a living Judaism that was gentle, sensitive, moral, loving. From the moment that I moved here, I fought for it to be that way. That's why I built the institute, as a place open to religious and secular, Jews and Arabs.

Is anyone even listening to you?

I have not lost hope. I wake up in the morning, and God says to me, 'David, put on your tfillin, and go to work. Don't give up.'

You talk to God?

I search for God. I hope that he sees my work as important.

He talks to you?

Yes. God is pressuring me not to give up, to believe that I can contribute, not to stop believing that things can change, to get out of the war. It's an existential war for me. What is happening today with religion is more dangerous than what's happening with the Arabs. The Arabs want to kill my body – the Jews are killing my soul...

To be religious today is an ongoing war not to let the haredim and the hardalim own the Torah. I want to return the Torah to the... entire people of Israel. I don't want religion to be the private property of certain people. I don't want the length of the sidelocks to be the determining factor.

What do you think about the hesder yeshivot?

Their problem is that they went only half way: they understood that it was important to find a way for yeshiva boys to be drafted into the army without compromising their ability to keep learning, but that's only the beginning.

The question is what content is given to them? Is national zealousness everything? The very extreme rabbis are dangerous in my opinion. I understand the need to belong to the land, but that doesn't make you a Jew. What makes you a Jew is how you behave on that land.

So your life work was in a sense a failure?

A lot of young people come to me and say, 'If not for you, I wouldn't be religious.' So I did not fail. I don't believe that life here is for naught. Even though it drains my energy and I am weak – this is the place. If we can't make it here, we can't make it anywhere. I tried to create a different kind of spiritual ideal. Not a shtibl, not a shtetl – a people. It can be done.

The closed nature of the Orthodox world is unacceptable to me. To understand rabbis' weaknesses, the Orthodox world has to be part of the public discourse.

People read my books. It makes me happy. There is a minority that we can build upon, but I don't know if it's strong enough. One thing is for sure: it's hard work. And they try to embarrass me. They try to say that Hartman is not really religious. They malign me. It doesn't bother me. I am threatening to them – very threatening. I can't be loved by all.

There is a lot of work, but you can believe in possibilities. I thought that Israel would expand my soul. I am going to keep working until my last day.

What my first picketers taught me about learning

Gil Troy

in Montreal

McGill University has been my academic home for two decades. I have taught thousands of students, always encouraging them to ask, challenge, learn and think independently. I frequently echo a friend of mine who would grandly welcome me into his home saying, "He who is shy does not eat" by saying, "He – or she – who is shy does not learn." I love the classroom's openness, the luxury we students and professors have to explore intellectually together. I relish every class I have taught as a learning journey, trying to break down the artificial barriers we all erect that stop us from thinking, stretching and growing.

Given that love of the learning process, I was surprised last month when I appeared at the McGill bookstore for a lunchtime lecture to launch my new book. For the first time in my McGill career – despite having taken controversial positions over those years – I was picketed. My crime, of course, was being a Zionist and writing a book about Zionism –*Moynihan's Moment: America's Fight Against Zionism as Racism*. As I and others who came to the lecture ascended the third-floor staircase, two or three protesters presented us with an anti-Zionist handout, emphasizing that they were Jewish and anti-Zionist.

Most people attending the lecture ignored the protesters, who hold weekly anti-Zionist vigils. It's important to emphasize that there were 15 to 20 times more attendees than protesters. One student, Yonah Diamond, who was a Shalom Hartman Institute summer intern with me last summer, spoke to the protesters, respectfully. A Jewish studies and political science major from Toronto, Diamond challenged an "End Zionism" sign they had brandished a week earlier. He asked: "Don't you see the hypocrisy in advocating on behalf of one people's rights [the Palestinians'] while simultaneously denying that self-determination to another people?"

Diamond quickly realized "they were completely OK with this hypocrisy, because they simply accepted stereotypical accusations, which they claimed to be historically accurate," taking refuge in the usual anti-Zionist buzzwords: "colonialist, ethnic cleansing, racist, apartheid." Their discussion about a two-state solution was particularly appalling. "They thought the idea of partition or two states was racist," he reports, which suggested to him that "they're not living in reality… they truly believe the lies and stereotypes."

During the question period following my lecture, one protester, wearing anti-Zionist slogans on his ski jacket, took something I said out of context to accuse me of being "racist." He lacked the discipline or the integrity to ask a question. He had not come to learn, only to posture. Although I had told the bookstore officials I did not object to the students leafleting inside the warm store rather than outside in the frigid cold – because I believe in academic freedom – his approach, which reflected no interest in learning, offended me – and I told him so. He walked away angrily.

Another protester asked a reasonable question. After comparing Israel to apartheid-era South Africa – a premise I refuted by noting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a national not racial conflict – he asked what criticisms I had of Israel. This question gave me an opportunity to celebrate Israeli democracy, and demonstrate that I, like others, have many concerns regarding the peace process, the growing gap between rich and poor and the role of the ultra-Orthodox. But, I pointed out, whatever criticisms I have, I don't reject the state. I don't demonize a country because, like all countries, it's imperfect.

In truth, the other questions I fielded were better, fuller, richer, more illuminating about my talk – and more to the point. They were asked by people who came to learn, not to score points, and they pushed me to refine some ideas while inviting me to emphasize others.

Diamond believes, that, ironically, the protesters, "proved the importance of [my] message. The way they unthinkingly accused Israel of all these modern evils emptied these terms of any meaning. This ignorance filled the halls of the UN General Assembly in 1975 and continues to poison the minds of my fellow students. [Former American UN ambassador] Daniel Patrick Moynihan taught us that words and ideas have far-reaching consequences, and this couldn't have become clearer to me that day."

Students such as Yonah – some of whom, like him, become friends – make teaching at McGill a privilege. Not because he agrees with me, but because he comes to learn, and therefore does.

'Lite' green synagogues

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

in Toronto

We've just marked Tu b'Shvat, the New Year of the trees. Noted in the Talmud as the "new year" of the trees for tithing, it was taken on later by the mystics as a spiritual celebration of the four seasons and the seven species of the Land of Israel.

But it was in the early 1970s that it really took hold in the larger Jewish community and became a kind of Jewish Earth Day. Tu b'Shvat is when synagogues and Jewish organizations all seem to become "green for a day." We talk about Jewish environmentalism, invite a special speaker from some hip ecological organization, read creative poetry about our relationship with the earth, and put out articles on climate change for folks to read (on paper, which will then be thrown away or, hopefully, recycled – if the congregation has a blue bin). But what happens the Shabbat after? Like "Sisterhood Shabbat" when we become feminist, or "youth Shabbat" when we bring out the teenagers who don't come the rest of the year, we isolate the environment as an interesting issue like any other special program. The environment in February, women in March, teens in April – let's see, what can we focus on in May.

But environmentalism isn't a "theme" for a service. It's the most pressing issue of our day, of humanity and of our planet. It's not about whether Judaism will survive. It's about whether the human species will survive. We all want to bequeath Judaism to our grandchildren. But if the generations after our grandchildren have been pushed to the brink of destruction by drought, fire, rising tides, unbreathable air and polluted water, what will we say to them? "Where were you, grandpa? Didn't you know this was happening?" If our Judaism can't speak to this issue, and if it's saved for only one evening on the 15th of Shvat, we are in physical peril as much as we are in spiritual peril.

Rabbi Larry Troster – with whom I was privileged to work while he was assistant rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto and I was at Holy Blossom Temple many years ago – wrote a blog post entitled "From Light Green To Dark Green: Committing to An Effective Jewish Environmentalism," in which he notes that "much of Jewish environmentalism is based on an underlying philosophy of what has been called 'Light Green' environmentalism. This is an environmentalism that seeks to solve issues like sustainability and climate change through green consumerism, new technology and green job promotion. All of this is good, but it will not solve climate change, environmental injustice or species extinction. It ignores the role of population and development in the environmental crisis, and it ignores the serious critiques of the world economic system, which is a major component in creating climate change and environmental injustice. Light Green environmentalism is based on a stewardship ethic that still privileges human needs and refuses to incorporate a more biocentrist approach to environmental ethics. In other words, a 'Dark Green' environmentalism."

The stewardship model says we are in charge of the world, but we just have to take better care of it as its custodians. And so we continue to develop new technologies that harm the earth because we still need them for our businesses or our leisure time. We'll continue to build factories that pollute, but we'll monitor them better. We'll continue to breed cattle for meat and cut down forests for grazing land because we want our cheap, fast-food burgers – but we'll introduce salads on our menus in recyclable, clam-shell containers to do our part.

In contrast, a biocentrist approach posits that the earth has intrinsic value apart from what it can do or provide for us. We protect the rainforest not only because it may provide the plant that has the cure for cancer, but also because it has its own inherent value, simply as a rainforest. A biocentrist approach sees the needs of the planet as being equal to the needs of us humans. It goes way beyond buying a store's own brand of "green" detergent. It asks deep questions about that store's policies, that brand's politics and even why we need the detergent in the first place.

Tu b'Shvat has come and gone, the almond tree has blossomed, but underneath it, in many of our shuls and organizational halls, is still a pile of styrofoam plates and plastic cutlery.

What's wrong with this picture?

Post-revolutionary Egypt torn by deep fissures

Egypt, long a beacon of stability in the Arab world, has been thrown into disarray since the downfall of its authoritarian president, Hosni Mubarak, two years ago this month.

Mubarak, a pro-western secular leader who presided over a dictatorial regime and preserved Egypt's peace treaty with Israel, was toppled during the Arab Spring, the internal rebellions that have boldly challenged the stultified political order in the Middle East. Mubarak, who held office for nearly three decades, resigned after 18 days of increasingly violent street protests, transferring his authority to the armed forces, which would imprison him and his two sons on charges of corruption and abuse of power.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

During this interim period, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the body that inherited Mubarak's mantle, was headed by Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, the longtime defence minister. Tantawi, self-servingly, usurped yet more power while blandly professing to be in favour of democracy.

Last June, the candidate of the banned Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Morsi, an American-educated engineer, won post-revolutionary Egypt's first free presidential election with only 51 per cent of the popular vote. He defeated Ahmed Shafik, Mubarak's last prime minister, and a coterie of progressive and nationalist candidates who had initiated the revolution. In effect, the Muslim Brotherhood hijacked the 2011 revolution.

Morsi, who had vowed to be "a president for all Egyptians," was swiftly undermined by the army, the strongest institution in Egypt since the 1952 revolution. Tantawi and his fellow generals staged a soft coup, dissolving parliament – controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood – placing strict limits on Morsi's powers, seizing control of the process of drafting a new constitution and re-establishing martial law, which Mubarak had imposed after the assassination of his predecessor, Anwar Sadat, in 1981.

With these draconian measures, Tantawi threw Egypt back into the muck of authoritarianism, making a mockery of the democratic rhetoric that had defined the 2011 revolution.

But in an astonishing counter-coup last August, Morsi struck back, using an incident in the Sinai Peninsula, in which 16 Egyptian soldiers were killed by a band of Islamic fundamentalists, to reassert his authority.

Morsi forced Tantawi into retirement, dismissed army chief of staff Sami Hafez Anan, regarded as Tantawi's successor, sacked a number of other generals and fired the governor of northern Sinai as well as the chief of military intelligence. He also appointed a new defence minister, Abdul Fattah el-Sisi.

Egyptian Defence Minister Abdul Fattah el-Sisi

Pundits generally agree that Morsi's moves were inspired by Turkey's campaign of recent years to reduce the outsize influence of the armed forces.

Having assertively propped up his Islamist regime, Morsi may have assumed he had carte blanche to do whatever he pleased.

He was dead wrong.

Last November, under the pretext of speeding up Egypt's bumpy and convoluted transition from autocracy to democracy, he issued a sweeping decree granting himself immunity from judicial oversight.

The measure touched off a wave of unrest.

Claiming the decree was required to ratify a new constitution and block a conspiracy by pro-Mubarak forces to unseat the president, Mori's spokesman said he would relinquish these powers within a few months.

The explanation did not wash in secular and liberal circles, raising widespread fears that he sought to become Egypt's new strongman by stealth.

More political violence erupted in December following Morsi's announcement that a referendum would be held to approve a new constitution.

Morsi claimed it would enshrine human rights. Critics, particularly those in the Coptic Christian community, which forms about 10 per cent of Egypt's population, complained that the proposed constitution would pay far too much deference to Islamic law, offer little protection to minorities and women and, worst of all, lay the foundation for a retrogressive Islamic state.

Morsi won the referendum by a comfortable two-thirds margin, and the new constitution took immediate effect. But Mori's opponents, led by Mohamed El Baradei – a presidential candidate and the former director of the International Atomic Energy Agency – described the constitution as a "very polarizing" document that denies Egyptians freedom of religion and expression and suppresses the independence of the judiciary.

Despite Morsi's unilateralism, observers wonder whether he and his allies can, in fact, implement their programs and policies. The bureaucracy, largely composed of secularists appointed during the Mubarak era, may well put up fierce resistance to his vision of a new Islamic Egypt.

In the meantime, tensions continue to fester. Throughout January, as lawlessness engulfed the country and open rebellion broke out in three cities along the Suez Canal, Morsi called out the army to deal with demonstrators. In the ensuing clashes, more than 50 Egyptians were killed, reminding observers of the pre-2011 days when dissent was barely tolerated. Of late, protestors have demonstrated in front of Morsi's presidential palace in Cairo.

Such has been the turmoil that the defence minister recently issued a stark warning that political differences "on running the affairs of the country may lead to the collapse of the state and threatens the future of the coming generations."

With critics already charging that Morsi has not lived up to his pledge to represent all Egyptians, the situation is likely to grow still worse when he imposes austerity measures to cope with an economy in a tailspin.

Tourism, one of the principal sources of foreign currency, has fallen by one-third. The unemployment rate among Egyptians between the ages of 25 to 29 has risen to a catastrophic 25 per cent. Calling this figure "a socio-economic time bomb," a former Egyptian finance minister recently observed it is especially worrisome because the popular uprising that deposed Mubarak and paved the way for Morsi was spearheaded by Egyptians in this age range.

Beyond the daunting problem of youth unemployment, which has been exacerbated by a decline in foreign investment, Morsi faces another challenge that speaks directly to Egypt's current economic woes.

Egypt has requested a loan of $4.8 billion from the International Monetary Fund, but will not get it unless food and fuel subsidies to the poor, the core of Morsi's constituency, are reduced. But with half of all Egyptians living on less than $2 per day, Morsi will be hard-pressed to comply with the IMF demand.

Morsi thus finds himself between a rock and a hard place as he attempts to govern an ancient nation torn by deep political, social and economic fissures and manifestly uncertain of its future.

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Beth Radom rabbi is on sabbatical

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Beth Radom Congregation has announced that Rabbi Steven Schonblum, spiritual leader of the congregation since 2001, is on sabbatical as of Feb. 8. The sabbatical will last until the end of July, when his contract ends.

The unaffiliated Conservative egalitarian synagogue, which has 350 families, is in a period of transition following a board decision in October 2012 not to renew the rabbi's contract, and a subsequent unsuccessful challenge by a group of members seeking to replace the board and overturn its decision.

Among other issues cited, the board alleged that the rabbi had performed "unauthorized" conversions.

A group of five members who sought to replace the board challenged the allegations in a letter to congregants, claiming the rabbi had complied with requests to make changes and had in fact acted in accordance with authorization from the board.

The group also blamed the board for what they termed a "financial crisis" at the shul.

Jordan Cait, a shul vice-president, told *The CJN* in December the financial issues were due to "a seasonal cash-flow problem."

Some congregants had withheld their dues because of the controversy.

In a Feb. 7 good-bye letter to congregants on the shul's website, Rabbi Schonblum asked that members who had not yet paid their 2013 dues call the synagogue office "forthwith" to make payment.

He wrote that he had come to "an amicable arrangement" with the board.

> *The shul must continue to survive and meet the needs of all its congregants*

"Although the past number of months have been a difficult time for all of us, it is now time both for me, my family and the [congregation] to move on," he wrote.

"A healing process needs to commence for the benefit of us all, and the shul must continue to survive and meet the needs of all its congregants," the rabbi added. "To survive and be in a position to meet all its financial obligations, including its obligations to its employees, including myself, the synagogue relies primarily on the payment of dues from its congregants."

Beth Radom president Henry Icyk wrote in his own letter on the website that the past few months have been "a time of re-assessing and learning... What we have learned is the importance of keeping you all updated and in the loop about the goings on here at shul, and that is why I am writing to you today."

In the letter, Icyk assured members that Cantor David Rosen and "many" lay leaders have committed to ensuring that "all services, events and simchahs will continue at the shul uninterrupted."

A transition task force was formed at the shul in December and will unveil its plan at a town hall meeting Mar. 6, Icyk wrote.

Cait told *The CJN* that the past few months have been "a difficult time.

"We believe it's best for both Rabbi Schonblum and the congregation, for him to be on sabbatical... This is going to help facilitate healing."

Cait said that only a small number of people – "literally, a handful" – have left the synagogue, but that most of the board members who were part of the "petitioning" group have resigned from the board.

He said it would be premature to comment on how effective the rabbi's request for dues payment has been, but that "the situation has been improving."

Part of the purpose of the upcoming meeting is to get "lots of input" from members. "That's part of the healing process," Cait said.

He said that there will definitely be a rabbi on the pulpit for the High Holidays. "We're moving forward with Cantor Rosen, who will be our main clergy person for the next little while."

Elliot Berlin, a supporter of Rabbi Schonblum and a regular at Beth Radom, said he has lost faith in the board and that he would have to make a decision together with his family about whether to wait and see how things proceed or resign as a shul member.

One of an estimated 30 people who followed Rabbi Schonblum to Beth Radom from his previous position as ritual director of Pride of Israel Synagogue, Berlin said, "A declaration that there's going to be a healing process does not do it."

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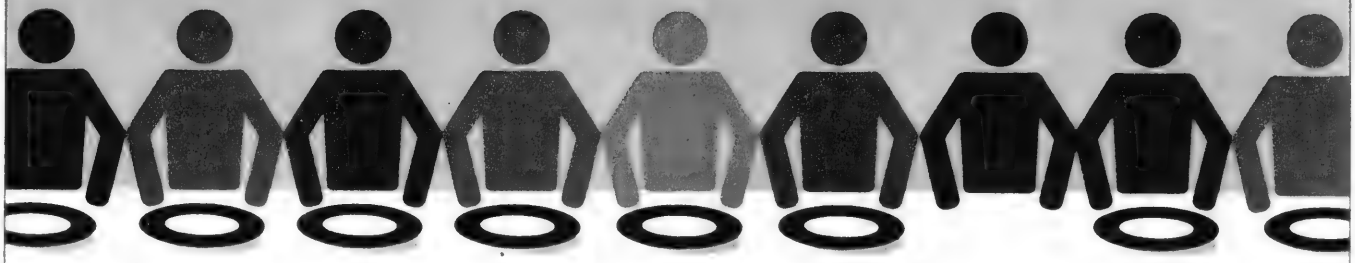

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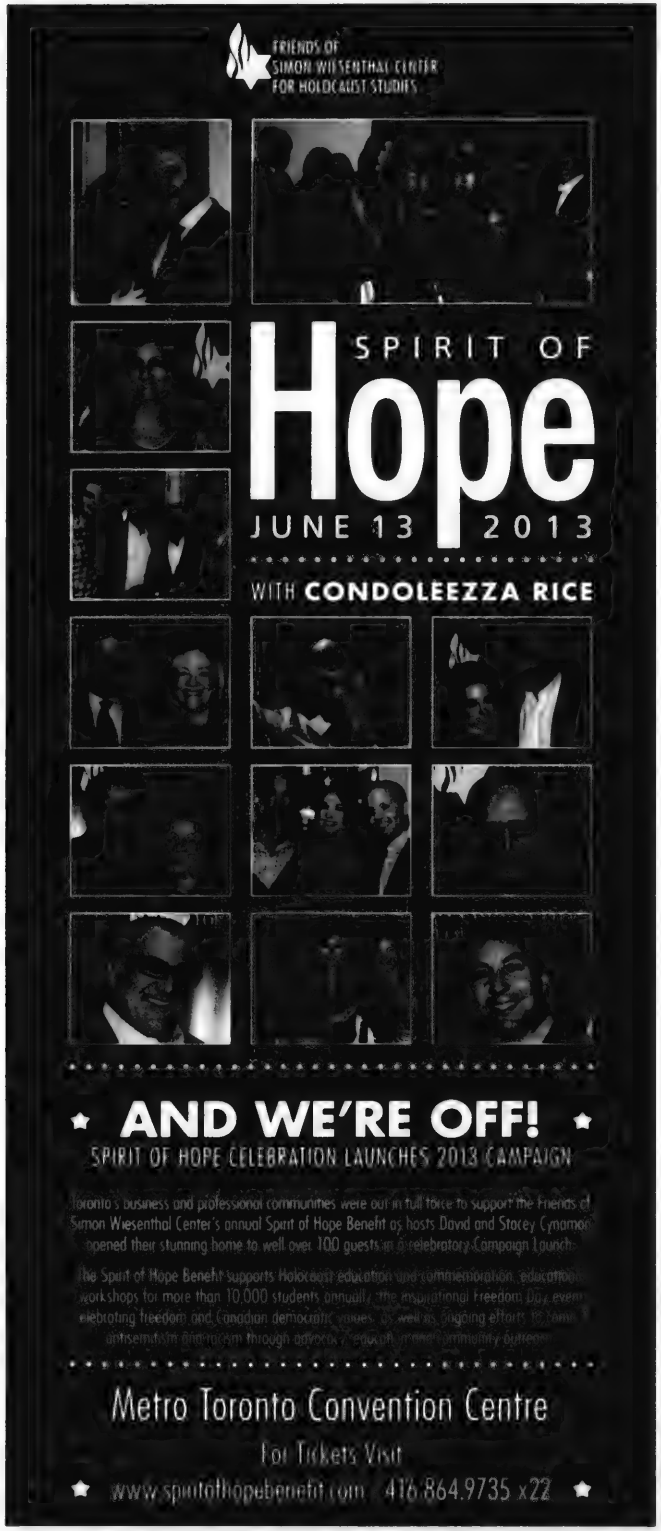
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Young professionals network for a cure

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Leah Carr and Kyle Lichtman were co-chairs of Revolving Tables, the Israel Cancer Research Fund's Next Generation fundraiser. *[Mosoff Photography photo]*

The Israel Cancer Research Fund's (ICRF) Next Generation Division raised $75,000 Feb. 7 to establish two grants for Israeli scientists to do a year of cancer research.

At the third annual Revolving Tables –networking for a cure event at the Bram & Bluma Appel Salon of the Toronto Reference Library, some of the country's leading CEOs, executives and business leaders shared their advice and personal stories with more than 250 of Toronto's young professionals.

The event was held to raise awareness and funds for ICRF. From the pre-dinner cocktail hour on, guests could seek out any of the 32 notable professionals in fields including law, entertainment, consulting, real estate, sports, media and writing, participate in a silent auction, and purchase raffle tickets for prizes such as time with top CEOs.

Revolving Tables participants were asked to list their preferred areas of interest prior to the evening so that they could be placed at dinner tables with moderators they wanted to know more about. Enjoying a three-course dinner with mentors including, among others, Paul Beeston, president of the Toronto Blue Jays; Michael Bryant, politician and former attorney general of Ontario; Paul Godfrey, president and CEO of Postmedia Inc.; Michele Maheux, executive director and COO of the Toronto International Film Festival; Dr. Marla Shapiro, author and medical expert on CTV; John Tory, activist, former leader of the Progressive Conservative party of Ontario and current radio host.

After each course, all participants moved to new tables to sit with a different mentor and get the opportunity to form new relationships and receive career advice.

Event co-chairs were Leah Carr and Kyle Lichtman, both Toronto young professionals. Revolving Tables is based on the idea that engagement by younger individuals now will result in greater awareness and interest in giving back later.

"ICRF is truly a cause worth rallying behind," Lichtman said. "The special ingredient in Revolving Tables' success is that it provides participants with something they truly value – face-to-face interaction and career tips from renowned executives."

Carr added that the evening is popular because it offers "great food, professional growth and social exchange."

Corey Mandell, CEO of Mandell Entertainment Group, also spoke of the evening's benefits for the participants. "Having been a mentor at Revolving Tables for the past two years, and now having the opportunity to host this year, I can truly say this is a unique event that is so beneficial to our young professional community. I have produced thousands of events over my 22 years in the business and never have I seen an event that gives so much back while raising awareness and money for such an important cause," he said.

ICRF was founded in 1975 by a group of American and Canadian medical researchers, oncologists and others committed to the growth and development of Israel and the fight against cancer. Since its inception, ICRF has provided more than 1,900 grants and $45 million to support innovative studies by Israeli scientists.

"Israel has one of the most sophisticated nation-wide electronic medical records in the world," said Dr. Fei-Fei Liu, clinician-scientist radiation oncologist at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto and a senior scientist at the Ontario Cancer Institute. "[Israel] has more than its share of Nobel laureates, and its ability to commercialize discoveries is next to none. Supporting cancer research in Israel is inspiring, because discoveries made in Israel will ultimately benefit everyone in the world."

Participants and mentors see the advantages of the Revolving Tables evening. "For a young professional, networking is such an important skill to practice," said participant Susanna Dawson, senior manager for corporate initiatives at EF Educational Tours. "I really enjoyed hearing about... the mentors' passions that have continued to inspire them throughout their careers."

Asked where passion fits into the business equation, Brent Belzberg, founder and senior managing partner of Torquest Partners, said, "If you love what you do, no matter what it is, and you strive to be the best at it, you will succeed. Wealth is merely a measurement of success. It is not an end in itself."

Fla. police seek info on woman in murder case

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Police in Hallandale Beach, Fla., are trying to identify a woman captured on video outside the townhouse of Donny Pichosky and Rochelle Wise the day the Toronto couple were murdered.

The Jan. 9 video, which was taken by a neighbour's surveillance system, shows a woman carrying an item and walking to the rear of the house just before 11 a.m., then walking back to the front/side area of the house empty-handed.

Police say the woman in the video is not a suspect or a person of interest. She is heavy-set and in the video is wearing a dark jacket, grey pants and white running shoes, and she appears to be blond and either eating or smoking as she walks.

The footage can be found on cjnews.com

Pichosky, 71, and Wise, 66, were found Jan. 10 by a concerned neighbour who had a key to their Venetian Park townhouse. They had failed to show up for a planned lunch and didn't answer repeated phone calls.

Wise was a preschool administrator at Bialik Hebrew Day School and a founding director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp.

Pichosky, her husband of four years, was a retired businessman who volunteered with seniors at Baycrest, and had spent at least 20 years wintering in Florida.

Hallandale police have been tight-lipped about the case and have not released a cause of death. Hallandale Beach police chief Dwayne Flournoy told the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* last month that police believe providing details would "severely hamper" their ability to solve the case.

As part of the investigation, Hallandale police, including Flournoy, travelled to Toronto at the end of January to meet with family members and others who knew the couple. Flournoy has expressed confidence that the murders will be solved, and he assured residents of the condo complex at a Jan. 22 meeting that they are not at increased risk.

Police are asking anyone with information about the identity of the person on the video to call Det. Lane Sauls at 954-457-1438. If you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 954-493-TIPS or via email at www.browardcrimestoppers.org to receive up to a $1,000 reward.

Both volunteers and telemarketers raise funds for UJA

Contrary to what some people may think, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto doesn't rely exclusively on volunteers to solicit donations by phone.

"We've been using telemarketers for years and years to augment the volunteer efforts and professional staff efforts to raise funds," Steven Shulman, UJA's campaign director and counsel, told *The CJN*.

Almost 700 volunteers canvass on behalf of UJA in Toronto, and "well over 1,000" take part in volunteer telethons like the annual Super Sunday, Shulman said.

"I would say we use telethons more than not only any other federation in North America, but more than almost any other philanthropic organization."

However, he noted, telethons have their limits. "Even when you use volunteers, telethons cost money in terms of food, staff time, and in terms of promoting the telethon."

From a financial standpoint, sometimes using telemarketers can be more cost effective, he said. For one thing, he said, they can process calls more quickly because of the technology they use.

Telethons such as Super Sunday, held during the High Holiday period, are "very efficient" because people are ready for the call, and "you have a very motivated volunteer base.

"You can't have the same volunteer base out week after week, month after month."

The federation monitors the cost of using telemarketers, to ensure that the ratio of cost to donations is "something we're comfortable with," Shulman said.

For at least the past year, the federation has been using a Canadian company with offices across the country. The callers are in Canada, but Shulman could not say in which city or cities.

In the past, it has used companies in Israel and in the United States.

Although he has been campaign director for only five years, Shulman said that, even in that short time, it has become more difficult to "get people to [answer] the phone, for anything... That's a challenge."

But "phone efforts are still very important to us," he added. "We bring in over $4 million a year through our phone campaign. The bulk of that is through telethons, augmented by outside contractors."

Also, he said, "what we bring in through the telephone represents between 30 and 40 per cent of the donors, in terms of number of donors. The vast majority of that is through the volunteer telethons."

The key point, Shulman believes, is that, "if we don't reach members of our community, they're not going to have a chance to engage in this collective effort to strengthen the Jewish People through a gift to UJA." —*F.K.*

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February 24-March 17, 2013

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Thomas Lutz, Director, Memorial Museums at the Topography of Terror Foundation

Jan T. Gross, Professor of History, Princeton University
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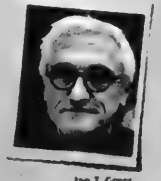
Professor Gross's books include *Neighbors, Fear and Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz.*



Jan T. Gross, Professor of History, Princeton University

The exhibition, reception and lecture are free and open to the public.
Parking passes provided for Nelson Road Parking Lot.

The exhibition, reception and lecture are cosponsored by Osgoode Hall Law School, The Azrieli Foundation, and The Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education - Learning from the Past, Teaching for the Future.

For further information and directions:
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Consumers urged to buy SodaStream at The Bay

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

In the aftermath of a recent demonstration by anti-Israel protesters in front of Winnipeg's downtown Hudson's Bay Company (The Bay) store, Canadians are being urged to buy Israeli-made SodaStream products from the retail giant.

On Feb. 10, some 20 boycott, divestment and sanctions activists from an organization calling itself the Winnipeg Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid gathered in front of The Bay asking consumers not to buy products from the Israeli company, which produces its home carbonation machines in a West Bank factory. The protesters claim the company supports occupation of the Palestinian people.

Buycott Israel, an initiative of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), was started in 2009 to encourage consumers to support Israeli-made products in response to boycott actions.

It put out an alert to pro-Israel Canadians last week in response to the Winnipeg event.

"Buycotters – go stock up on your SodaStream and its associated products! Not in the Winnipeg area? Buy SodaStream at your local Bay and thank them for having this great, innovative product in stock," Buycott Israel said on its website last week.

Protesters advocating against Israeli products made in the occupied territories have targeted The Bay in the past. In 2011 the Ahava cosmetics line was singled out for boycott.

The Bay has consistently refused to be drawn into the politics involved in these campaigns, stating it carries an assortment of products based strictly on business principles and what customers want.

The SodaStream equipment

Sara Saber-Freedman, CIJA's executive vice-president based in Montreal, told *The CJN* last year that the "buycott" initiative has worked "pretty much every time" it has been employed.

In 2009, hundreds of pro-Israel consumers converged on a mid-town Toronto LCBO outlet to counter a call to boycott Israeli wines. Within a few hours, the store had sold out of its stock of about 150 cases of Israeli wine.

In 2011, Saber-Freedman and Buycott Israel helped dispel rumours that The Bay had removed Ahava beauty products from its shelves as part of a boycott request from Canadian anti-Israel group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME).

The Bay had in fact temporarily removed the products from its stores in order to make room for a rebranded Ahava line that it continues to sell.

Last year, the pro-Israel campaign urged Canadians to shop at housewares retailer Bed, Bath & Beyond in response to a call to boycott Israeli-made Ahava cosmetics and SodaStream home carbonation products being sold at the U.S.-based chain.

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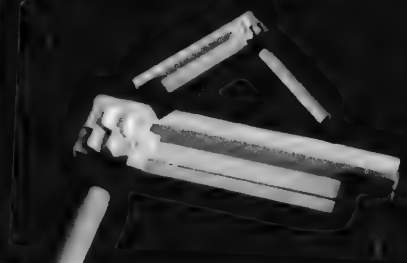

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UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

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Arab democracy could take centuries, or never happen

In light of the turmoil currently facing the Middle East, it would be an understatement to say that the media have had a difficult time making sense of the prospects for "Arab Spring" democracy.

Writing from Tunis about the assassination earlier this month of Chokri Belaid, the leader of the secular opposition, the *Globe and Mail*'s Eric Reguly reflected on dire situation in Tunisia: "[T]he political chaos threatens to tarnish, perhaps even destroy, [the country's] reputation as the model in the Arab world for transition from dictatorship to modern democracy."

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Non-democratic regional movements, specifically those characterized by tribalism (Libya) and Islamic authoritarianism (Egypt), appear to be gaining at the expense of prospects for liberal freedoms.

It was never clear from the start of the Arab Spring that the liberal freedoms we identify with democracy in the West – including individual rights and respect for minority rights – were the aspirations shared by the majority of those seeking freedom from tyranny in the Middle East. Indeed, most (if not all) of the societies in question remain patriarchal and religiously conservative.

Still, numerous experts continue to argue that the Arab Spring remains the harbinger of "real" democracy (that is, beyond the mere mechanics of elections). Those same analysts caution that, like other historical struggles for freedom, this will take time and involve setbacks.

In the Feb. 13 *Times of Israel*, Elhanan Miller interviewed Yigal Carmon, founder and president of the Middle East Media and Research Institute (MEMRI), which monitors and translates the Arab and Muslim media in the region. Miller points out that Carmon, who has studied the Middle East for decades, considers it racist to claim that Arabs cannot build democratic societies.

The challenge, however, is that the move to such a political order could take a very long time – measured in centuries. As Carmon notes: "There are no shortcuts in history. Europe took hundreds of years to agree on a progressive set of values."

According to Miller, "Carmon scoffs at the notion that a monolithic Islam has taken root in the Arab world… Far from an amorphous 'Islam' taking power, states are rapidly disintegrating into smaller structures representing region, tribe, religion and ethnic group."

Yigal Carmon

Coincidentally, Tom Friedman, in the *New York Times* (Feb. 10), drew attention to similar points about time frames and these smaller structures. Writing from New Delhi, but looking at the broader region, Friedman wrote: "Indian officials tend to think in centuries, not months, and they look at the map of the Middle East without any of the British-drawn colonial borders [following World War I]...

"'If you want to understand this region, just take out a map from the Ganges to the Nile and remove the British lines,' remarked M. J. Akbar, the veteran Indian Muslim journalist and author. It takes you back to the true undercurrents of history that have long ruled the Middle East 'and to interests defined by people and tribes and not just governments."

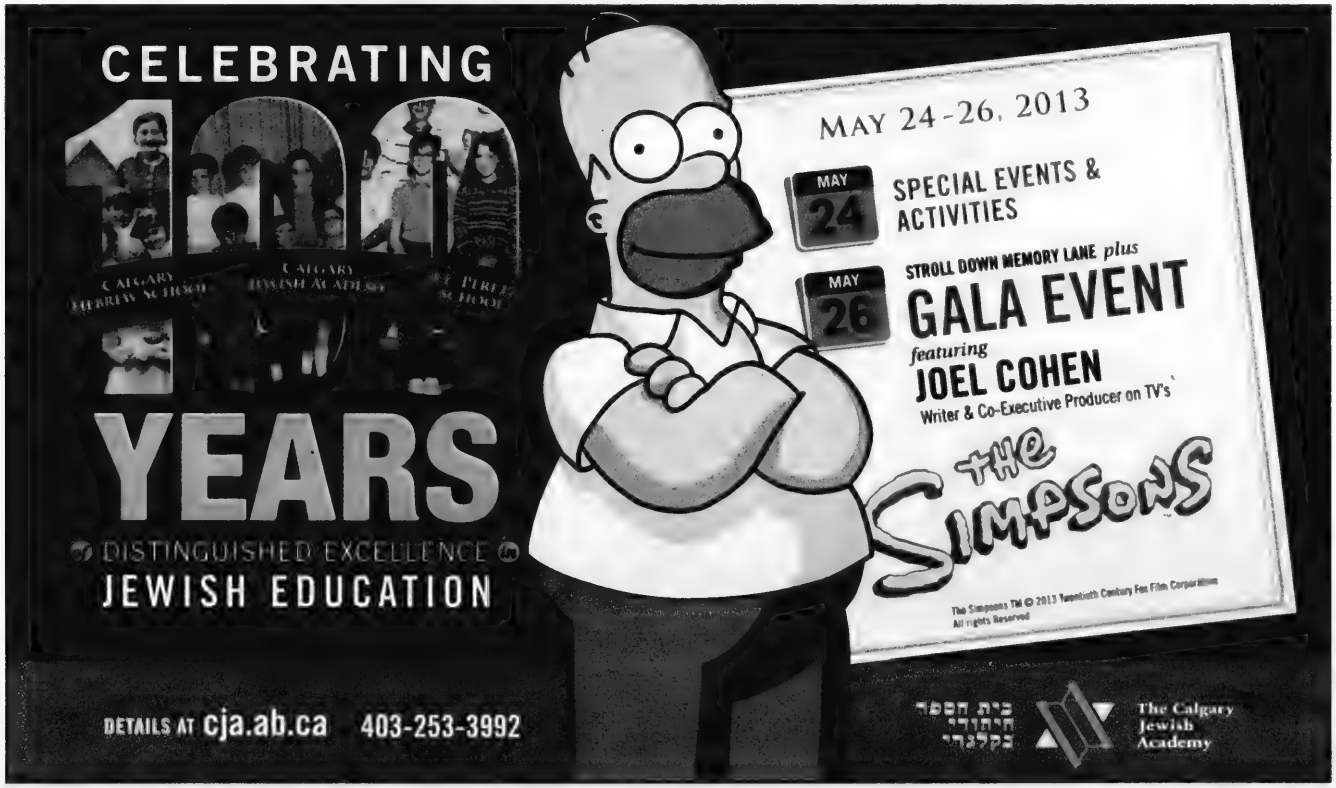
The references here to region, tribe and religion correspond with Carmon's thoughts. But, significantly, there is no indication that they hold the promise for any movement to democracy. Just the opposite appears to be the case, given the atavism, the return to an earlier order, to which Friedman alludes.

"So from India, the struggle in Syria looks like just another chapter in the long-running Sunni-Shiite civil war," which never ends but can only be "suppressed," he remarks.

Friedman foresees a Syria that breaks apart into Sunni and (Shiite-related) Alawite regions. He also reminds us that a similar process is already underway in Iraq, where "deep historical currents were at play there – Sunnis versus Shiites and Kurds versus Arabs."

We may not have adequate perspective to see what lies ahead for the Arab Spring. And we certainly don't have centuries to find out. What seems fair to say, however, is that early signs do not look promising.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.



Liver transplant recipient urges others to donate

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Sam Marr found a hero – an anonymous donor who came forward to give him part of her or his liver.

"There was a time where my future didn't look so good," said the 51-year-old father of two. "Now it looks very good."

After most of a year on the transplant waiting list, in early November, he got the call that someone was a match, and he would go through a living-person liver transplant on Nov. 21.

Although he can't be sure how this donor found him, he said it was likely they heard his story from his wife, Susan, who wrote an email to friends and family pleading with them to check if their liver would be a match for Marr. The letter was forwarded on to a number of people, including *The CJN*.

Sam Marr

A living-person liver transplant involves a surgery that can take up to 10 hours in which a living person donates a portion of their liver. Often, several months after the transplant, the liver will regenerate to its original size. The portion inside the recipient also regenerates, though not quite to its original functioning capacity.

Already, just three months after the surgery, Marr said he feels much stronger and he hopes to return to his law office next month.

He said he wants people to know that he's on the road to recovery.

He especially wants to give his thanks to the people who supported him, whether they passed on his story online, in person or in synagogue, as well as to the people who treated him in Toronto General Hospital.

His experience has inspired him to get involved in organ donation awareness.

"There's not enough organ donation in our country," he said. In particular, he added, people need to know about live donations. "I think more people would do it if they knew about it."

He also hopes to call on the government to give a reward to the family of deceased organ donors. When you give a charitable donation, you get a tax receipt, he pointed out.

"One of the greatest donations a person could give when they're dead is to give their organs away," he said. "The estate and family should benefit from their generosity. I think it's the right thing to do."

Marr said he would remind anybody waiting for a transplant to have faith in the medical system. The surgery is difficult, but the doctors are tremendous. Additionally, he recommends finding a way to share their story to encourage people to be tested as a match.

People who are waiting for a match "have to figure out a way to try to spread the word," he said after a number of people came forward to be tested following his publicity campaign. "There's nothing special about me – I think other people would [then] have the same opportunities."

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'The government is building a façade of democracy'

Continued from page 3

A Jan. 31 report in *Spiegel Online* seems to confirm Csillag's assertions that the boundaries between Fidesz and Jobbik's ideologies "are blurring."

Csillag, who acknowledged that his speaking out and raising an alarm might endanger him, pointed out that while Orban was in opposition, he began setting up grassroots, nationalistic groups to promote a pure Hungary.

Many of the "main personalities" of those groups have since become influential members of Jobbik, he said.

The reason Orban set up the civilian groups was to discredit the then-ruling Hungarian Socialist Party and those on the left by labeling them anti-Hungarian, according to Csillag.

Orban's friend and Fidesz co-founder, prominent Hungarian social commentator Zsolt Bayer, wrote in the daily *Magyar Hirlap* newspaper in January that Roma are "unfit for coexistence. They are not fit to live among people. These Roma are animals, and they behave like animals. These animals shouldn't be allowed to exist. In no way. That needs to be solved. They should be stamped out – immediately and regardless of the method."

Neither Orban nor any other Fidesz member denounced the article.

In the past, Bayer has also referred to Jews as "stinking excrement called something like Cohen," according to the World Jewish Congress.

Members of Fidesz have also publicly demonstrated support for Miklos Horthy, the World War II-era Hungarian prime minister who helped the Nazis murder tens of thousands of the country's Jews and Roma.

Last November, Jobbik member Marton Gyongyosi called for Jews to be registered on lists as threats to national security. Massive protests broke out in Budapest, prompting Gyongyosi to apologize and say his remarks were misinterpreted.

However, the parliamentarian was never disciplined for his comments.

Orban's office eventually denounced Gyongyosi's remarks, though it only did so 16 hours after the comments were uttered. Jewish groups in Hungary were critical of the delay.

Hungarian Holocaust survivor and executive director of the Hungarian Jewish Congregations' Association said the event and lack of action by Fidesz and Jobbik made Hungary "the shame of Europe."

Csillag said Fidesz has also slowly been curtailing freedom of the press and free speech, saying that most of the country's TV and radio stations are increasingly falling under the control of the government and provoking anger at anyone who dares speak out against it.

"My activities aren't big enough to be a threat to the government," he said, noting that he's usually out on the streets about three times a week to document "the decline in democracy" in Hungary.

"There's only one radio station that you could still consider to be 'free', and that's only because of international media scrutiny," Csillag said.

"The government is building a façade of democracy, behind that they are destroying basic rights. They are giving Hungarians the option to focus their economic fears through hate."

The net result, he said, is similar to what transpired in prewar Nazi Germany, where Roma and Jews were scapegoated for all of the country's problems.

Csillag said that while there are still "plenty of goodwilled people" in Hungary, power resides with Fidesz, which continues to foment "anti-foreigner sentiment.

"This is not just against Roma. It's also against Jews," he said.

"I tell my daughter she needs to find a way to leave Hungary and find a more stable place to live. If I am being honest, I cannot tell my children that Hungary will be a good place to live in the coming years. I tell them to prepare to leave at any moment" Csillag added.

"The [official] Jewish community organizations must stop making compromises and speak much more loudly now. They believe they only have Jobbik to fear, but they should know better, that Fidesz is also the danger."

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A mother and her son march in the annual Purim Ad Loyodah parade in Tel Aviv. *[Israel Sun photo]*

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GETTING READY TO CELEBRATE

Children in Israel test their costumes ahead of the holiday. *[Flash90 photo]*

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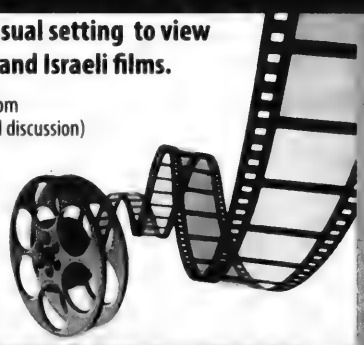

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דער יידיש ווינקל

דזשערי קעין

חתן איינשטיין און אפענהיימער האבן נעבעטן פרעזידענט רוזוועלט אז ער זאל נעבן דעולויבענישן צו בריוו די פרשטע אטאמישע באמבע האם ליסע מייטנער נעזאגט –"ניין איך וועל נישט ארבעטן צו מאכן א באמבע!"

חער איז ליסע מיטנער?

איינשטיין האט איר נעוועזן די "דייטשישע מארי קורי". מיטנער איז נעווען א חעלט בארימטע יאדער פיסיקער (נוקליאר פיזיסיסט), וואס האט נעהעלפט ארויפדעקן אוראניום פיוזשן. אבער חען עס איז נעקומען צו ארבעטן אין דער מאנהאטן פראיעקט, צו בריוו אן אטאמישע באמבע, האט זי דערקלערט "ניין." זי איז נישט נאכנעגנגן דעם זעלבן חעג חי פיל פון אירע אנדערע יידישע פיזיקער פרייוד וואס זיינען אנטלאפן פון די נאצים. זי, אן האט פארשטאנען חי נעפערלעך אזוא וואקן איז, חיפל מענטשן וואלטן נעחאלן פארבריוט אין אן אטאמישן פייער ארוב די אמעריקאנער וואלטן די באמבע נעווארפן.

די האט ארוך גוט נעווזסט אז איר אמיליקע דיישישע מיטארבעטער איז פיזיק האבן שוין אנגעהייבן ארבעטן צו שפאלטן דעם אטאם פאר א וואסן וואס האט נעהאט א פאטענציעל צו נעבן היטלער א נעחיגע איבער די לענדער אליירט קענן די נאצים.

מייטנער, געבארן אין וין אין 1878, האט גראדוירט אין 1905מיט א דאקטאראט אין פיזיק פון דער וויענר אוניווערסיטעט. אין 1917 איז זי איבערגעפארן קיין בערלין וווּ זי איז נעוואָרן אן אסיסטאנט צו דער חעלט בארימטער וויסנשאפטלער מאקס פלאנק. די איז נעחתן די ערשטע פרוי וואס ער האט נעלאסט מיטארבעטן מיט אים.

אין 1926 איז מייטנר נעוואָרן די ערשטע פרוי אין דייטשלאנד צו חערן א פול פראפעסאר אין פיזיק אין דער קיוזער חילהעלם אינסטיטוט. דאָרטן האט זי נאָענט מיטנעארבעט מיט אטא האן צו אנטדעקן נוקליער פיוזשן–וואס פונדאמענט צו מאכן א באמבע. האן, וואס האט נעארבעט פאר די נאצים דורך די יאָרן פון דער צווייטער וועלט קריג אין האט נעוווּנען א נאבעל פרעמיע אין 1945, האט מייטנערן נישט דערמאנט חי א וויכטיקע מיט-ארבעטער אין שוחף.

איינשטיין אין פיל אנדערע יידישע פיזיקער וויינען פרי אנטלאפן פון נאצי דייטשלאנד אבער ליטנער איז נעבליבן ביז 1938. די איז אנטלאפן קיין שוועדן וווּ זי האט נעוווינט פאר די נעקסטע 22 יאר. דורך אלע די יארן האט זי קארעספאנדירט מיט אטא האן – עם נעהאלטן חי א פריינד אפילי חען זיין נישט אנערקענן די וועגרעג פון איר ארבעט אויף נוקליער פיוזשן וואס איז חיי נעטאן.

נאך איר טויט אין 1968 האבן וויסענשאפטלער איר נעגעבן כבוד. די האבן נעגעבן חאם מען האט איינע פון די ניי כעמישע עלעמענטן חאם מען האט נעפונען –"מייטנעריום." אסטראמיקער האבן אויך צוגעשטעלט איר נאמען צו קראטערעם אויף דער לבנה און אויף דער פלאנעט ונעפון.

אנדערע האבן וויידערגעשטאנען די נאצים מיט חאפן אין די העט. ליסע מייטנער, א יידישע פרוי, א חעלט בארימטע פיזיקער, האט וויידערגעשטנאן מראליש, נישט נאר די היטלעריסטן אבער אויך די פון אירע יידישע פיזיקער פרייוד וואס האבן נעבויט די אטאמישע באמבע.

אויב איר האם נעדאנקען וועגן אנדערע וויינקל שויבכם דורך פאקס אדער בליץ-פאקס: info@cjnews.com

The romance of archeological discovery

One of the enjoyable things about writing this column is that I'm able to discuss some amazing archeological discoveries, especially as they pertain to the history of Israel. These discoveries have taken different forms. Some involve ancient writings, such as those found at Mari, Ugarit, and the Dead Sea. Others are of a more monumental and architectural variety, such as the massive gates found at Tel Dan and Ashkelon.

All of which raises the question, what constitutes an amazing discovery? Obviously, these finds must generate excitement to catch the public's attention. Often these discoveries are visually captivating and may have an element of a monumental nature attached to them, such as the aforementioned city gates, while at other times the appeal may be on a more emotional level, such as the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Rarely does one run across a find that combines these elements. But such is the case with the discovery of a fourth- to sixth-century CE monumental late Roman synagogue with an inscribed mosaic floor, at Tel Huqoq in the Galilee this past summer, by a team led by professor Jodi Magness, holder of the Kenan Chair for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who has been assisted by professor Michael Chazan, head of the Archaeology Centre at the University of Toronto.

It was Chazan who solicited my involvement in the project when he asked me, in my capacity as president of the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies, if I could help raise the funds for U of T's participation in this

Past Forward

Alex Gropper

worthwhile archeological endeavour.

It was a serendipitous moment since at the time I was involved with the Israeli and Italian consulates in looking for a worthwhile event for the Friendship Project celebrating the close co-operation between our two communities. What could be more ecumenical than to sponsor the excavation of a late Roman synagogue in the Galilee?

Such was the beginning of my involvement in what would become the major discovery of this past summer. It was important enough for Magness to be asked to deliver the keynote lecture at the Archaeological Institute of America's annual meeting a few weeks ago.

So what was it that caught the imagination about the synagogue and mosaic floor at Tel Huqoq? Needless to say, it was visually appealing. It was both unexpected and unusual for such a spectacular find to be discovered in an area that was off the beaten track.

Ultimately, it is the romance of discovery that catches the public imagination. Although some might think that the discovery of another synagogue in Israel is not a "big deal," I would like to extend a personal invitation to come and hear the charismatic excavator, Jodi Magness, speak on March 14 at 7:15 p.m., in Alumni Hall, 121 St. Joseph St., Room 400, at St. Michael's College, U of T, explaining why it is!

No poppy. No prunes. No problem.

For some aficionados, a hamantash just isn't a hamantash unless it's filled to the brim with a poppy seed or prune filling. And sure, traditionalists abound. But so do advocates of modern fillings that would make your bubbie's jaw drop.

Like at Tel Aviv's Lehamim Bakery, which offers hamantashen crammed full of amaretto, meringue with cream, marshmallows, strawberries and orange jam, and pistachio with rosewater. As the *New York Times* found, "The bakery uses butter in its dough, unusual for a kosher bakery, and makes about a dozen types, like one with spelt flour filled with sugar-free preserves, and savory quiche-like versions stuffed with potatoes and sesame seeds or feta cheese and beets." **[http://bit.ly/purimfood10]**

Esther, I've a feeling we're not in Shushan any more!

Now it's your turn. You can start with some relatively modest variations including Raspberry, Apricot or Coconut-Chocolate-Hazelnut. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood11]** From there, how about some Pecan Pie Hamantashen? **[http://bit.ly/purimfood12]**

Now you're ready for something a bit more daring such as Orange-Spiked or Poppy-Pecan-Honey (Shh! I snuck in a poppy-seed recipe.) **[http://bit.ly/purimfood13]** Or Cream Cheese or Raisin Almond or some of the more than 60 other recipes at the Jewish-food hamantashen archives. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood14]** But perhaps not too daring. If you're planning on leaving some hamantashen on *my* doorstep, I think I'll pass on the beef- and onion filled varieties, thank you very much. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood15]**

Chocolate has become almost as traditional as prune or poppy-seed hamantashen. But here's a recipe with a difference. These Chocolate-Peanut Butter Hamantashen actually infuse the chocolate into the dough, giving them a deep brown hue. And the cookie's pocket cradles the peanut-butter filling that is

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

crowned with a dab strawberry jam. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood16]**

I have always found hamantashen pretty easy to manoeuvre: (1) Place in hand. (2) Eat. But here are two variations that actually have the treats mounted them on sticks. Hamantashen Truffle Pops are triangular cake pops that call for a generous supply of Oreo cookies. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood17]**

And in a case of Chanukah meets Purim, there is the unbelievable Deep-Fried Hamantashen on a Stick! It actually looks pretty simple. Take one standard hamantash. Dip it in funnel cake mix. Boil up some vegetable oil. Deep fry. Loosen your belt. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood18]**

I don't know whether Deborah Biskin has ever dined on deep-fried hamantashen. But I do know that she has written a charming memoir about the day she and her daughters stumbled on the best filling possible. **[http://bit.ly/purimfood19]**

"I suggested we use the traditional prune and poppy fillings, but Rachel and Jessica crinkled up their noses... I then hit on it: 'How about chocolate?'... Hours later, piles of hamantashen were strewn around the kitchen, some sticky with filling that leaked out the sides, some slightly burned and others just funny looking. I felt a sense of pride. My girls and I were actually doing a mitzvah together. Our results certainly were not esthetically or gastronomically perfect, but it came from the heart... I now realize that the flavour of the fruit or type of jam filling is irrelevant. The best hamantashen in the world are those filled with love."

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Transcending antisemitism with humour

Rabbi Jeffrey Ableser

The esteemed chassidic Rabbi Naftali Horowitz of Ropschitz (1760–1827) is credited with giving the shortest-ever Shabbat sermon. The story is told that one Shabbat, he had been deep in thought and meditation for many days, alone in his study. He was summoned by his students at the appropriate time to deliver his weekly drashah on the Torah portion.

Rabbi Naftali appeared before the congregation. He began his sermon.

"We are told that a drashah should include three qualities: it should be true, it should be brief, and it should have the weekly Torah portion as its theme. I do not know what week it is, or for that matter, the weekly portion. This is true, it is brief, and it has the Torah portion as its theme. Amen."

When I was asked, many months ago, to contribute a rabbinic reflection for this week, I was not told what the portion would be, but I was told that it would be in the issue preceding Purim. Purim has for centuries been a day to celebrate Jewish humour. It is a day devoted to wine-drenched happiness. There's a rich tradition of creating Purim plays, or spiels, to mark the occasion. Before the modern era, when Jews have had a wildly disproportionate role is writing comedy for Broadway, radio and television, Purim spiels were the primary outlet for writing extended comedy pieces.

Where does Jewish humour come from? Freud and others felt it came about as a defence mechanism developed over generations of Jewish suffering. While it would be im-

Rabbinic Reflections

pertinent to question these theories, I believe there's another crucial factor that has contributed to the richness of Jewish humour. Humour comes about when we see the world from two mutually exclusive perspectives. Because Jews have lived as a minority in most of the countries of our sojourn, we were usually forced to see the world through "Jewish eyes" as well as the eyes of the majority culture. Both sets of eyes, and the values embedded in their worldviews, were seen to be true. We may have been in the minority, even an oppressed minority, but the Jewish way of looking at the world was at least as right as the view of the majority. When these worldviews collide, one can often encounter a joke.

(This theory of incongruity also explains why Canadians are disproportionately represented in comedy circles. In the words of comedian Martin Short, the reason why so many Canadians are funny is that Americans watch American television, and Canadians watch American television.)

Purim affords us a series of opportunities for half-crazed creativity that comes just once a year. From choosing and designing our Purim costume to the voices and sound effects we employ in the Megillah reading, and from the choice of fillings for our hamantashen to the most creative modes of drowning out the name of Haman, we each find ways to make the day our own.

Purim teaches us that sometimes the best way to confront antisemitism is by transcending it through humour.

Rabbi Jeffrey Ableser is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth El of Windsor, Ont.

Have a soulful Purim

Purim is a much misunderstood Jewish holiday. On the one hand, it's understood as an extremely joyous time for children. There are costumes and treat bags, and permission to boo and hiss while sitting in a synagogue listening to the chanting of a Jewish text. All other times, children are admonished to be silent and solemn while in the sanctuary, but not on Purim – the rowdier the better.

The adults also dress up, but not everyone feels the meaningfulness of costumes. The treat bags can become onerous when they start to number in the dozens. The booing and hissing in synagogue can get out of hand and trigger a headache. There is a commandment to drink, which of course raises logistical issues of driving home and dealing with the hangover the next morning. Somehow, it's lost its childish charm.

When we look at Purim, it seems to be entirely centred around the physical: the dress, the drink, the treats, hearing the Megillah, booing and hissing, and let's not forget the seudah, the Purim feast of food.

Where is the soulful aspect of the holiday? Where is the meditation and the reflection and the repentance? What Jewish holiday would only celebrate with the physical and not include a balance with the spiritual?

Actually, the spiritual side of Purim anticipates the physical side of the holiday. In other words, it occurs the day before Purim on

Midrashic Moments

Rachael Turkienicz

the Fast of Esther. Historically, the fast is to commemorate Esther's three-day fast, during which she needed to decide if she was Persian first or Jewish first. She needed to question if her own safety was enough or if she should worry about her people. She needed to ask the tough, soulful questions, and only with the proper answers was Purim possible.

There's no question that Purim represents the physical survival of the Jewish people in the face of outrageous odds. The topsy-turvyness of the holiday reminds us of the topsy-turvyness of our reality in a political materialistic world devoid of spirituality. Purim is, in fact, a tremendously adult holiday, but only if we recognize its dynamic.

Whether you choose to fast on the Fast of Esther or not, it's crucial to take some time on that day to remember the fundamental questions of our soul. As Esther asked herself, who are you as a Jew? Are you an island or part of a greater nation, and can you remain silent in the face of injustice?

Without those moments, Purim becomes a holiday of the body, that element of ourselves that God created from the lower realms, the earth. The midrash teaches us that humanity is the juncture point between the upper realms, the soul, and the lower realms, the body. Only through a balance of the two can peace be brought into the world.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

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What's New

By LILA SARICK

Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News
for the :-) generation

Deadline reminder: Feb. 25 is the deadline for the issue of March 7 and March 4 is the deadline for the issue of March 14. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 21

SOCIAL MEDIA AND JOBS

JVS Toronto presents a workshop on using social media for the job search, 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., Bathurst-Finch Hub, 540 Finch Ave. W. 416-649-1696 or 416-649-3406.

JVS presents a panel with leaders in the business and media world on the job market, **Jonathan Kay**, the *National Post*, **Mike Van Doorn**, Scotiabank, **Greg George**, Monster.ca, 6 p.m., 540 Finch Ave. W.

Saturday, Feb. 23

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation, a Conservative egalitarian congregation serving Mississauga, Oakville and Burlington, meets 10 a.m. in Oakville. A guest speaker from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton will speak after services. 905-901-9889 or www.bnaishalom.ca.

Monday, Feb. 25

FALSEHOODS IN THE TORAH

Join Mekorot for "Peace or Justice: Falsehood in the Torah," taught by **Shayna Kravetz**, Feb. 25-March 11, 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-877-2050.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Rabbi Micah Streiffer leads a discussion of Pirkei Avot, noon, Temple Kol Ami, 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill.

ESTHER COMES OUT

A discussion/study session based on the writings of Jewish queer scholars, sponsored by Kulanu Toronto, will be held at Congregation Darchei Noam, 864 Sheppard Ave. W., 7 p.m. RSVP kulanoto.education@gmail.com

LIVING A JEWISH LIFE

"What Does It Mean To Live a Jewish Life," is the topic of a lecture at the Chai Centre, 8:30 p.m., 1089 Spadina Ave. info@thechaicentre.com. $18.

Tuesday, Feb. 26

LOVE AND ANARCHY

Debbie Rose presents more than 1,000 letters and postcards belonging to her great-great-uncle, **Leon Malmed**, who was a lover of activist **Emma Goldman**, 7 p.m., Beit Zatoun, 612 Markham St.

PRE-PESACH WINE TASTING

Beth Jacob Synagogue, Toronto holds a pre-Pesach wine tasting, 7:30 p.m. RSVP by Feb. 22. Call 416-638-5955 or events@bethjacob.org.

HOLLYWOOD'S COMPOSERS

Jordan Klapman presents and performs "Hollywood's Oscar-Winning Jewish Songs, from 1960 to the Present," Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 8 p.m.

TUESDAYS WITH LARRY

Beth Tikvah Synagogue shows the film *The Boys-The Sherman Boys Story*, 2 p.m. $5.

Wednesday, Feb. 27

RAISING A MENSCH

Dr. Audrey Huberman discusses "The 10 Commandments of Raising a Mensch," 7 p.m., Beth David Synagogue. $15/$20.

THEATRE OUTING

Beth Sholom Chai Society is going to see *Jacob and Jack*. $30

Continued on page 27

HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE
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Sunday, March 3, 2013 - 7:30 p.m.

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1950 Bathurst Street Toronto, Ontario

Continued from page 26

for ticket and bus. RSVP **Rivy** 416-783-6103, ext. 228.

JEWS IN FILM

Shlomo Shwartzberg discusses "The Image of Jews in Film: Remarkable Movies, Part 1," Beth Tzedec synagogue. Dessert 1:30; lecture at 2 p.m.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Missionary Proof Texts- Daniel's 70 Weeks," 8 p.m., Beth Torah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, Feb. 28

RESUMÉ CRITIQUE

JVS Toronto offers one-on-one resumé critique/coaching every other Thursday, 540 Finch Ave. W. By appointment only, 416-649-1700. Free.

Other News

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA

Am Shalom Synagogue of Barrie hosts a Shabbat Across Canada dinner, March 1. RSVP 705-792-3949 by Feb. 21.

Beth Emeth Synagogue hosts a Shabbat dinner with Israeli university students. March 1. RSVP by Feb. 26, 416-633-3838.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to deliver meals to seniors. Call **Karen Sacke** at Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

Volunteers are needed by Jewish hospice program to visit and support individuals with a life-threatening illness and their families. Volunteers receive a 30-hour training program that starts Feb. 25. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or lspringer@circleofcare.com.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

PURIM FUN

Pride of Israel Synagogue holds a Purim Extravaganza with children's entertainer **Lenny Graf. Feb. 23**, 6:45 p.m. Pre-register at 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Beth Emeth Synagogue Players present *Motown Megilla* **Feb. 23**, 8 p.m., and **Feb. 24**, 2 p.m. Tickets $5. 416-633-3838.

Beth Jacob Synagogue holds a Purim party **Feb. 24**, 11:30 a.m. Call 416-638-5955 to reserve.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds an adult Purim party at the shul, **Feb. 23**, 7 p.m. A youth carnival will be held **Feb. 24**, 1:30 p.m. $10/$20.

Chabad of Markham presents Cirque de Purim, **Feb. 24**, 2:30 p.m., with acrobatic group Zero Gravity. Megillah at 2 p.m. $13/$9. 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

City Shul holds a family Megillah reading and party, **Feb. 23**, 6 p.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St.

Morris Winchevsky School holds a family Purim celebration, **Feb. 24**, 11 a.m., 918 Bathurst St. $10/$5.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, holds family Purim festival, **Feb. 24**, 10:15 a.m., St. Andrew's Junior High School, 131 Fenn Ave. Purim Showcase for Na'amat on **Feb. 24**, 5 p.m., Pilot Tavern, 22 Cumberland Ave. $25/$10. 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Danforth Jewish Circle holds Purim festival, **Feb. 24**, 2 p.m., Eastminster Hurndale Room, 310 Danforth Ave. RSVP info@djc.com.

Temple Sinai presents *iPurim*, an interactive Purim comedy, **Feb. 23**, 7 p.m. **Feb. 24**, Family day at the Toronto Zoo, Purim in ZOOshan, 9:30 a.m. To reserve, call 416-487-3281.

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation holds a Megillat Esther reading by women for women, **Feb. 24,** 10 a.m.

Or Hadash holds a Megillah reading and hamantashen bake-off **Feb. 23,** 7 p.m. 451 Botsford St. Newmarket. 905-898-2220.

Toronto Partnership Minyan holds a community-wide Purim service, **Feb. 23,** 7:45 p.m, Toronto Heschel School, 819 Sheppard Ave. W. (Bring your own Megillah.)

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents *The Ultimate Purim Musical*, **Feb. 23,** 8:15 p.m., **Feb. 24,** 2 p.m., 7 p.m. For tickets, call 416-781-3511.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Casino Royale evening **Feb. 23**, Megillah reading at 6:30 p.m., program to follow. **Feb. 24**, carnival at 11 a.m. $7/$12. RSVP for all events, 416-221-3433.

JF&CS GROUPS

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors Frank Simkevitz on "The Israel Nobody Talks About," 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim, Feb. 28. RSVP **Tammy** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Temple Sinai Social Club 65+ Sylvia Goldenblatt reviews *The Imposter Bride*, Feb. 21, 1:30 p.m. $7/$9. 416-487-3281.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, March 13. Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Feb. 26, **Robert Shechter** on "European Odyssey," 10 a.m.; Feb. 27, Russian Samovar Day, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.; Feb. 28, **Barry Shainbaum** on "Inspiration through Music," 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons for Seniors is a discussion group meeting at Beth Tzedec Synagogue, March 11, 1:30 p.m.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Register now. Social worker **Phyllis Flen** facilitates positive-aging group. 4 sessions, starts March 5.

Support group for Russian-speaking seniors. Call 416-635-2900 ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Purim Carnival and Circus Show, Feb. 24, 9:30 a.m. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Opera with **Iain Scott** runs Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Feb. 21, *Eugene Onegin*.

Film lectures on "Produced and Abandoned Films," with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Shalom Singers resumes Feb. 21, 10 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Purim carnival Feb. 24, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. features games, musicians and Megillah reading. $10.

Jordan Swartz offers a vegetarian cooking class, with the food being shared with the hungry, Feb. 27, 7 p.m. Ext. 0.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers, Feb. 25-April 29, 7 p.m.

Register now for the MNJCC Theatre Lab, March 7-May 30. Develop skills while rehearsing pieces from new Jewish theatre.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Photos by Sheridan College graduates are in the gallery till March 17. Opening reception Feb. 21, 7 p.m.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

How-to-Passover Seder with **Noam Zion,** author of *A Different Night: The Family Participation Hagaddah*, March 3, 9:30 a.m.

60X60 Dance Toronto, presented by **Tova Kardonne** and Vox Novus, March 10, 8 p.m., at the Al Green Theatre. It links 60 composition and dance works by 60 different composers and choreographers each 60 seconds long, in a 1-hour performance. $20.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Jewish Parenting Class sponsored by Beit Rayim Synagogue, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3025.

Seniors' bagel breakfast, March 15, 9 a.m. Seniors coffee hour, March 1, 1:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

Medical students sing and dance in annual fundraiser

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

On a frigid Sunday night in February, David Sheps is at Starbucks studying for a major exam. After Starbucks closes he moves to Tim Hortons, explaining that he can concentrate better with the background noise.

The first-year medical student says he's still adjusting to the heavy academic workload and he doesn't expect to get much sleep before the next day's exam.

Despite the demands of medical school at the University of Toronto, Sheps is still finding time to act and sing in Daffydil, the musical production put on annually by students at U of T's faculty of medicine. "I jumped at the chance to do it."

The show, an original theatrical production written, performed, directed and produced by faculty of medicine students, has been a U of T tradition for more than 100 years. In recent years, the show has been a fundraiser for cancer, and to date it has raised more than $600,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Many Jewish students are involved in the show, from performing on stage to producing and fundraising. Daffydil 2013 runs from Feb. 20 to 23 at Hart House Theatre.

Sheps, who grew up in Thornhill, Ont., has been acting and singing for years. He attended summer theatre camps, he studied acoustic guitar and in Grade 12, he was in his high school's musical production.

As an undergraduate at York University, he participated in Vanier College Productions, acting in stage plays, doing improv theatre and singing in coffee houses.

Sheps says when he applied to medical school, he knew he wanted to be in Daffydil. "I even mentioned that in my interview."

He says he knew about the show from his uncle, Dr. Franklin Sheps, who had also been a participant.

Elan Panov, a second-year U of T medical student, had also heard about Daffydil when he was growing up. His mother, Dr. Rochelle Schwartz, had been one of the performers. "She always talked about Daffydil and she raved about the performers.

"When I was accepted to medical school, I knew I wanted to be a part of the show in one way or another. The problem is, I have zero talent. I can't act. I can't sing and I can't dance. The logical choice was to get involved in fundraising."

Panov says there were two reasons to do fundraising. Through his charitable work, he has acquired significant experience in promoting ticket sales and finding corporate sponsorships.

His second reason is personal. Since the production raises money for cancer, it was important for him to get involved to show support for a close family member who has cancer. "This is a way of helping my family member."

Second-year student David Ben-Israel, the co-producer of the show, says his "vision for the show" was to draw more awareness to cancer. "I wanted to make the event more cancer-focused."

To that end, he had planned to have a field trip to a cancer research centre for the band and cast, but he says it ended up being too difficult to organize a visit for so many people.

However, he did find a cancer survivor who will speak about his experience before the shows. "It's an opportunity for advocacy and for people to think about their support for the cause," Ben-Israel says.

He also made an effort to encourage students in the other schools in the faculty of medicine, such as occupational and physiotherapy and speech pathology, to participate in Daffydil.

When he saw the shows last year, he says he was inspired to get involved. As he has no previous experience acting, he ended up becoming a co-producer.

Ben-Israel has multiple responsibilities in this position. "If there's an artistic dispute, myself or the other co-producer mediate situation. We try to remain impartial."

However, sometimes he's just the chief schlepper, running errands such as printing sheet music and finding props.

As much as he'd love to be performing, Ben-Israel says co-producing has been a "wonderful learning experience in being a leader."

He says the production includes a main cast of 10, a 15- to 20-person chorus, and about six to eight dancers with a similar number of band members.

As a co-producer, he says he sat in on auditions and he attends all rehearsals.

Ben-Israel says the talent of the people involved in the show is very impressive.

One of the people he cites as being a big asset to the production is Michael Fridman, a second-year medical student with a solid theatrical background. "I've been involved in theatre since Grade 1," Fridman says.

He had tremendous stage fright when he was in kindergarten, but was encouraged to participate in a drama program at school as a way of overcoming this fear. "It transformed me to the person I am today.

"The more I performed, the more I saw the enjoyment in being onstage. It became addictive. It's an experience unlike any other."

He performed in several productions a year from grades 6 through 12, and as an undergraduate at Queens University, he participated in several theatrical shows.

Fridman, who was also in last year's Daffydil show, describes himself as "an actor who is able to carry a tune."

Participation in Daffydil is "a privilege," but it's also "an enormous commitment," he says. "You have to be a steward with your time. We have an exam the week following Daffydil. We also have to cover the same material as the other students with much more limited time."

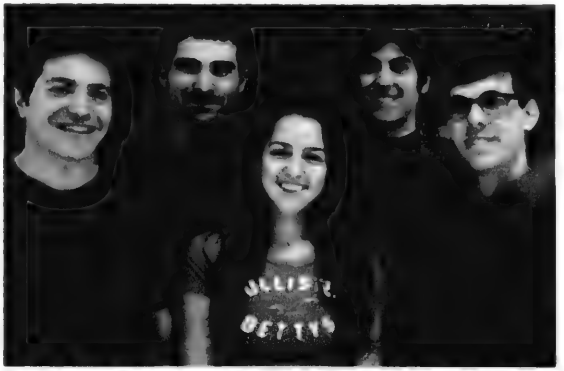
Inna Genkin, a second-year medical student, is one of the show's dancers. She says juggling her time between performing and studying is a challenge, but she's having a lot of fun.

"When I saw the show last year, I thought it would be really cool to be part of it. But I can't sing for my life and I can't act. I'm not artistically inclined."

However, she's been dancing since she was a young child and so she auditioned. "I'm very excited to be part of Daffydil."

Sheps echoes her sentiments. "It's been a blast. It's so impressive watching people with so many diverse talents come together."

For tickets, visit www.daffydil2013.com.



From left are University of Toronto medical students David Sheps, Michael Fridman, Inna Genkin, Elan Panov and David Ben-Israel, who are taking part in the musical Daffydil .

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Samuel Tomkin	Jan 31/13	1 Malabar Place
Nat Hennick	Jan 31/13	18A Hazelton Avenue
Bernie Pont	Jan 31/13	5351 Yonge Street
Henry Dickler	Jan 31/13	525 Lawrence Ave. West
Gloria Mandel	Jan 31/13	63 Burbank Drive
Laurie Arnold	Feb 1/13	43 Glen Cedar Road
Sydney Wise	Jan 31/13	1555 Finch Ave. East
Molly Walker	Feb 3/13	429 Walmer Road
Helen Fox	Feb 4/13	36 High Point Road
Sylvia Latner	Feb 5/13	14 Baintree Street, East
Helen Pasternak	Feb 4/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Edythe Stein	Feb 6/13	602 Melita Crescent
Bernard Braun	Feb 8/13	2 Covington Road
Peggy Birnberg	Feb 8/13	40 Merritt Road

HEBREW BASIC

Mildred Bregman	Feb 7/13	529 Rushton Road

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LILLIAN SONNE ז"ל

At home, surrounded by her family, on February 11, 2013,

Lillian, beloved wife of the late William.
Loving mother and mother-in-law of the late Benjamin (Janet), Norman, Barbara (Larry Rose), Cheryl, Martin.

Devoted Grandmother of seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

She is survived by her brothers, David Farberman, Saul Farberman (Marcie), Reuben Farberman (Dorothy).

A graveside service was held February 13, 2013 at Pardes Shalom Cemetery, Toronto Hebrew Benevolent Section.
Shiva was observed at 17 Michelle Drive, Barrie, Ontario.

Popular Vancouver rabbi to retire

Sharon Chisvin
Special to The CJN

VANCOUVER — Philip Bregman decided to become a rabbi when he was just 13 years old. More than 50 years later he admits that although he was young to make such a major decision, it definitely was the right decision to make.

"My decision to pursue this path has truly led to a very fulfilling life," says Rabbi Bregman.

In August, Rabbi Bregman will be retiring after 33 years as spiritual leader of Vancouver's Temple Sholom. During this time, he has grown the Reform congregation from the city's smallest synagogue to its largest, and in the process has connected hundreds of Vancouver Jews with their traditions, heritage and Israel.

Rabbi Bregman and his American-born wife, Cathy, arrived in Vancouver in the summer of 1980 from New Rochelle, N.Y., where Rabbi Bregman was serving as an assistant rabbi. The Vancouver appointment gave him the opportunity to return to Canada where he had been born and raised, first in Galt (now Cambridge), Ont., and then in Toronto.

In Toronto, Rabbi Bregman's parents joined Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut's Holy Blossom Temple and the rabbi became a mentor to their young son.

"Rabbi Plaut became the major rabbinic influence in my life," Rabbi Bregman says. "He set a very high standard."

Rabbi Plaut introduced Rabbi Bregman to the subtleties of Reform Judaism and to the discipline and dedication that it required.

Reform Judaism, Rabbi Bregman explains, demands extensive study of tradition and text, but also the desire and ability to go beyond what is written or proscribed in order to integrate observance with the contemporary world.

"I have tried to demonstrate this not only by my own personal practice of Judaism," Rabbi Bregman says, "but also by what I've taught here at Temple Sholom and beyond."

Longtime congregant Jack Lutsky says, "Rabbi Bregman is a 'doer' and makes things happen. His engagement with families to make the bar/bat mitzvah experience meaningful and his work with the sick and the bereaved are his greatest strengths."

Ellen Gordon, co-chair of the committee planning a farewell event in his honour on April 28, says, "He is warm to everyone he meets. He has a brilliant sense of humour."

Rabbi Philip Bregman and his wife, Cathy

Rabbi Bregman's commitment to social action, interfaith initiatives and Israel have been cornerstones of his tenure at Temple Sholom.

He has initiated numerous social justice projects over the years, and has determinedly built bridges between his synagogue and all other Jewish denominations and faiths.

He is the co-founder and chair of the Rabbinical Association of Vancouver, and enjoys a close relationship with the Orthodox Schara Tzedeck synagogue.

"We have something quite unique to Vancouver and to Canada, and that is a group of rabbis who honestly clearly respect and care for each other," says Rabbi Bregman. "We have our differences as to what we believe and observe, but the line of differentiation is almost non-existent."

Bregman's interfaith relationships are similarly positive. He is a co-founder of the Metro Vancouver Muslim Jewish Dialogue and the Vancouver Jewish Christian Dialogue. Last year, he travelled to Israel with Christian clergy, one of dozens of Israel tours that he has facilitated over the years.

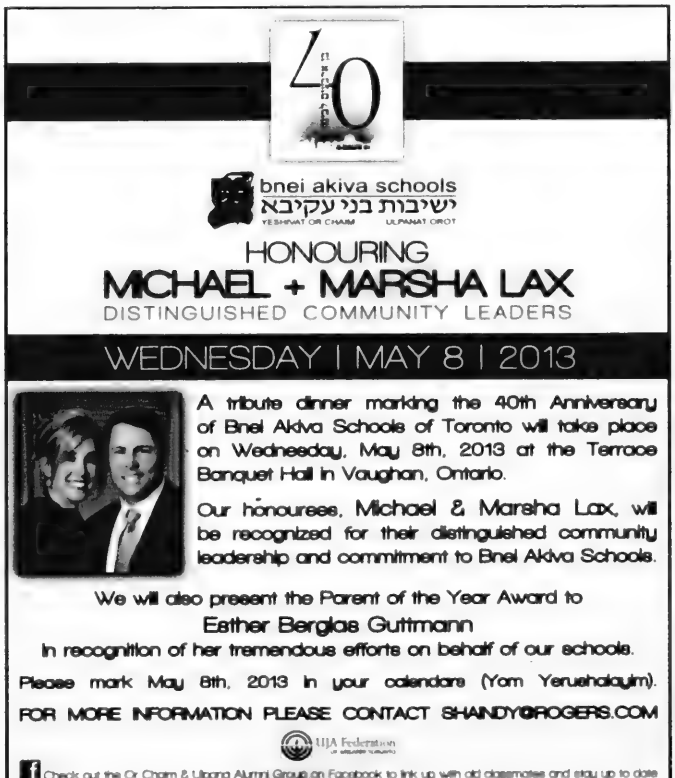
He has continuously advocated for Israel, and has always welcomed children from other faith communities into his synagogue to learn about Judaism.

Bregman's rapport with children derives from the many years he has worked with bar and bat mitzvah students and taught at the Temple Sholom Religious School. Typically, he is quick to attribute the success of the school to former principal, Anne Andrew.

In fact, Bregman deflects much of the credit for Temple Sholom's myriad accomplishments to his staff and to his wife's support and advice.

"Cathy and I have worked together as a team," Bregman says. "Cathy has an incredible ability to identify what needs to happen to enhance the life of our shul, and then she points me in the right direction."

For three decades, Rabbi Bregman has been leading services, telling stories, sermonizing, mentoring, teaching, praising, counselling and consoling. It has meant instilling in his congregants a commitment to community, Israel, social justice, tolerance, tradition and change, and it has meant helping them become proud Jews and proud members of Vancouver's only Reform congregation.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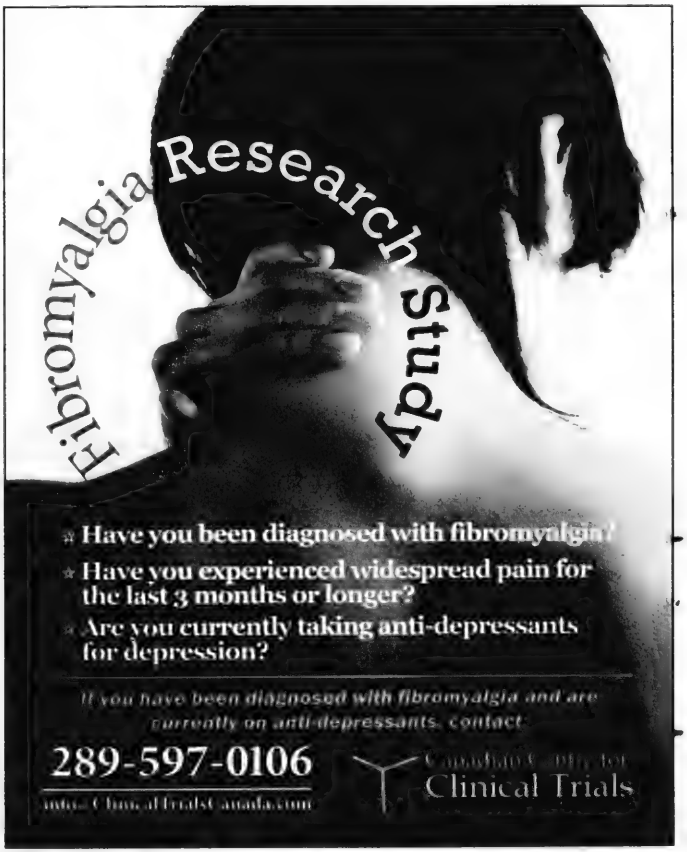
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Israeli ambassador cracks Maclean's Power 25 list

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Late last year, Israeli Ambassador to Canada Miriam Ziv received an unexpected honour: she was selected by *Maclean's* magazine for its annual "Power 25" list.

The list is a who's who of influential power players in the nation's capital and on Parliament Hill.

Ziv, now in her fifth and final year as ambassador, told *The CJN* she had never been nominated for anything like the "Power 25" before and that it came as a surprise.

"It was a 'wow' moment for me. But it was a great compliment, not only for me, but for Israel. Being the sole non-Canadian on the list in the company of 24 Canadians and having Israel represented out of all the other countries that work with Canada, is a special thing," she said on a recent phone call from the embassy in Ottawa.

Miriam Ziv

Others on the list included Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Liberal leadership front-runner Justin Trudeau, NDP Opposition Leader Thomas Mulcair, Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Beverley McLachlin, to name a few.

The magazine nicknamed Ziv "the dogged envoy" in a nod to her tireless efforts to increase bilateral trade and strengthen cultural bonds between the countries.

Relations between Israel and Canada "have rarely been as warm" as they have been under the current Conservative government, which has helped the ambassador immensely in her role.

"As I said in my interview with the magazine, the relationship between our countries is exceptional. It was there when I came [to Canada]. It was my job to bring this relationship even closer," she said.

"And there were so many opportunities to do this. Everybody acknowledged the fact that [Israel] is a start-up nation... we have shared values and so much in common. Even with this, it takes time and it's a process to build on the existing relationships with politicians and ministers and also with Canadians as a whole."

Ziv noted how her work extends beyond the boundaries of Ottawa and the halls of power in Parliament. She also travels extensively throughout the country, meeting with universities, working with granting councils, and liaising with the premiers and legislatures of all the provinces and territories.

Her work, Ziv said, is "based on the fact that there is so much commonality between Canada and Israel in all areas."

As of last week, the ambassador was unsure when her superiors in Israel's foreign ministry would be calling to let her know her exact end date in Canada and who her replacement will be.

In the meantime, she continues to work a full schedule to bring Canadians and Israelis closer together.

"As I look back at 2012, we had a very busy year with visits from [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu in March, [Israeli President] Shimon Peres in May and many other [Israeli diplomats and Knesset members] who came on working visits," she said.

"This is a sign of what kind of special relationship we have now with Canada, and it will continue."

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Lawyer takes reins at anti-domestic violence group

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Becoming chair of the board of directors of Act to End Violence Against Women, is a logical next move for Alanna Salpeter, 31.

"I've always worked with people less fortunate than me. I feel responsible to them, and I have a desire to do what I can," said Salpeter, who began her two-year term in the fall.

Act to End Violence Against Women's mission is to end violence against women within the Jewish and broader community through education and advocacy.

An active member of the board of directors since 2010, Salpeter is the director of education at Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

A laywer by training with a master's degree in bioethics from Michigan State University – where she was involved with the sexual assault crisis intervention centre – Salpeter has been a visiting lecturer in the faculty of law at the University of Gambia, has consulted on the development of ethical health guidelines at several heath-oriented institutions in post-genocide Rwanda, has taught English in Japan, and has worked with University of Toronto's faculty of medicine and Public Health Ontario in bio-ethics research.

Alanna Salpeter

While in law school, she said, she was involved in pro bono work and represented a number of women who were involved in domestic abuse.

"My work with Act to End Violence Against Women is a continuation of everything I have done. I have a passion for treating humans everywhere equally," Salpeter said.

"In 2010, when I saw that the [the organization] was looking for board members, I thought that it would be a great way to use my skills. It is a small organization with a large mission, and it does incredible work."

In her new position, she said, she is encouraging both women and men to get involved in the organization.

"Although we are focused on violence against women, it is not simply a women's issue. It is a human issue that affects the fabric of our society: our mothers, our daughters, our sisters, our aunts, our friends and our children," she said.

"To that end, we are on the lookout for volunteers and welcome interest from anyone and everyone."

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Toews seeks applications for security funding

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Public Safety Minister Vic Toews announced last week that the government is now accepting a new round of applications for its Security Infrastructure Program (SIP).

The $1-million annual fund is disbursed to successful applicants from communities at risk of hate crimes and is typically used to help defray the costs of security at schools, places of worship and other institutions.

Vic Toews

Items allowed for purchase under the program include alarm systems, fences, gates, lighting, security film for windows, closed-circuit television systems, exterior cameras (as well as their relocation), anti-graffiti sealant, motion detectors, signage and landscaping.

Training costs for proper use of new security equipment are also covered.

"Projects funded under SIP are cost-shared with communities and funds are matched dollar for dollar, up to $100,000," Toews said.

Initiated in 2008 as a three-year pilot program, SIP was declared a permanent program by the government in 2012.

Speaking to journalists at an ethnic media roundtable at his regional offices in Toronto last week, Toews said his ministry is calling for proposals from communities with a March 26 deadline for submissions.

"As part of our government's strong commitment to preventing hate crimes and making our streets safe, we are pleased to announce that [SIP] is once again accepting applications," he said.

"This program helps communities fight against hate-motivated crimes so that they can pursue their beliefs, culture, and activities peacefully, without fear of harm."

SIP is administered through the ministry's National Crime Prevention Centre.

Numerous Jewish community institutions have benefited from the program since 2008. Most recently, in January Toronto's Beth Tikvah Synagogue and Hamilton's Adas Israel congregation received some $32,000 each in SIP funding.

Asked whether the fund will remain capped at $1 million or if the government had any plans to increase it, Toews said there is no plan "at this time" to do so and that the government is trying to be fiscally responsible while still protecting communities.

Toews also told *The CJN* that the amount of intelligence being picked up by law enforcement in Canada around possible homegrown terrorist activity is "substantive."

Queried on whether the Canadian Jewish community or Canadians in general should be worried about a growing possibility of terrorist attacks domestically, the minister demurred before stating that he had full faith in law enforcement to keep communities safe.

However, Toews did encourage anyone with knowledge of possible terrorist activity within their communities to contact local or national law enforcement.

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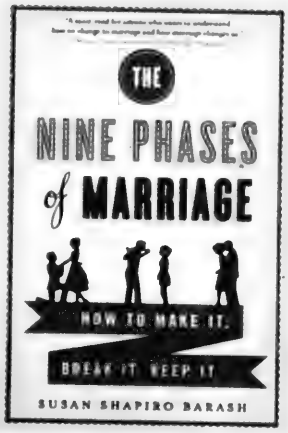
Book examines stages of marriage

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

As you embark on your marriage, you can't help but begin to compare it with the marriages around you. To what extent is your relationship like that of your friends? What goes on behind their closed doors, and is everything as picture perfect as it looks?

For her book *The Nine Phases of Marriage* (St. Martin's Griffin), Susan Shapiro Barash interviewed 200 women from across the United States to find out how they really felt about their marriages. She learned most of them wouldn't marry their husbands all over again. Using real-life examples, she relays their emotions in various stages of their marriages, examining how they feel about their relationships from honeymoon through housework and child raising.

For the married reader, there are lots of "aha!" moments in Barash's book, moments when it's easy to identify with the frustrations of women who had no idea marriage meant cleaning up after a sloppy husband or doing the majority of housework and child raising with no recognition for their efforts. Some said the feeling of partnership they had hoped for in their marriages was gone. Others felt fully justified in having affairs to satisfy needs their husbands weren't meeting.



Barash discusses the concept of an "un-divorce," when couples stay together for the sake of their kids or to continue appearances and a quality of life they've become accustomed to – but without any of the sharing or intimacy implied in marriage. And many women lamented the fact that their husbands just weren't the men they thought they were at the time when they said, "I do."

Barash paints a pretty sad picture of marriage for the most part. She defines the stages starting from the hopeful bride and her infatuation with a perfect wedding, a fantasy created by celebrity culture. Do most women want the wedding, or the marriage? she wonders. After wedding comes the perfect-wife phase, followed by child-centricity and midlife disappointment, as unhappiness and dissatisfaction creep into the lives of 70 per cent of wives. As loss of closeness and infidelity rear their combined heads, women start to look at their options, such as connecting with long-lost boyfriends through social media or exchanging heartfelt secrets with colleagues at work. If they make it to the golden years still married, in all likelihood they have learned how to handle their spouse, to accept marital conflicts and still make their partnerships work.

Most married women will be able to identify themselves in at least one stage of Barash's nine, though hopefully without the sense of betrayal, desperation and regret in many of the voices of the author's participants. A woman who has experienced divorce firsthand, Barash is not glib about it in the least. "For me, this was one of the most painful periods of my life, filled with remorse and murky memory, damage and despair," she admits in her preface. "Not being a wife was a profound loss of identity."

For each phase she discusses, Barash offers readers a prescription for how to deal with the stage they are going through. Her suggestions prompt reflectiveness and a feeling of camaraderie, a sense that others have stood in this same position and wrestled with similar issues. So for married women who wonder if anyone else has felt quite the way they do over the course of their married lives, sitting down with *The Nine Phases of Marriage* is like having a long, comforting conversation with a close friend who has, at her fingertips, a wealth of thought and information about the truly complex institution of marriage and how it plays out over a lifetime.

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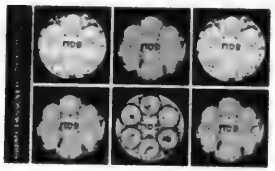

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Family of dead Mossad agent receives compensation

Ron Friedman and Michal Shmulovich
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel has agreed to pay the family of Ben Zygier, a Mossad agent who committed suicide in 2010 in his cell at Ramle's Ayalon Prison near Tel Aviv, several million shekels in compensation.

The arrangement, which was supposedly made six weeks ago – after Zygier's family was notified about an internal investigation that concluded that he had killed himself – was reported by *Ha'aretz* on Friday, quoting an unnamed source familiar with the case.

News about the compensation comes amid reports that the state is looking into filing negligence charges against those who failed to prevent the inmate's suicide.

Zygier's family in Australia – he was born in Melbourne – has refused to comment on the case. "I really don't want to talk about it," his father said earlier last week before hanging up the phone on an Israeli TV reporter. "I've lost my son."

Reports Friday said the family was not told what charges had prompted Zygier's arrest and incarceration.

Meanwhile, retired senior Mossad official Rafi Eitan said Friday it is possible that there are other "Prisoner X's," people held in Israeli jails under assumed names, as Zygier was, for reasons linked to intelligence work.

Israel is not like other countries, given the regional challenges it faces, Eitan, 86, told Army Radio. "We're in an ongoing war that requires certain technologies."

A top Justice Ministry official told reporters last Thursday that there are no "Prisoner X's" in Israel and objected to the term, which was widely used at first to describe Zygier before his name became public knowledge. The official said it created the false impression that Israel was some kind of dictatorship or Third World country that strips its citizens of their rights. Zygier had been granted all the rights afforded to him by law, including family visits and a fair judicial process, the official said.

"There are no Prisoner X's in Israel," said the official. "The allegation that Israel behaved like a dictatorship that makes people 'disappear' is nothing but irresponsible and malicious nonsense." The official added that the entire process under which Zygier was held, and his case handled, was overseen by the most senior legal official in the judicial system.

Zygier's family was notified as soon as he was arrested, he received legal representation, and he was granted family visits, the official said. He was being tried in a regular criminal proceeding behind closed doors.

Ben Zygier

He said Zygier had been granted all the rights and protections due to him under Israeli law. Even the unusual fact that his identity was kept secret was a security measure to which Zygier himself consented, the official said, recognizing that this was beneficial to national security and to his own and his family's protection.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, did not provide details about why Zygier was arrested and what he was charged with.

Avigdor Feldman, a defence lawyer who met with Zygier two days before he died, said the 34-year-old father of two had been charged with "serious criminal" offences and faced many years in prison. Conflicting, unconfirmed reports have indicated that Zygier had spilled Mossad secrets to the Australian authorities or media, or was believed to have been about to do so.

Although he was being held in a top-security jail cell under constant camera surveillance, and was reportedly considered a suicide risk, Zygier killed himself in the bathroom where there were no cameras, Israel's Channel 2 TV reported on Thursday. A transcript of the prison officials' panicked call for medical assistance to Magen David Adom – "he's hanged himself," the caller wailed – was read on *Channel 10 News*.

According to reports, Zygier immigrated to Israel in 2000, was recruited by the Mossad, and worked for the agency for years, including heading a front company that sold electronics to Iran, a country he was said to have visited several times, using his Australian passport. In Australia in 2009, he was reportedly called in for questioning by Australian security authorities. He was arrested and jailed in Israel in early 2010.

The Justice Ministry official did not rule out the possibility that ongoing restrictions on reporting the affair may be further eased, but stressed that the state would seek equally comprehensive media blackouts in the future, in cases that pose a national security risk.

Official handling of the affair has been greatly criticized in the past few days, since Australian media broke the story. Knesset members used parliamentary privilege to bring the case to the public's attention by asking about it during a Knesset session.

One legislator said he had made a formal inquiry into the matter while Zygier was being held and was assured the matter was being properly handled. And an effort to persuade editors to suppress the story has been derided as anachronistic and heavy-handed.

Dalia Dorner, a former Supreme Court justice and current president of the Israel Press Council, said in a Friday interview with Israel Radio that "self-censorship of journalists is unacceptable." She added that there's a possibility that some judges issue gag orders too easily.

Government officials and the military censor's office, however, have argued that gag orders and other restrictions on the case have been necessary to minimize the damage to Israel's national security.

Timesofisrael.com

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The partners of SLF LLP are pleased to announce that Patrick Vanier, CPA, CGA, Richard Schnurbach, CPA, CA and Richard Scheim, CPA, CA, have been named Principals of the firm. Their extensive knowledge and years of experience working with medium-sized enterprises is an asset to our team of professionals and will continue to add value to our clients.

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'This decision is a betrayal of justice'

Continued from page 1

Philosopher, poet and writer Santiago Kovadloff mocked the government for the international criticism the pact has drawn. "But our government is not alone," he said. "Our government is with Iran."

President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner has defended the pact as a way to break a long impasse and Timerman said it as a way to promote justice.

Iran has until now resisted appeals by Argentina and Interpol to make available for interrogation top Iranian officials believed to have organized the attack, which killed 85 people and wounded hundreds of others.

The Argentine Parliament's upper house was scheduled to vote Feb. 21 on whether to ratify the memorandum, followed by a vote in the lower house on Feb. 27. Kirchner's political party enjoys a majority in both chambers and it is likely to pass.

Alberto Nisman, a lawyer representing AMIA, meanwhile filed a criminal complaint with federal authorities on Feb. 14 over a threat he received recently via email warning him to abandon his investigations of the bombings within 24 hours, or risk the well-being of his daughters.

Both the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) issued releases recently denouncing the Argentine-Iranian co-operation pact, saying having Iran on the commission investigating itself amounts to a farce.

CIJA chair David Koschitzky called the pact between the countries "disappointing."

"It is disturbing to think that any democracy – let alone one that suffered a mass bombing – would hand over its investigative duties to a 'truth commission' beyond its borders. That such a commission would be jointly established with the party implicated in the crime is added insult to those who were murdered at AMIA," he said in a Jan. 31 statement.

"For the victims' families and for the entire Jewish community of Argentina, this decision is a betrayal of justice that has already been long denied."

Adding further fuel to the fire, on Feb. 12 Iran denied it would consent to having its defence minister, Ahmed Vahidi, questioned by an Argentine judge about his role in the terrorist attack.

Vahidi, the subject of an international arrest warrant from Interpol in connection with the deadly bombing of the AMIA centre, would be questioned under the framework of the truth commission agreement, according to Timerman.

"The matter of questioning of some of the Iranian officials is a sheer lie," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast said at a news conference. "It seems that those who are concerned by the actual agreement are spreading such reports."

Timerman has said that seven Iranians with international arrest warrants against them would be interrogated under the agreement.

"I can assure that he will have to be present when the judge questions them, and he will be," Timerman said on Jan. 29 during his meeting with relatives of the victims of the AMIA bombing when he was asked about Vahidi.

In a joint Feb. 12 statement, WJC President Ronald Lauder and Latin American Jewish Congress president Jack Terpins said Iran is only interested in "perverting" the cause of justice.

"The memorandum of understanding with Iran undermines the efforts of the Argentine judiciary and of Interpol, whose investigations have clearly established that Iranian nationals conspired in masterminding the worst terrorist attack ever carried out in any South American nation," they said.

"At the time Iranian leaders, among them the current Defence Minister Vahidi, gave orders to kill as many civilians as possible. This deal with Iran is an affront to justice. The Iranian government cannot be considered a neutral interlocutor in this affair because its leaders are involved in terrorist activities themselves."

– *With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf*

Bulgaria expels Hamas delegates

JTA

SOFIA, Bulgaria — Bulgarian security forces ordered a group of Hamas officials visiting Sofia to leave the country.

Ma'an, the Palestinian news agency, on Friday quoted a statement by Hamas, which said that delegates from its parliamentary party, Ismail al-Ashqar, Salah al-Bardawil and Mushir al-Masri, left Bulgaria shortly after being told to go. The three men arrived in Bulgaria on Feb. 13 for a five-day visit meant to show that representatives of Hamas, a designated terrorist group in Bulgaria and the rest of the European Union, were increasingly welcome in Europe, *Ma'an* reported.

According to the Hamas statement, the men entered Bulgaria "officially" but in statements last Thursday, a spokesperson for the Bulgarian government said the men had not been invited to Bulgaria, nor had they met with Bulgarian officials.

Ma'an quoted the Palestine Liberation Organization envoy to Bulgaria as saying that he was informed by the Bulgarian foreign ministry that it "regretted" the presence of the Hamas delegation and made the decision to ask them to leave. *Ma'an* said the Hamas group was invited by Bulgaria's Center for Global and Middle East Studies.

The PLO and Hamas are rivals for Palestinian power.

The head of the centre, Mohammed Abu Assi, told the Bulgarian news site *Dnevnik* that the visit was meant to "improve Bulgaria's image in the Arab world" after the country's government "made a blunder" by blaming Hezbollah for a 2012 bus bombing that targeted Israeli tourists in Burgas and killed six people. Hezbollah denies the accusations.

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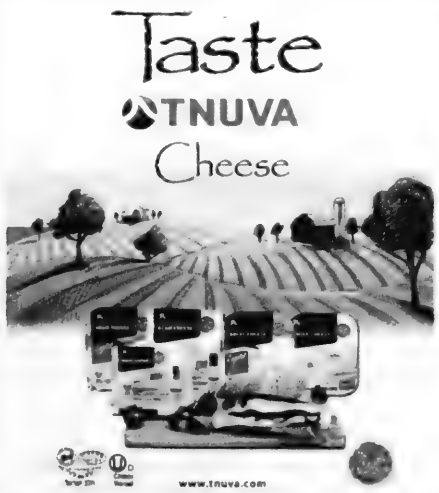

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Antisemitic incidents near Marseille

JTA

PARIS — French police arrested two men in connection with recent antisemitic attacks near Marseille.

One of the suspects in the attacks in Aix en Provence, a Tunisian national without a visa, was placed in a detention centre, according to a Feb. 14 statement by the security affiliate of France's Jewish communities, SPCJ.

The first of the two incidents was on Jan. 28, when a group of 15 men assembled outside a synagogue in the town.

One of the men hurled a rock at the synagogue and shouted "Allahu akbar" and political slogans about "Palestine" "in a threatening way," SPCJ said in its report of the incident.

The suspects were arrested shortly after the second incident on Feb. 2, when two men approached the synagogue during an event attended by the Israeli consul.

They shouted "dirty Jew" at an SPCJ guard and profanities in Arabic and ran away when guards approached. The suspects were arrested after SPCJ informed police about the incident.

In a third incident, not believed to be connected with the suspects, two vagabonds on Jan. 29 urinated on a Jewish school adjacent to a synagogue. Interrupted by the guard, they said, "There's no one here but Jews – it smells like Jews here" and ran away, SPCJ reported.

On Feb. 4, a group of men robbed a 20-year-old Jewish man and beat him near Marseille's main railway station after noticing he was wearing a Star of David. Police defined the incident as antisemitic.

Israel aiming for the moon

SpaceIL, an Israeli non-profit made up of a team of scientists and space enthusiasts, is aiming to make Israel the third country, behind the United States and Russia, to successfully land a spacecraft on the moon. Part of Google's Lunar X Prize competition, SpaceIL intends for its spacecraft to be as small as possible, harnessing the latest in nanotechnology. It also recently received a significant boost when the Israeli telecommunications company, Bezeq, announced that it would provide an advanced communications infrastructure needed for spaceflight, *Israel Hayom* reported. Team SpaceIL's has received support from the Israeli Space Agency, Israeli Aerospace Industry, Asher Space Research Institute at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Ramon Foundation and the Israeli Nano-Satellite Association. In order to win Google's $30-million Lunar X Prize, a private team must land a robot on the surface of the moon and send images back by the end of 2015. There are currently 25 teams from around the world competing.

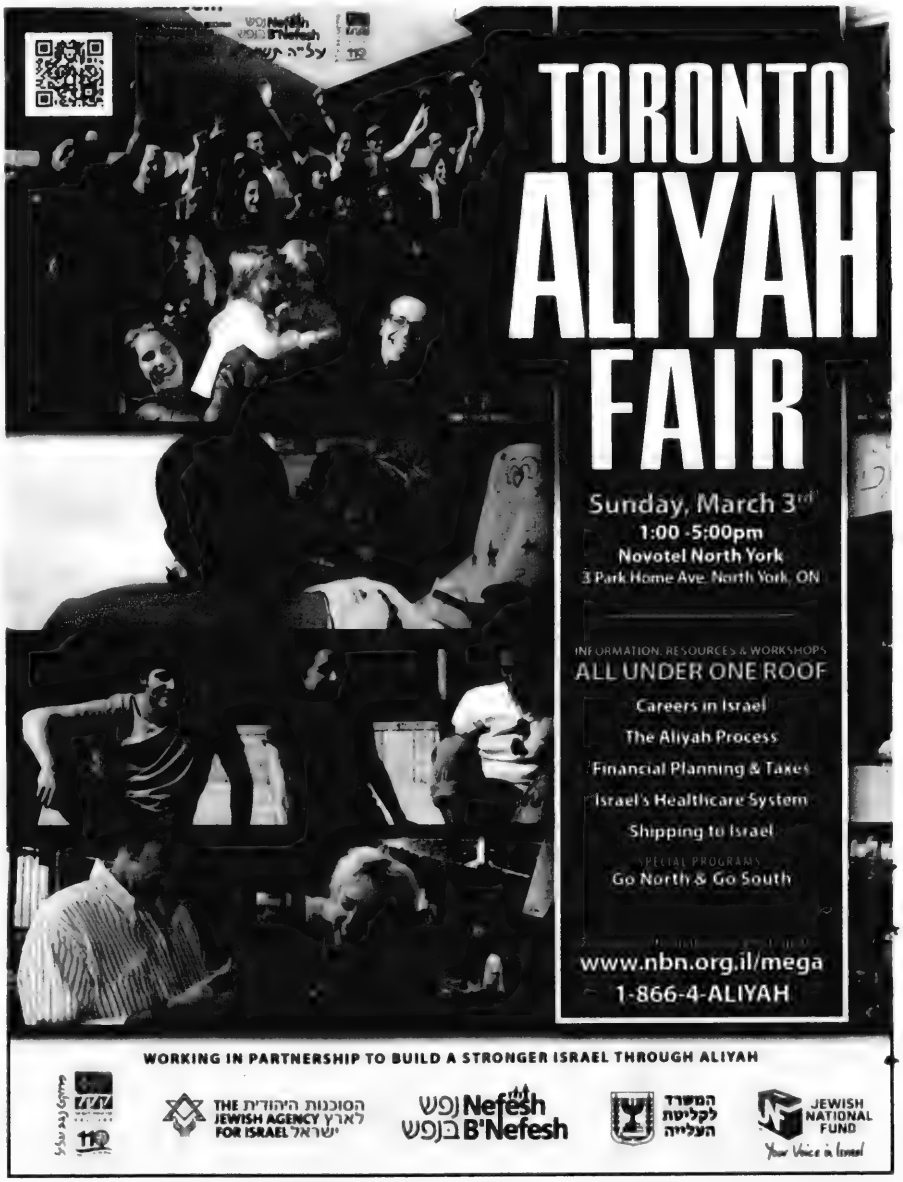
Dubai bars Israeli soccer player

An Israeli soccer player for a British team is being forced to skip a team visit to Dubai because of the United Arab Emirates' policy on visits by Israelis. The 25-year-old striker, Itay Schechter, who plays for Swansea City, was prevented from attending the six-day group training session in the Persian Gulf city, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported last Wednesday. The United Arab Emirates does not have diplomatic ties with Israel, and Israeli passport holders can be arrested and deported on entering if they lack a special visa. Dubai is one of the UAE's seven emirates, or city states. In 2009, the Dubai Tennis Championships was levied a record fine over its country's refusal to award a visa to Israeli tennis player Shahar Pe'er. She received a visa and appeared in the 2010 tournament in Dubai.

No refugees from Israel

The Canadian government announced, effective Feb. 15, that Israel was added to the list of designated countries from which claimants seeking asylum as refugees will have their applications fast-tracked. Israel was determined by Canada to be among the "democratic countries that offer state protection, have active human rights and civil society organizations, and do not normally produce refugees."

– With files from JTA and JNS.org



Being detained at the Kotel

Rabbi Robyn Fryer Bodzin
Special to The CJN

It was either coincidence or bashert that I was in Jerusalem for Rosh Chodesh Adar and thus able to support and join the Women of the Wall (WOTW) for minyan. My colleague, Rabbi Debra Cantor of Connecticut, along with many male rabbinic supporters, awoke early and flocked to the Old City. We had all heard of Women of the Wall, but had never davened with them before.

At 7 a.m., I joined hundreds of women, as we opened our prayerbooks and began with the opening blessings. Behind us and beside us, on the other side of the mechitzah, were a combination of male supporters and photographers.

After a melodious *Hallel*, we left the Kotel en masse for Robinson's Arch to begin the Torah service, as is the custom of WOTW. I was very nervous as we sang and walked over, because I was supposed to read the fourth aliyah. However, that never happened, because as soon as I exited the metal detector at the Kotel plaza, a police officer asked for my identity papers. I explained that I had a Canadian passport, so she asked for that. When I asked her why, I did not receive an answer. At that moment, I realized I might not actually be able to attend my back-to-back meetings as a delegate of the Jewish Federations of North America's rabbinic cabinet anymore.

Guest Voice

Nine other women joined me at a satellite police station in the Old City. We stood in a courtyard and introduced ourselves to one another. While some of the women had been detained before, there did not seem to be a clear reason as to why others were chosen. David Barhoom, the WOTW lawyer who spent some time with us, could not even figure out why we were detained.

Throughout the morning, we were taken into an interrogation room, one at a time. While I was asked numerous questions, I also requested that the lovely Druze police officer answer some of my questions as well. It was important to me to know why I was there. He shared that my two crimes were that I violated the regulations of holy places and that I behaved in a way that may violate public safety.

It might not have been the right thing to do, but I laughed when he said that.

Rabbi Robyn Fryer Bodzin

How was it that only 10 out of hundreds of women were violating public safety? What was going to happen? We were not picketing or demonstrating. We were praying to God. It still makes no sense to me.

I have read many accounts of our situation last Monday morning, and I would like to clarify that we were detained, not arrested. There were no handcuffs involved. We were not placed in a cell. The experience was surreal, not scary. In fact, my only fear was that I would miss my flight, which was scheduled for later that night.

After some time, the officers brought us tea and we began to chat with them. I asked one of them if he liked to babysit women who don't actually commit crimes. With a smile, he responded that he did it every month. The sense that I got was that these officers go through this processing routine every month, and they, too, think it is ridiculous. But, they have a job to do.

After some time, we were told that we could be released, as long as we signed a surety document that stated we would not come to the Kotel for 15 days. I signed the document, and then at about noon, we were taken from the satellite police station to a larger one. Once there, we were fingerprinted and had our pictures taken. And then we were free to go.

I have more faith and love in the Jewish People because of the overwhelming positive response I received following this experience. The status quo will change. But change takes time, and Israel is not even 65 years old yet. I have faith that her golden years will shine on all Jews, no matter our religious affiliation.

Originally from Toronto, Rabbi Robyn Fryer Bodzin, is spiritual leader of Israel Center of Conservative Judaism in Queens, N.Y.

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Customers injured in stampede for bargain tablets

Aaron Kalman
The Times of Israel

BE'ER SHEVA — Not since Moses have the people of Israel been so obsessed with tablets. Last week, a shopping centre's promotion sale of the nifty computers ended in mayhem with 10 people injured in a stampede for a bargain.

The store management decided to donate 500 tablets, instead, to the city's welfare services for distribution.

The BIG centre in Be'er Sheva put seven-inch tablets on sale for only 10 shekels ($2.70 Cdn) in a promotion that attracted thousands long before the planned 4 p.m. discount took effect.

People were trampled by the seething mob, and Magen David Adom ambulances were called to the scene. Medics treated 10 people – most with light injuries, but two who required hospital treatment. Others needed medication to help them calm down, and many had their clothes torn and damaged.

Police ordered the store to cancel the sale and moved to restore order. "I was sorry I came, and I fled away as fast as I could," one woman said. "It wasn't worth dying to save a few hundred shekels."

Times of Israel.com

App will allow real time phone voice translations

David Shamah
Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Israeli start-up Lexifone, which runs an automatic phone conversation translation service, is set to come out with an Android app that will enable smartphone users to call people all around the world and speak in their own language, while the listener hears the message in theirs.

It's an impressive system, based on advanced algorithms and clever use of voice-to-text technologies. Lexifone, barely two years old, is used by millions of people around the world and is proof that high-tech in Israel can thrive outside the Tel Aviv bubble.

Lexifone services allow customers and vendors in countries around the world to ensure that deals run smoothly. For example, a hotel in Spain can set up a phone number for tourists from France, who can call and book rooms in French, with the desk clerk on the other side of the line hearing the request in Spanish. It works with Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, Italian, Russian, Mandarin, and English. Hebrew is on the way, the company says.

Lexifone started out in the first incubator round of Haifa's Hi Center, which just graduated another four start-ups from its Top Start-Up accelerator. Top Start-Up, which began last October, was the first accelerator for new start-ups in the Haifa area, offering companies office space, mentoring, and partnerships with companies such as Microsoft.

Ike Sagie, CEO of Lexifone

Four companies participated in the newly graduated Top Start-Up group: YouMe, which is developing health-related cellphone apps; OptiCar, which is working on making the car rental process more efficient; WebSnacks, which is developing a content distribution center for tablets; and Dalit Technologies, with a smartphone-based system to manage agricultural enterprises.

All these companies hope to follow in the path of Lexifone, so far Hi Center's most successful graduate. In 2011, Lexifone got a $2-million investment from Canadian web branding company Intertainment Media.

Anthony Pearlman, president and COO of Intertainment, said the Toronto-area company first learned of Lexifone at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. "They were part of an Israeli government-sponsored group showing its technology," he said.

"I was interested in their technology from day one… We're very cognizant that there are a lot of smart applications and solutions coming out of Israel," he said.

For its $2 million, Intertainment obtained a 25 per cent stake in Lexifone.

Pearlman believes that given the prevalence of language barriers, Lexifone's voice translation solution "represents the next step in the evolution of global communications."

Referring to Ortsbo, an Intertainment subsidiary, he said Lexifone's solution "is one we're looking at growing and integrating with the text translation at Ortsbo."

Lexifone recently declared it was seeking to raise $10 million in a second round of financing. However, Intertainment won't participate in that financing, Pearlman said.

With files from Paul Lungen

Tech magazine lauds airport debris detection system

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Israel's XSight Systems, which detects runway debris that can endanger planes and passengers, has been called one of Israel's most innovative companies by U.S. tech magazine *Fast Company*.

"Foreign object debris (FOD) costs the aviation industry around $13 billion (US) per year," and is a major safety risk, *Fast Company* wrote about XSight, naming it one of the top 10 Israeli innovators for 2013. The XSight system "has emerged as one of the leading solutions, using hybrid radar and electro-optical technology to detect junk on runways," the magazine wrote.

XSight's premier product, FODetect, uses hybrid radar and electro-optical technology to detect junk on runways, with units installed together with runway lights, ensuring that all parts of the runway are constantly monitored. When debris is detected, the control tower is alerted and can contact the pilots and hold up flights as necessary. The system's GPS, meanwhile, alerts ground crew to exactly where the debris is located, enabling them to quickly remove it without holding up flights.

Runway debris is a serious safety issue in the airline business, and has been responsible for damage to aircraft and even crashes. One of the most well-known instances of an FOD-related tragedy occurred in 2000, when an Air France Concorde supersonic plane caught fire, exploded and crashed into a hotel within minutes of takeoff. All passengers and crew on the flight were killed, as were some hotel employees. The death toll reached 113.

The reason for the crash: a 17-inch metal strip that fell off a plane that had taken off minutes before. The pilot didn't see it – he was too high off the ground. The ground crew missed it, too, and as a result, more than 100 people lost their lives.

According to Alon Nitzan, president and CEO of XSight Systems, the product has been installed at Boston's Logan, Paris' Charles de Gaulles and Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion airports and others.

"We take pride in being on this honourable list. Beyond that we are happy to contribute to the state of innovation in the world's economy driven by the aviation industry. XSight's innovative runway management solution provides leading airports with improved runway safety, increased runway capacity and enhanced operational efficiency," said Nitzan.

"The company will continue to develop its innovative technology to deliver crucial benefits to airport operators and answer growing needs."

Timesofisrael.com

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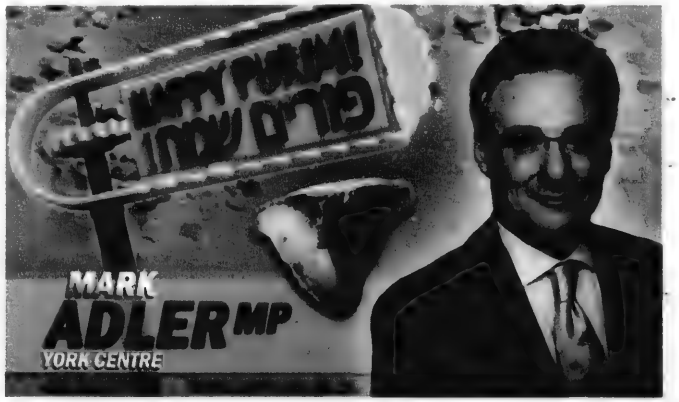


The Book of Esther

Bill Gladstone
Special to the CJN

Novelist Susan Glickman is the latest in a series of Canadian novelists, scholars, scriptwriters and performance artists to become enchanted by the legend of Esther Brandeau, the first known Jew to set foot in New France.

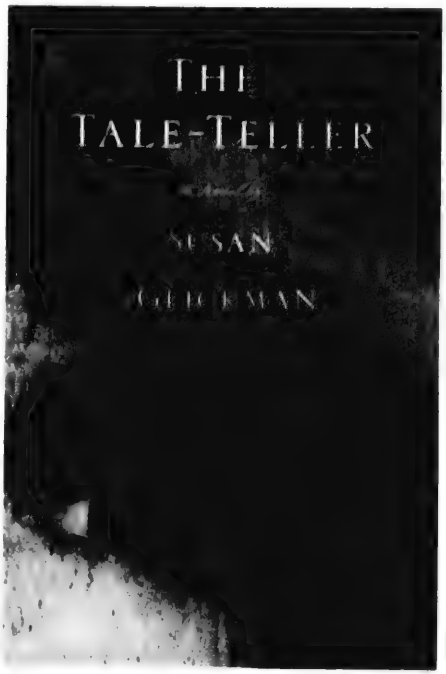
As a young single Jewish woman, Esther Brandeau would not have been allowed to sail on the French ship St. Michel from the French port of La Rochelle to Quebec as she did in 1738. She travelled in the guise of Jacques La Farge, an ostensibly Catholic teenaged boy seemingly not quite old enough for the razor.

When and where Esther's true identity was discovered, whether while still at sea or once the ship had docked at Quebec, is not known. But Esther was interrogated intensively and the stories she told of her extravagant adventures have been set down in the public record, preserved in archives in both Canada and France. As historian-scholar Isidore Goldstick wrote in the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle* in 1945, Esther "turned out to be a quaint combination of hobo and adventuress, renegade and Jewess."

She was the daughter of David Brandeau, a Sephardi Jew who lived in a suburb of Bayonne in southwest France. Five years earlier, her parents had put her on a Dutch ship and she was to sail to family members in Amsterdam, but the ship was wrecked.

That was fortunate for Esther, since her family had intended to marry her off to an elderly widower. Saved by one of the crew, she determined to wear male clothes and become an adventuress. She worked under various names as a ship's boy, a tailor's errand-runner, a domestic, a baker's assistant and an infantry captain, and was even jailed for theft shortly before sailing for the New World.

Esther's status as a Jew was a huge problem and embarrassment for the French authorities. Although she claimed she wanted to eat pork and other forbidden meats and "to enjoy the same liberty as the Christians," she resisted every attempt to convert her to Catholicism



at a time when non-Catholics were barred from settling in New France. She remained a year in Quebec before being deported back to France and disappearing from the pages of history.

In her fictional work *The Tale-Teller* (Cormorant Books), Glickman highlights Esther's crafty ability to tell fascinating and beguiling stories about herself and her adventures that keep her listeners spellbound. Many of the details she gleans from books (such as *Robinson Crusoe*) in the library of her host, Intendant Hocquart, in whose home she becomes a temporary servant while her case is being decided. During that interval she acts as a Jewish Scheherazade, spinning charming, almost spellbinding tales in order to win a reprieve from deportation.

Wishing to become an indispensible member of the household, Esther tries to seduce her hosts with her culinary skills. Having brought a bag of cocoa beans with her from New France, she cooks them, pounds them into a mortar, adds almonds, hazelnut, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg and an egg, and pours the whipped concoction into a cup for Monsieur Hocquart.

"He was delighted, proclaiming that Esther's chocolate was the finest he had ever tasted; better than the beverage served in the finest homes in France; better than that Beauharnois drank every morning for breakfast to give him stamina for his amorous and military conquests. Hocquart had often drunk chocolate at other people's houses but no one in his staff knew how to prepare it properly. Esther having revealed this talent, he would be happy to drink chocolate morning, noon and night."

The Tale-Teller is likewise an appealing confection, a colourful historical adventure-fantasy and a skilful imagining of the inhabitants of New France in its early period before 1759. Although it seems more a story than a full-fledged novel (it lacks rising action or character development, for example), that shouldn't prevent it from winning any awards. Glickman's novel *The Violin Lover* took the fiction prize in the Canadian Jewish Book Awards in 2006.

Numerous other writers have embellished Esther's historical legend since historian Benjamin G. Sack wrote about her in an historical essay in *The Jew in Canada*, a large volume about the Jewish community of Canada published in 1926.

Mrs. Gitelle Goldwater Betensky wrote a television script about Esther in 1963 in which Esther remains a loyal Jewess who rejects baptism while nobly upholding the faith of her ancestors. "I'm sorry, Father," Betensky's Esther explains, "my heart wouldn't be in it. My heritage and strength lie in the teachings of my parents and forefathers. A Jewess I was born and a Jewess I must remain."

Sharon McKay's 2004 novel, *Esther*, which was shortlisted for a Governor General's Award, supposedly remains much more faithful to the known facts of the case.

Perhaps the most successful of the modern reinterpreters of the Esther Brandeau legend is poet-scholar Heather M. Hermant. Several years ago, Hermant received a grant of $80,000 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to write a scholarly thesis, *Queer, syncretic triangulations: Mapping Esther Brandeau from France to New France, 1738*, a four-year project due for completion in 2014.

Hermant has also assembled and performs in a "multidisciplinary performance installation" about Esther titled *Ribcage: this wide passage* – the title a punning reference to the method by which Esther supposedly bound or "caged" her breasts so as to avoid detection. In her description of the piece, Hermant calls Esther "an outed female, and an outed Jew," adding: "Who outed her on either count, and how, remains in question."

What also remains in question, of course, is how applying the vernacular and gender concepts of the 21st century to an 18th-century historical figure can increase our understanding of her. Such exercises, it seems, often end up revealing more about ourselves than anyone else.

Glickman, at least, seems to be removing layers of varnish rather than adding them.

Message to CJN Snowbirds

1) Arrange for Canada Post to forward The CJN to your winter address with the rest of your regular mail.

2) Advise our Circulation Department to suspend delivery until you return to Canada with your expiry automatically extended. You can still access the eCJN while away.

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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes.

They should not exceed 2,000 words. Selected submissions will appear in the Passover Supplement of The CJN on March 28 2013, in either our Montreal or our Toronto edition, or both. If you have a preference, please state it on your submission. Not all submissions can be published. We look for originality.

E-mail submissions to:
cjnliterarysupplement@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is February 28, 2013.
We can only accept e-mail submissions.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

CHAI TEA & A MOVIE PRESENTS *PARIS-MANHATTAN* ON FEB. 24

The Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents the Canadian première of director **Sophie Lellouche**'s film *Paris-Manhattan* at its upcoming Chai Tea and A Movie event.

The film focuses on Alice, an idealistic pharmacist who is obsessed with the films of **Woody Allen**, keeps quoting lines from the films, and recommends his classic works to her customers to help alleviate their ailments. Alice's Jewish parents hope to cure her fixation by fixing her up with a handsome French gentleman. Allen makes a playful cameo in the film.

Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Cinema, 4861 Yonge St. at Sheppard. Sunday, Feb. 24, Tea at 4 p.m., film at 5 p.m. $15. www.tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• • •

New Teatron Production: *Jacob and Jack*, a time-travelling farce by **James Sherman**, explores the challenges the protagonist, Jack, faces as a husband and actor, as compared to those of his grandfather, Jacob, a former Yiddish actor, whose woes are presented simultaneously. Presented by Teatron Jewish Theatre. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St. Feb. 27 to March 10. $48 to $19.

• • •

Two by Moscovitch: Tarragon Theatre presents a **Hannah Moscovitch** double bill featuring two works by the acclaimed young Canadian playwright. *Little One* is a "stylish lullaby-nightmare thriller" that focuses on two adopted siblings for whom "loving and destroying each other are the same thing." *In This World* follows the lives of two teenage girls on the same school volleyball team who lead completely different lives. Tarragon Theatre's Extra Space, 30 Bridgman Ave. Opens Feb. 20, runs to March 24. $27 to $53. 416-531-1827, www.tarragontheatre.com

• • •

Musical Notes

• Orchestra Toronto performs three romantic compositions: **Edvard Grieg**'s *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*, **John Burge**'s *Canadian Shield* and **Tchaikovsky**'s *Symphony No. 4 in F minor*. Toronto Centre for the Arts, George Weston Recital Hall, Sunday, Feb. 24, 3 p.m. $39, $34; youth $14. For tickets, call 1-855-985-2787. www.orchestratoronto.ca

• Violinist **Helmut Lipsky** and **Melosphere** perform a unique brand of cinematic music that blends jazz, classical, tango, latin, gypsy and rock genres. With **Karen Young** (voice), **Matt Herskowitz** (piano), **Jean-Francois Martel** (double bass) and **Vladimir Sidorov** (Russian accordion). The band has performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival and has produced soundtracks for movies. Hugh's Room, 2261 Dundas St. W., Thursday, Feb. 28, 8:30 p.m. hughsroom.com

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Film Events

• Critic **Adam Nayman** discusses The Coen Brothers in Nayman's Terms, a series of talks focusing on acclaimed American film artists **Joel** and **Ethan Coen** who over three decades of filmmaking have evolved from edgy independents to Oscar winners. Runs Feb. 25 to April 29. The topic for Feb. 25 is "Rednecks: *Blood Simple* and *Raising Arizona*." Miles Nadal Jewish Commuity Centre, Mondays 7 to 9 p.m. $90 for series, $12 drop-in per class; students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• The Mosaic Institute, a group dedicated to intercommunity dialogue and reconciliation between Israeli Jews and Palestinians (among other peace efforts), presents *The Gatekeepers*, a special screening of the 2013 Oscar nominee for best documentary. A reception and discussion follows featuring **Ami Ayalon**, former head of Israel's Shin Bet. Priority tickets $100; students $20. Royal Ontario Museum Theatre, 100 Queen's Park Cres. Thursday, Feb. 28, 6:30 to 7 p.m. www.mosaicinstitute.ca

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Theatre & Dance

• Register now for the MNJCC Theatre Lab with instructor **L. J. Nelles**. Join a company of actors at all levels who will develop voice, movement and character skills while rehearsing pieces from new Canadian Jewish theatre. Miles Nadal JCC, March 7 to May 30, 7 to 9 p.m. $100 for 10 sessions. 416-924-6211, ext. 606. email esthera@mnjcc.org

• **Tova Kardonne** and **Vox Novus** and **Al Green Theatre** present 60x60 Dance Toronto, a compilation of 60 compositions by 60 different composer and choreographer pairs, each 60 seconds long, presented continuously in an hour-long performance. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday, March 10, 8 p.m. $20. www.algreentheatre.ca

• **Purim Celebration:** Active Seniors and Boomers presents a Purim musical celebration featuring Israeli vocalist-musician **Mickey Lewin**. $3 includes hamantashen. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday Feb. 21, 1:30 p.m

• • •

At the Galleries: *New Visions from Applied Photography* is an exhibition of works by Sheridan College graduates **Alexander Clemmer**, **Jason Moreland** and **Jessica Toczko**, curated by **Rafael Goldchain**, author-photographer *of I Am My Family*. Miles Nadal JCC Gallery, Feb. 21 to March 17. Opening reception Thursday, Feb. 21, 7 to 9 p.m.

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Love is in the air in *Paris-Manhattan*

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

First-time French director Sophie Lellouche, in *Paris-Manhattan*, takes viewers to Paris on a magical quest for an elusive goal – romantic love.

The 2011 film, hosted by the Chai Tea & A Movie series, is scheduled to be screened on Sunday, Feb. 24 at 5 p.m. at the Cineplex Odeon Sheppard Cinemas (4861 Yonge St.)

The spirit of the American director Woody Allen infuses Lellouche's cinematic valentine. He appears in fleeting excerpts from his own films, as well as in a surprising cameo role.

Allen, the object of Alice Ovitz's admiration and infatuation, seems to be her alter ego. Ovitz (Alice Taglioni), a single woman in her early 30s, is a pharmacist who seeks a suitable companion to ward off the painful pangs of loneliness. Her sister is married, but she appears to be hurtling toward spinsterdom.

As she waits for the blessed day when a handsome and intelligent man will sweep her off her feet, relieving her of angst about the future, Alice glances at a poster of a neurotic Woody Allen in her bedroom.

Alice Taglioni and Patrick Bruel in *Paris-Manhattan*

She likes him because he makes her laugh and "speaks" to her. In imaginary conversations, Allen assures Alice that life can be good and that work and sex are life's most essential needs.

With a few quick skillful strokes, Lellouche creates the cloistered world of a soulful middle-class Parisian Jewish woman who's defined and demarcated by family and profession.

Just when everything seems so hopeless, Alice runs into Victor (Patrick Bruel), the proprietor of a security alarm company. Victor, at first glance, appears grossly unsuitable. He is considerably older and, horrors of horror, he has never even seen a Woody Allen movie.

Nonetheless, Victor makes some headway, thanks in no small part to Allen's sage advice.

The implicit message in *Paris-Manhattan*, a modestly conceived film distinguished by uniformly fine performances, is that care and consideration can sweep aside burdensome obstacles and, maybe, even lead to a flowering of mutual love.

Drake wins Grammy for his latest album Take Care

JTA

The Jewish Canadian singer Drake won a Grammy Award, his first, for rap album of the year.

Also, the indie pop band Fun. won song of the year with *We Are Young* and best new artist at the 55th annual Grammy Awards on Feb. 10 in Los Angeles. Its lead singer, Jack Antonoff, is Jewish, and he thanked all the band's fans after Fun. won in the latter category.

> ***Also nominated for best rap song***

"We've been touring for 12 years and we haven't made money for a very long time," he told the crowd, extending a shout-out to girlfriend Lena Dunham of *Girls* fame.

For Drake, his album *Take Care* brought him the Grammy before the televised portion of the show began. He beat out Lupe Fiasco, Nas, The Roots and Rick Ross.

The former *Degrassi* actor had been nominated 10 times before breaking through this year. He also was nominated for best rap performance for his song *HYFR* and best rap song for *The Motto*.

Fun. also performed at the Grammys, playing its hit *Carry On* during a staged indoor rainstorm at the Staples Center.

In his introduction of the group, actor Neil Patrick Harris said, "As legendary gangsta rap icon Katharine Hepburn once said, 'If you obey all the rules, you don't have any fun.'"

Aubrey Drake Graham was born in Toronto in 1986 to Dennis Graham and Jewish mother Sandi (Sher) Graham.

The cover of Drake's Grammy-winning album *Take Care*

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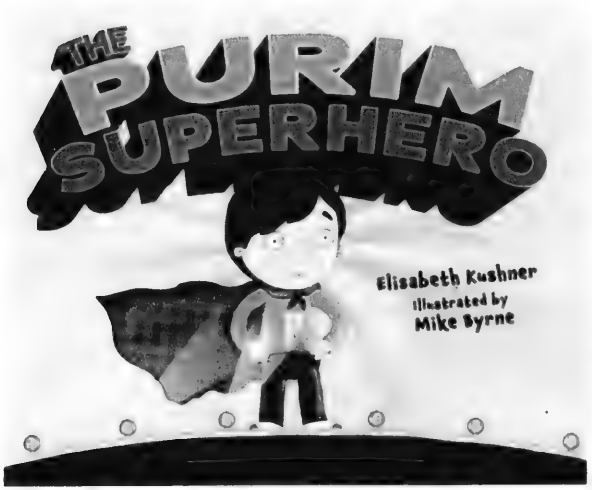
Jacob and Jack
by James Sherman
a comic love letter to the Yiddish theatre, a laugh-out-loud escapade
February 27 - March 10, 2013
Toronto Centre for the Arts 5040 Yonge St.

Children's book about being Jewish in a gay family



Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Although Nate wants to be an alien for Purim, all the other boys are dressing up as superheroes.

He asks his two dads for input and learns that it's OK to be yourself, and that it may seem lonely at times to follow your own instincts, but doing so can also give you strength.

Elizabeth Kushner

That's the gist of *The Purim Superhero*, a children's book by Vancouver author Elizabeth Kushner published by KarBen, which recently won Keshet's LGBT Jewish children's book contest.

The book is about a gay Jewish family and being different, Kushner says. "My favourite books are about more than one thing at once, and let the reader, at least to some extent, find their own message in the story, and that's what I tried to accomplish with *The Purim Superhero*," she reflects.

"So, for one child, the most important aspect of this book may be that Nate has same-sex parents, while another may be reassured by the idea that there's more than one way to be a boy, and someone else might like that there are aliens in it –or superheroes, for that matter."

Herself a Jewish parent, lesbian, writer and librarian for the Vancouver Public Library, Kushner says the holiday of Purim presented a perfect opportunity to tell the story.

"Purim seemed like such a natural theme for a children's book, with many of the appealing qualities of Halloween and April Fool's Day. It's about 'coming out' as yourself – Esther is a great example of someone who comes out of the closet for a good cause – and I thought that would be a good setting for a book about a kid with gay parents and a costume crisis."

She gave her character two dads rather than two moms because, she says, there aren't as many children's books featuring two-dad families.

"I wanted my male protagonist to have trusted adults in his life who were also not conventionally masculine – hence Nate's dads, who, without making too big a deal out of it, cook, and sew, and are very nurturing."

On tour to promote *The Purim Superhero*, (Kulanu Toronto was scheduled to have a live chat with her on its Facebook page on Feb. 17) Kushner is thrilled her book has been so warmly received and hopes it will encourage kids to respect what's individual and unique in themselves.

"I hope it will teach them to pay attention to the voice inside themselves that tells them what's important to them. I think both of those are very Jewish values, and that living them takes a fair bit of courage," she says.

The Purim Superhero is intended for kids age four through nine.

JEWS IN FILM

February 27, March 6 & March 13
2:00 PM Lecture (Dessert at 1:30 PM)

Movies about the Jewish experience and Jewish people have many unforgettable images in cinema history. We welcome Toronto film critic Shlomo Schwartzberg and Israeli film expert Amy Kronish who will share thoughtful insights, witty comparisons and perceptive criticisms of famous movies, and the actors, writers, directors, producers and studio moguls who created them.

February 27 **Shlomo Schwartzberg** Remarkable Movies Part I
March 6 **Amy Kronish** – Contemporary Issues in Israeli Society through Israeli Cinema
March 13 **Shlomo Schwartzberg** Remarkable Movies Part II

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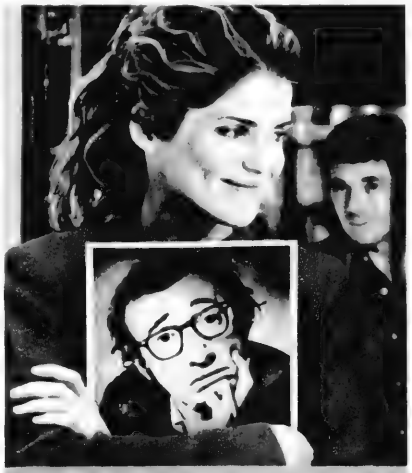

TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS

PARIS MANHATTAN

The perfect antidote to the midwinter blues! Idealistic pharmacist Alice is still single, much to the dismay of her quirky family. She takes refuge in Woody Allen movies. In her daydreams, she has long talks with the filmmaker, asking him about everything from love to work. When she meets Vincent (played by the gorgeous Patrick Bruel from Un Secret and Five Brothers), her life gets turned upside down. A charming romantic comedy that's "as bubbly and lively as Paris in spring" (Le Figaro). Paris Manhattan features a delightful array of oddball characters, as well as a playful cameo by Allen himself that will definitely make you smile.

France, 2011, 77 min, English & French with English subtitles. **Director:** Sophie Lellouche. **Cast:** Alice Taglioni, Patrick Bruel and Marine Delterme

Sunday, February 24
4:00pm Chai Tea, 5:00pm Film

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Goalie racks up honours at NCAA Division III school

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

According to a recent game summary, Plymouth State University's Ali Ponte stopped 29 of 30 shots to lead the Panthers to a 2-1 victory over St. Michael's College.

That's a .967 save percentage – pretty good in any hockey league, including the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) Women's East, a Division III program.

While any goaltender would be happy with that statistic, you'd have to go back to earlier in the year to see just how good a season Ponte is having. In the Codfish Bowl Tournament – a New England tradition – the Richmond Hill native stopped 97 of 105 shots over two games, including a 64-save effort against Lake Forest University. The performances, albeit in a losing cause, led to Ponte being named to the All-Tournament Team.

Around the same time, Ponte was named to the ECAC Women's East Weekly Honor Roll, marking the fourth time she'd received the recognition.

And then last week, she did it again. Following a 1-1 tie with New England College in which she stopped 33 of 34 shots, she was named to the ECAC Women's East Weekly Honor Roll for the fifth time. Ponte made 12 saves in a hectic third period to help the Panthers kill three out of four penalties.

Ponte, a third-year player who's studying environmental sciences, has been a key factor in Plymouth's bid to make the playoffs for the first time ever.

So far this season, she's sporting a 3.39 goals against average to go along with a .916 save percentage.

Given the rubber she's seen, she's pretty happy with the results. Speaking on the phone from New Hampshire, Ponte said she doesn't mind seeing as many pucks as she did in the Codfish bowl. "I like getting shots, which is one of the things I like about being on the team," she said.

Going to Plymouth, Ponte knew she'd likely see plenty of action. "It's a new program, with a new culture," she said. The team's goal was to just get into the playoffs.

Now a junior in the hockey program, Ponte got a rude, if not unexpected, welcome to the league in her freshman year: "In my first year, we won only one game. It was kind of a rough year."

Three-quarters of the players were freshmen like her, and last year, the difficulties continued. Conference powerhouse Norwich twice directed more than 50 shots at her in 14-0 pastings. In one, Ponte was pulled after allowing six goals in two periods. Her replacement allowed eight goals in one period. In one of the contests, her team replied with five shots of their own.

Overmatched? Undoubtedly. But this season, the Panthers are challenging for a playoff spot. At *The CJN*'s press time, the Panthers were 4-15-3 overall with three games remaining, versus Castleton, Saint Anselm College and UMass Boston. One win out of the three would clinch a playoff berth.

For Ponte, being counted on to backstop the team and give it a chance to win is something she relishes. "I love the pressure of being a goalie," she said. "Even if your team doesn't score, if you don't let in a goal, you won't lose."

Ali Ponte

Like many kids of her generation, Ponte started skating at an early age and was playing hockey at eight. At around 10, she switched full time to netminding, attending goalie camps in the summer and playing against boys right up to Grade 10.

After playing for Markham Stouffville in the Provincial Women's Hockey League, the premier women's hockey league in Ontario, she was recruited by Plymouth, earning a partial scholarship.

Given her experience playing at a top level in Ontario – "lots of girls [from the league] do end up on the Canadian Olympic team" – Ponte added a level of stability and leadership to the Panthers' roster.

She's got one more year at Plymouth next season, and after that, she'll move to British Columbia to study geology in grad school and play in a women's hockey league.

"I just love the game. I want to play for the fun of it," she said.

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Jaffe, Nystrom to coach U.S. Maccabiah hockey team

Compiled by CJN Staff

NHL Network analyst William (Billy) Jaffe and Dallas Stars player Eric Nystrom will serve as head coach and assistant coach, respectively, for the U.S. hockey team at the Maccabiah Games in Israel.

Jaffe participated in the 15th Maccabiah Games as captain of the U.S. hockey team, leading them to a silver medal. He also played hockey for the University of Michigan from 1987 to 1989.

Prior to his work for the NHL Network, he was colour analyst for the New York Islanders, Versus Network, MSG Network, NESN and Rogers Sportsnet.

"Going to Israel in 1997 as the team captain was a fun learning and cultural experience that I wouldn't have had if it wasn't for ice hockey," Jaffe said.

"My expectations are to help the players understand what a wonderful opportunity it is to experience something unique and special like the Maccabiah Games. It will be an incredible athletic and life experience."

The United States is expected to ice a strong team, with many NCAA Division 1 players to draw from. Canada has announced its team, which consists of players from the NCAA, major junior leagues and non-NHL professional ranks.

Mike Keenan, a Stanley Cup-winning coach with the New York Rangers, will coach the Canadian entry.

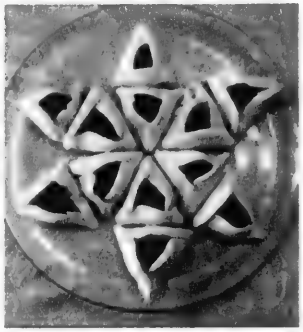
Nystrom, the son of former New York Islander Bob Nystrom, has experience representing the United States at various levels: he played in the under-18 World Championship and in the World Championships in 2010.

Nystrom attended the University of Michigan, qualifying for the all-rookie team during his debut season and becoming the captain during his final year.

His NHL career has included stints with the Calgary Flames, who took him in the first round of the 2002 entry draft, the Minnesota Wild and currently the Dallas Stars.

The ultimate in homemade hamantashen

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN



It isn't Purim without hamantashen. Granted, at Purim it's important to sing songs, hear the Megillah and tell the story of Purim, which are also lots of fun. However, as soon as those activities are done, we look for the triangular shaped pastries stuffed with yummy fillings like dried or fresh fruits, poppy seeds, chocolate or cream cheese. We eat hamantashen because they are delicious, but we should know that these triangle pastries, symbolic of hats, ears or pockets, represent the annihilation of the villain Haman.

Preparing and baking your own hamantashen should be an enjoyable event. No one should have the experience of baking hamantashen that leak out filling all over the baking sheet, spread apart while baking and/or totally lose their shape.

Even if you have had difficulty in the past, review the following guidelines and you will be able to master any hamantash recipe with ease and turn out tasty, beautiful batches on your first try.

Dough

Chill the dough. This makes it easier to roll and prevents spreading during baking.

Roll the dough to a consistent 1/4-inch thick. This will make it easier to handle and shape. Only roll the scraps once, or pastry will be tough.

Use a round cookie cutter, no smaller than 3 to 4 inches in diameter. Anything smaller will be too difficult to work with.

Brush the edges of the circles with egg wash before filling.

Filling

The filling should be thick to prevent running while the hamantashen are baking. It's best to follow a tested hamantashen filling recipe. Using jam on its own is not a good idea, as it will run. Mix jam with dried or fresh fruit for a better result.

Check the recipe to see if the filling should be chilled before using. Chilling the filling makes it less sticky and easier to handle. Note, however, that this does not apply to chocolate fillings.

Do not overfill the hamantashen. For a 3- to 4-inch pastry circle, use about one teaspoon of filling. Any more will cause the hamantashen to spread open and/or leak. Place the filling in the centre of the circle.

Folding

Do not pinch your hamantashen! We all seem to have an instinct to pinch and we must overcome it. Hamantashen need to be folded into neat triangles much like packing a carton, with one "flap" overlapping the other.

Baking

Double up baking sheets for more insulation to protect pastries.

Use parchment paper on the baking sheet to prevent any sticking.

Place baking sheets on the middle rack of the oven.

THE ULTIMATE HOMEMADE HAMANTASHEN

Pick one filling or double up the dough and try them both!

Prune Filling

2 cups pitted prunes
1 cup soft raisins (dry raisins may be plumped by soaking them in warm water)
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup orange marmalade

Combine the ingredients in the food processor until smooth. Chill for a minimum of one hour.

Chocolate Chip Cheesecake Filling

1 cup cream cheese
2 tbsp. honey
1/2 cup sugar
1/8 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pure vanilla
1/2 cup semi sweet chocolate chips

Combine cream cheese, honey, sugar, salt and vanilla in the food processor until smooth. Add the chocolate chips and pulse until most of the chocolate chips are grated into the cheese filling. Chill for a minimum of one hour.

Dough

3 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp. pure vanilla
1/2 cup vegetable oil
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1 egg plus 1 tsp. water, lightly beaten, as egg wash for cut dough circle
1 egg white, lightly beaten, for coating unbaked hamantashen

Using the food processor or electric mixer, combine eggs and sugar until smooth. Add the vanilla and oil until combined. Add the flour, baking powder and salt, mixing just until it begins to come together. Remove dough from work bowl onto a floured pastry board or counter. Sprinkle with flour and knead dough until it is smooth. Flatten dough, cover it with plastic wrap and refrigerate for a minimum of one hour.

Divide dough into two and roll one section, either on a floured board or between two pieces of parchment paper, until it is 1/4 inch thick. Cut dough into circles with a 3 inch or larger round cookie cutter.

Brush the edge of each circle with the egg wash, then place a teaspoon of filling in the centre.

There will be 3 flaps to create the triangle. Start at the left side and make a flap folding in towards the centre. Make another flap at the right side folding in towards the centre, overlapping the left flap at the top and creating a point. Fold up the remaining flap to complete the triangle. When folding, tuck the left side of the last flap under the left flap while leaving the right side over top of the right flap. Each side of the triangle should have a flap that folds over and a corner that folds under. Brush the top of each hamantash with the egg white.

Bake in a preheated oven at 350 for 15 to 20 minutes, or until golden.

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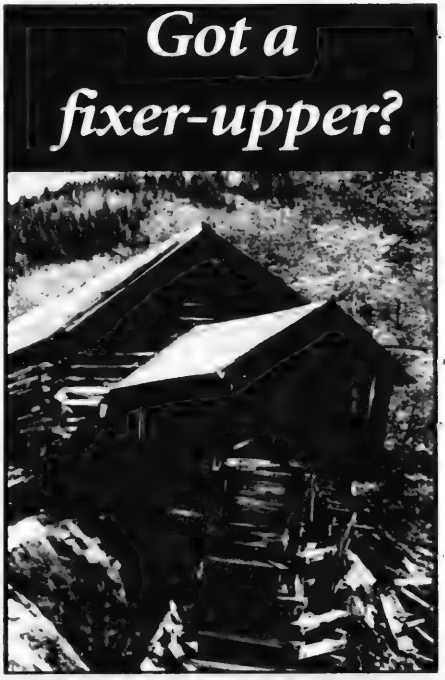


More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Argentine musician to work with at-risk youth

Simja Dujov is bringing his energetic klezmer-infused music to Toronto for the first time. ***[Lola Garcia Garrido photo]***

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Simja Dujov's name means "Happy Soul," and that's exactly what people can expect to see on stage when he makes his Canadian debut at Toronto's Lula Lounge.

The Argentine musician arrived in the city on Feb. 17 and will be in town until March 1 as part of an artistic residency with the Koffler Centre of the Arts and the Ashkenaz Foundation.

The two-week residency is filled with workshops and master classes, and it will culminate in a group performance of Dujov and six other culturally and musically diverse musicians at Toronto's Lula Lounge on Feb. 27.

Working with SKETCH, an organization that brings cultural opportunities to Toronto's homeless and underprivileged youth, Dujov will run a music workshop with 10 at-risk youth. Together, they will collaborate on an original composition.

"I'm very excited to work and see what blends we discover together," he told *The CJN* over the phone from Buenos Aires. "We can share as much as we can about our music and culture and ideas, so we can have deeper cooperation."

Dujov will bring to the mix his own blend of Latin klezmer and gypsy cumbia, with a touch of surf-style music. The 30-year-old musician describes his sound as the music of his hometown of Córdoba, Argentina, portrayed as if his city had sand and waves – which it doesn't.

"It's a way of imagining how my city would be like and a way of creating my own new world with music," he says.

Dujov has been playing music his whole life, but discovered klezmer when he was in university studying classical composition and symphonic music. One of his professors directed a Yiddish choir. Knowing that Dujov was Jewish, he invited him to sing.

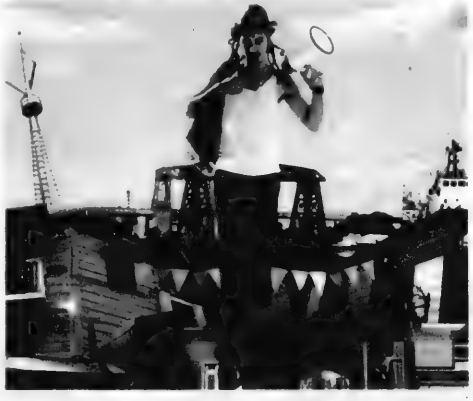
Although most of the participants were in their 70s, Dujov describes the rehearsals as having the atmosphere of a party.

"I went into this Yiddish culture by sharing this moment with these kind of grandparents," Dujov jokes.

Soon after, he began to perform at weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, and in synagogues before starting his own klezmer band.

While he was travelling in New York City and Tel Aviv in 2008, he decided to form a band that played original music. It was then that he realized how different Jewish life can be around the world.

"I grew up listening to Jimi Hendrix and Latin American music, but that doesn't make me less Jewish than a guy born in Jerusalem, wearing a big hat and a beard," he says, adding that it was travelling that taught him to discard the fixed ideas he had of how people live around the world. "That makes you feel more free for your life and your own musical creation."



About his visit to Canada, Dujov says he's excited to see how Canadians live – and he's especially looking forward to the visit since he has been reading a biography of poet and singer Leonard Cohen, who he describes as one of his inspirations.

Born Gabriel Dujovne, Dujov picked his stage name to represent his love of parties. "Simja" is a Spanish spelling of simchah, and "Dujov" is translated as "soul" from Russian.

His album is called *Santificaras la fiesta*, which is a play on the Spanish translation of the fourth commandment to "Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy." In Spanish, both religious holidays and "parties" are called fiesta, so he used a play on words to "make sacred the fiestas."

"We don't need to be holy just on Saturdays… You have your own work and life and you decide when is your best moment to think about the holy things," he says.

He describes parties as holy moments, as in times of reflection and connection with others and with "your other self" – you can become the person you want to be without the restrictions you face at work or during other parts of life.

"It's not just a place for escaping reality – it's much more," he says.

Although Dujov's music isn't necessarily religious, he says his faith does come through in his songwriting.

"I don't want to be like a priest trying to spread religion, but I think religion can be a way of life," he says. "I write about religion, politics, I write about love and family and things that happen in my life. I don't write specific things about religion, but it's all over."

Dujov says he hopes Torontonians will enjoy the party the live show creates.

"If you want just the sounds, you can buy a CD, but if you're at a show, it should be a moment for your senses," he says.

He hopes people will hear his music and that it will make them happy.

"Our cultures were inspired by happiness," he says. "If you keep on being inspired by happiness and not by hate, we can do much better things."

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The perfect number

Married With Kids

Lauren Kramer

Over the past 25 years, I've been no stranger to Weight Watchers. When my 10 extra pounds have felt like an insurmountable burden, I'd present my credit card, walk away with another little booklet and show up for weekly weigh-ins at various church halls. It would alleviate my conscience, somewhat, and make me feel that, if nothing else, at least I was on the road to a thinner me.

Each time, as I'd join the long line of women awaiting caloric judgment after a week's worth of battling food cravings, the scene would be the same. Those around me would range from reed-thin to normal-weighted women, with occasionally a few obese or visibly overweight ladies among them.

A gasp of distress would come from the digital scale and all eyes would be riveted on the woman poised on top of it. She'd be shaking her head, clearly distressed at this week's number.

"Yes dearie," the Weight Watchers employee behind the counter would say as she recorded the evidence.

"You gained two pounds. Sorry," she'd add, sounding anything but sorry.

This is the world of Weight Watchers, where food is measured in points and distinguished by numeric values rather than by flavour, texture or taste. This is the home of the woman laden with weight complexes, the person beaten by the social yardstick of sexual appeal into believing that she's fat.

Deep down, she suspects everyone, from her friends to her lovers, will like her more if she robs her body of its excess baggage, replacing fatty rolls with bone-baring skin. It's what keeps Weight Watchers in business, really – women on their never-ending quest for the perfect number on the scale, the number that will say, unequivocally, "You're thin, and you're gorgeous!"

Recently, I reached the perfect number, the one I'd been striving toward for years. It was no thanks to Weight Watchers, with whom I parted amicable company several years back. Dr. Pierre Dukan, the famous, in-vogue French Jewish doctor, helped me get there this time, encouraging me with examples from his book, *The Dukan Diet*.

I'd been certain that when I reached my perfect number, my body issues would be gone and that I'd look in the mirror with pride rather than disdain and criticism. Yet the moment of victory was anti-climactic to say the least. The scale clearly stated that I'd reached my goal, but the bathroom mirror said otherwise.

"Look at those bulges," it leered, deprecatingly. "Maybe it's time for a new perfect number, 10 pounds lower."

The notion of a perfect number is so tempting. When you're far from it, it gives you a goal that can make it worth foregoing dessert or doing that extra set of jumping jacks. Maybe the fun is in the journey toward the goal, and not the arrival, after all.

But a little voice in my head argues that there's no such thing as a perfect number. "It's about accepting you as you," it declares. "Surely you knew that all along?"

BREAKFAST ON THE GO

3 eggs
½ c milk
½ c sugar
1 tbsp vanilla extract
1 tsp cinnamon
10 slices challah cubed,
1 c mixed berries (fresh or frozen)
2 tbsp maple syrup

In a bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, sugar, vanilla and cinnamon until well combined. Add cubed bread; toss gently until egg mixture is absorbed. Add berries; toss gently to combine. Refrigerate a few hours or overnight to allow bread to absorb liquid.

Divide muffin mixture evenly into greased muffin tins and drizzle with maple syrup. Bake in preheated 375° oven for 25 min. Serve warm. These freeze very well –to reheat, place in microwave on defrost for 1 min. Drizzle warm muffins with more maple syrup if desired.

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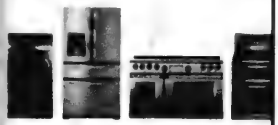

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

An interview with French journalist Antoine Vitkine (below), who talks about Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* – its popularity worldwide for so many years and how it can be used as an educational tool.

French writer and editor Martine Gozlan, who, in her latest book, *Israël contre Israël* (*Israel against Israel*), discusses the historical and current internal divisions in the Jewish state.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa writes about his hope that a new social policy-oriented coalition could bring Israelis living abroad back home.

An Israeli doctor teaches dogs to sniff out cancer.

Author's stories look at human frailties, strengths

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Journalist Fran Edelstein takes readers on an emotional voyage and through a variety of cultures in *Set to Music and Other Stories*, her first work of fiction.

The seven stories in this book explore many themes and feature a kaleidoscope of countries. Edelstein includes characters of various ages and families who live at various socio-economic levels. Her characters experience both love and loss, and the stories offer insights into human strengths and frailties.

"The book is the fruit of many encounters with people and places that have profoundly affected me, all marinated in a good dose of imagination, fantasy, humour and reflection," Edelstein says.

Edelstein, an octogenarian, was born in Montreal and raised in Toronto in the height of the Depression.

She says that she wanted to be a writer, but her financial situation forced her to get a paying job with the government.

"I always left bits of paper around the house scribbled with ideas and remembrances as they came to me."

At age 42, she attended creative writing classes at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute (now Ryerson University). It was then that she wrote her first short story, *The Mantilla*, which is included in the book.

The story begins in Mexico and reaches into the lives of a group of diverse individuals. It is the mantilla that binds them all together.

Edelstein, a freelance journalist, has been published in the *Canadian Antique Showcase*, and she had a monthly column in *Canadian Coin and Stamp News*. Her feature articles have also been published in the *Toronto Star*, the *Toronto Sun* and the *London Free Press*.

A great-grandmother, Edelstein says she is passionate about storytelling. "I love my thesaurus, but I love people best."

The title story, *Set to Music*, tells of a young piano virtuoso who is faced with overwhelming obstacles that require choices or the absence of choices. Anne is losing her sight because of a fall from her beloved horse. It is a love story that stirs the emotions.

Deedu is written through the eyes and with the language of a four-year-old boy. The child is fascinated with words. *Deedu* is the story of love between the young boy, an old man and a little girl, as well as about the choices that the boy makes.

Edelstein's themes are challenging. In other stories, she writes about marriage, survivors and a nurse locked in a hospital cooler with the body of a killer.

Edelstein says she is currently writing her first novel, which will reintroduce one of the characters in the lead story of *Set to Music and Other Stories*.

"I won't tell you what it is about," she says. "It will spoil the surprise. I'll just say that through music and the arts, for all nations of the world, is where peace might be found."

Set to Music and Other Stories (iUniverse, Inc. Bloomington) can be ordered through www.amazon.com or through a bookstore. It's also available at the Toronto Public Library. For more information, visit www.franedelstein.com.

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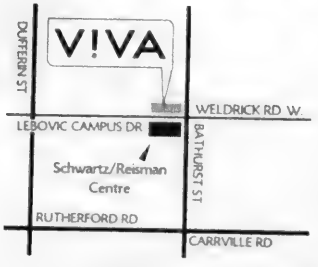


The Canadian Jewish News

Brides

We met for lunch and stayed for life

Dorry Korn
Special to The CJN

Coming up this July 3, we will be celebrating our special 25th wedding anniversary. Our marriage took place at Temple Sinai. Our officiating rabbi was Jordan Pearlson of blessed memory. We lovingly called him our "SPA," which stood for our spiritual advisor. He not only was our teacher/mentor, held in the highest esteem, we were also fortunate to have him as a dear friend and loving family member.

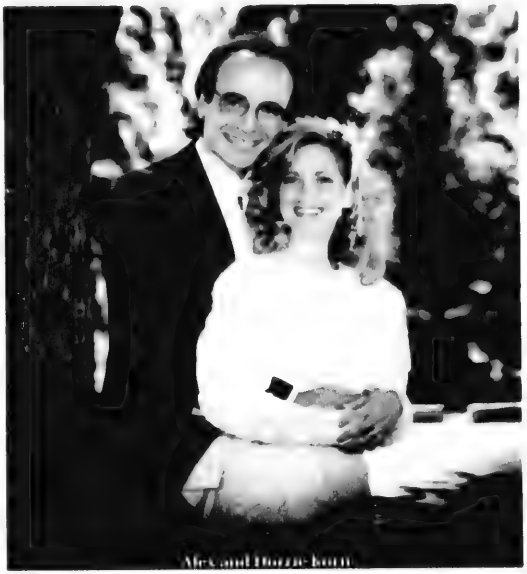
Alex Korn, I have had the time of my life and I owe it all to you. You came into my life when I was a single parent with two girls and a boy. Our mutual friend, Bill Robinson, was the driving force behind our meeting. From the first phone call, there was an ease of conversation. The humour was ever-present, and I was eagerly anticipating talking in person on our first date.

You arrived at my front door that day, all 6-foot-1 of you. My daughter, Reesa, was home, and her eyes were checking you out and assessing Mom's date. The big smile on her face said it all, and off we went on our great adventure, on Dec. 5, 1987. We went to dinner, and afterward we went to a dance club.

It was a chilly night and we simultaneously buttoned up each other's coat collars. Kindness and consideration were there from the outset.

Three days later, it was my 42nd birthday, and you sent a bouquet of roses. The next day, in spite of us saying we would only be friends, we fell in love.

Having spent the day together at what turned out to be an all-day lunch, we found out that we felt at home in each other's presence, sharing deep personal life stories and opening up to each other as never before, totally trusting one another. The time passed in the blink of an eye.

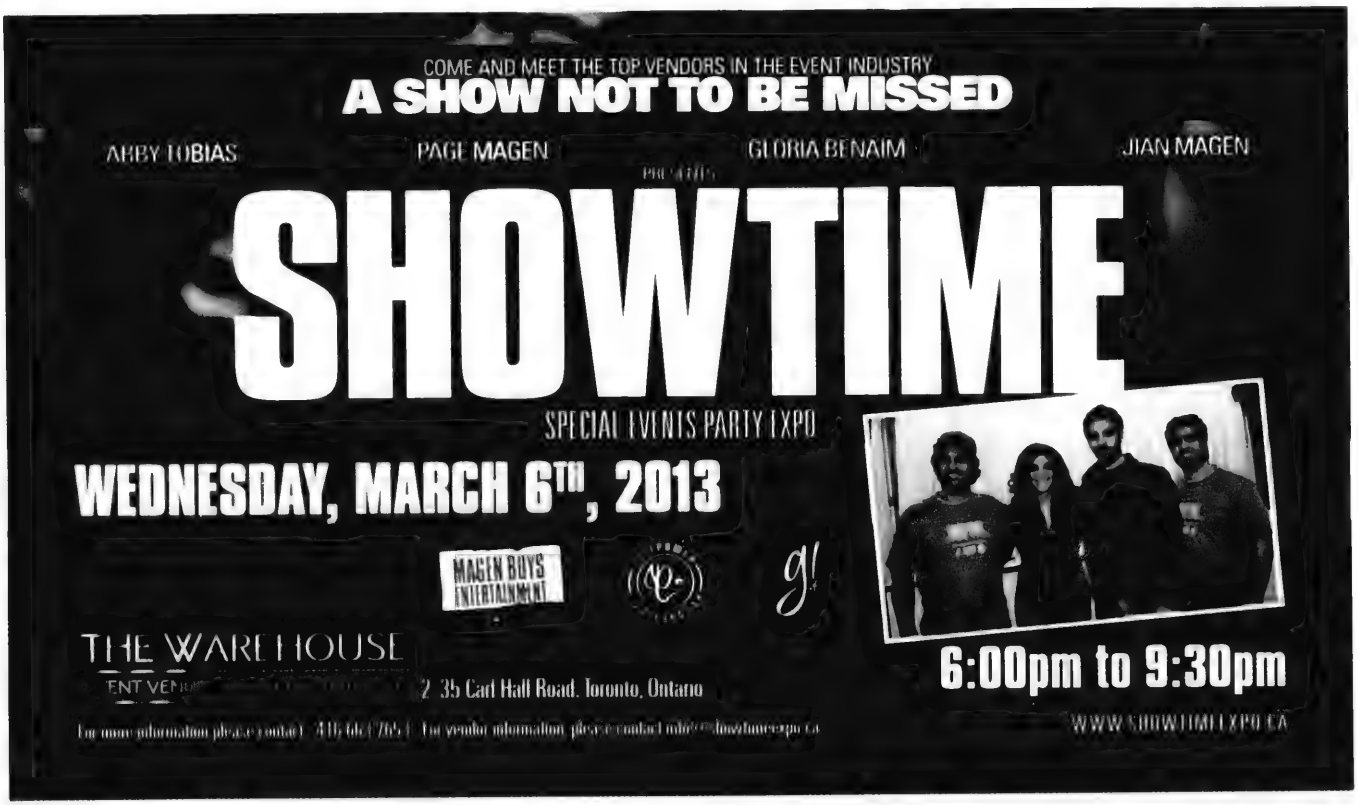

Alex and Dorrie Korn

God and His/Her angels were working overtime by bringing us together. We became engaged that evening.

We came for lunch and stayed for life.

Alex has two boys and a girl, so between us, we have three sons and three daughters. We had a marvelous wedding. Our kids marched down the aisle looking ever so beautiful. Our dear mothers, of blessed memory, looked so radiantly happy knowing that their kids had found their basherts.

This union and blending of our two families has brought us much naches. Our children are married, and it's so wondrous watching them parent their children. Our treasures, our grandchildren, have given us our dearest names: Bubbie and Zaida, Bubster, and Bubs and Z. Our hearts are overflowing with joy and gratitude. L'chaim!



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Your wedding day won't be perfect, but so what?

Chloe Korenblum
Special to The CJN

Whoever depicts a wedding as a perfect, happily-ever-after fairy tale has obviously never tried to organize one.

It's a day as real as any other, and as unpredictable and as flawed as the next.

Although my wedding took place on a beautiful sunny summer day, it was anything but smooth.

With no sign of my makeup artist a mere few hours before the ceremony, I started off my wedding day in a panic, phoning every salon in the area, trying desperately to get a last-minute appointment.

She ended up arriving two hours late (what a relief!), and when I rushed into the synagogue, picture-ready and – amazingly – only 30 minutes behind schedule, we were told that our ketubah (as unbelievable as it sounds) was written backwards and would need to be redone.

Just when we thought nothing else could go wrong, in that beautiful moment under the chupah as Henry placed the ring on my finger, my mother's cellphone started going off!

Since it was a new phone, it took her at least a minute to find the volume button, during which time the rabbi politely advised her that unless it was a call from God, she should probably not answer it.

Chloe and Henry Korenblum

Minutes later, one of the bridesmaids nearly fainted and had to be escorted out of the chapel. Some say she was overwhelmed by the intensity and beauty of the ceremony, but others say she probably shouldn't have skipped breakfast that morning.

In the end, we made it to the moment we had all been waiting for: a crash of a glass and the kiss. Home free!

As we walked back down the aisle, a smile plastered on my face, all I could think was, "This is the most incredible and happy day of my life." Not one part of me was thinking about the silly imperfections. The love and joy of sharing this day with my husband and our families overpowered it all.

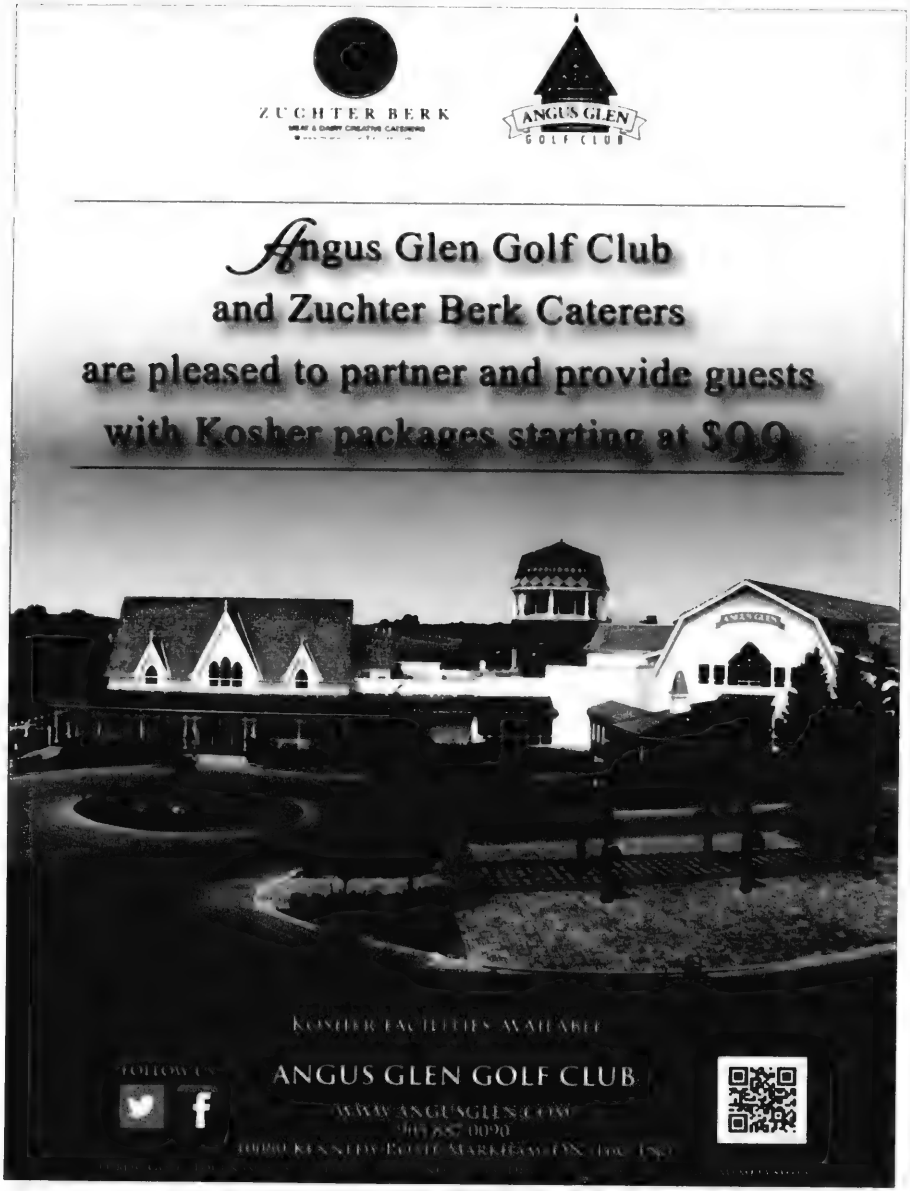
I already look back and chuckle when I think of the moment where I am 90 per cent sure I heard my mother swear out loud in the chapel while fumbling awkwardly with her phone.

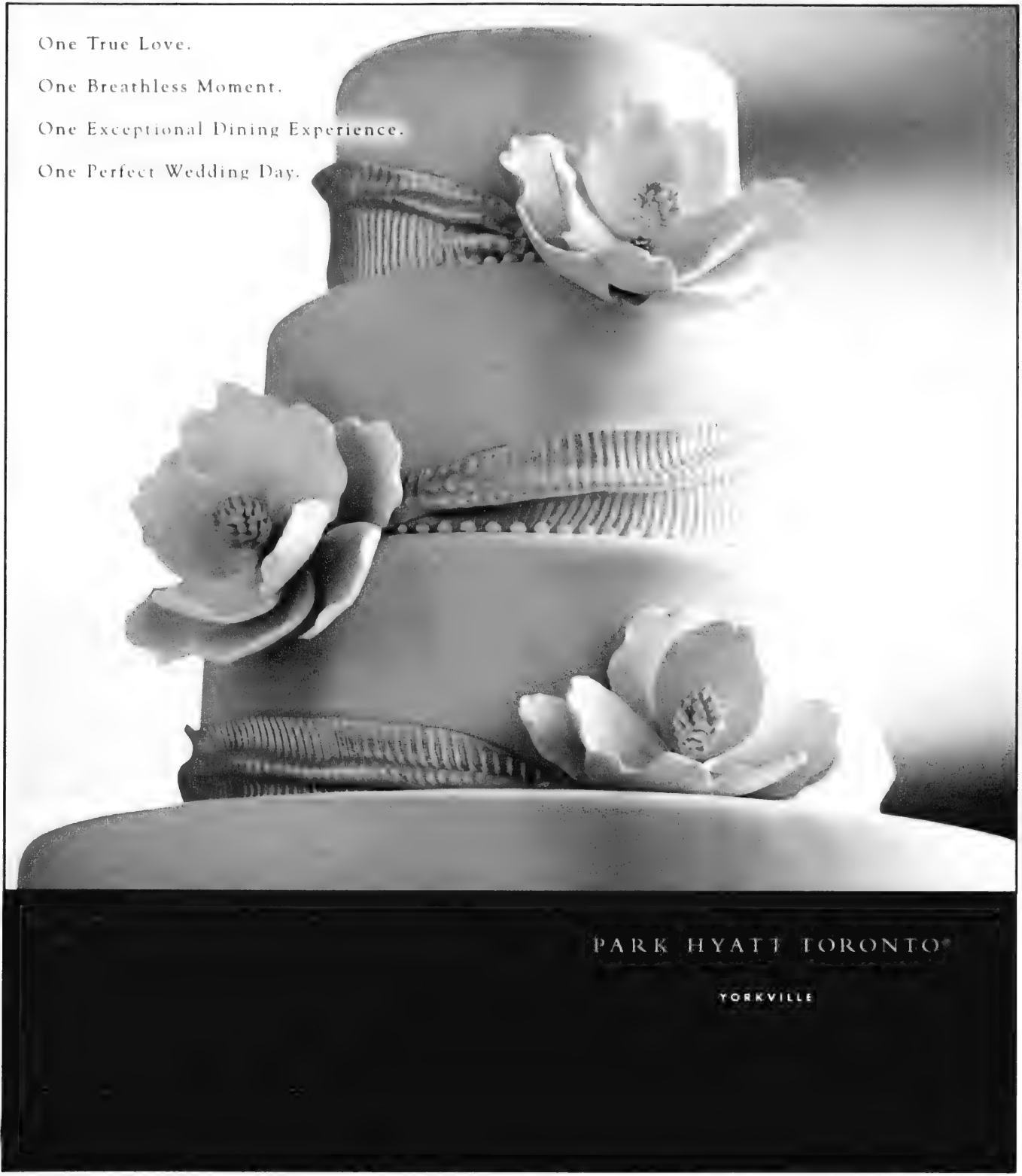
As much as our wedding was a beautiful moment between Henry and me, it was, above all, a day shared and created by our family and friends.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Well, the same certainly applies to weddings. Not one part of our wedding would have happened without the time, effort and creativity of our loved ones. It was a day planned, built and nurtured by many.

So if you are in the process of organizing your wedding, don't be devastated if it doesn't go exactly according to plan. In fact, I can pretty well promise you that it won't be perfect. But neither is the person you are marrying, neither are your families, and neither are your friends.

It is the total package – the amazing, the unpredictable, the touching and the hilarious – that make a wedding day, as it turned out for us, the happiest day of our lives.

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Fifty years together across Canada

Gail Cooper
Special to The CJN

My parents, Sylvia (Macklis) and Frank White, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this past December, exemplifying for their children, grandchildren and everyone who knows them, a true, loving and long-lasting relationship.

Originally from Edenbridge, Sask., and raised on a farm with his two brothers, Frank excelled academically. After graduating as a teacher, he took a trip west to visit family in Vancouver.

Sylvia Macklis grew up with two sisters in Winnipeg's famous North End, graduating from the infamous St. John's Tech. After high school and a brief stint in the work force, Sylvia moved to Vancouver and lived with cousins.

Frank and Sylvia met in Vancouver on a blind date arranged by their relatives. They married on Dec. 24, 1962, in Winnipeg, surrounded by family and friends, and they settled there. Frank was a high school science teacher for 30 years at Stonewall Collegiate, in Stonewall, (30 minutes outside of Winnipeg), and Sylvia stayed home to raise their three children: Gail, Lorne and Ron.

All three children graduated from Winnipeg's I.L. Peretz Elementary School, where they studied Yiddish and Hebrew and strengthened their Jewish identity, culture and heritage. These values were reinforced at home with large family dinners for holidays and simchahs, a tradition that continues to this day. Sylvia and Frank instilled in their children a value for education and a good work ethic. All three children continued on to higher education and successful careers.

Sylvia was the ultimate mother and housewife. There was a home-cooked meal on the table every night, she packed lunches with love and sewed clothes and costumes for her children. She not only effectively managed a busy household, she also found time to learn to swim later in life and became a swim instructor for many years. Later, when the kids were older, Sylvia co-founded and operated a successful travelling ladies clothing and fashion show business for seniors.

Wonderful family memories include annual summer camping trips in a "deluxe" pop-up tent trailer. Over the years, the White family drove west to Vancouver, east to Quebec and west to California, camping everywhere in between.

Frank was also a devoted coach of his daughter's softball team for many years.

Gail, Lorne and Ron all moved from Winnipeg to Toronto, beginning in 1989. Whenever Frank and Sylvia visited Toronto, the three "kids" received the best of all care packages, filled with Sylvia's baking and cooking, and looked forward to Frank's handiwork since he fixed and repaired things while he was in town.

Sylvia and Frank White

Frank and Sylvia finally moved to Toronto to be with their children and granddaughters in October 2010.

They have been busy retirees and volunteers for the last 20 years. In 2003, Frank was the recipient of a Winnipeg Shem Tov Award presented by the federation on behalf of the Gwen Sector Creative Living Centre for his many years of wide-ranging volunteer service.

Now in Toronto, they find there is not enough time to do everything that's offered in the community. They are able to attend all their granddaughters' activities, recitals and ceremonies celebrating their achievements. They have reconnected with former Winnipeggers and have made many new Toronto friends. As was the case in Winnipeg, whenever you call them now in Toronto, they are never home!

For 50 years, their love has never wavered. Sylvia and Frank are doting grandparents to Jennifer and Alison, wonderful and helpful parents and truly best friends.

My cousin's magical Jewish Greek wedding

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

A small, eclectic group of guests, a picturesque setting on the Sea of Crete and, unobjectively speaking, a bit of magic – were among the memorable elements of my cousin Joe's wedding to his bride, Ariana, four months ago.

It didn't take long for my husband, my daughter and me to realize why Joe and Ariana, both Americans, had told us in a save-the-date email that the town of Hania – a 50-minute flight from Athens, and the city where he had proposed – might be the best place in the world. Our taxi from the airport let us off just outside the old town, where our hotel, the Doge, was located on a pedestrian thoroughfare in the city's former Jewish quarter, a short walk from Hania's 14th-century Venetian port.

We entered Kondylaki Street under a lush canopy of bougainvillea, pulling our suitcases along the cobblestone road. On the short walk to our hotel we passed shops housed in centuries-old buildings. Their wares spilled out onto the street – a treasure trove of jewelry, olive oil, local honey, pashminas, postcards, soaps, ceramics, spices and Greek mountain tea.

To our right we saw the Ela taverna, a former soap factory built by Jews in 1650. Across the way, on our left, a sign pointed toward the 15th-century Etz Hayyim Synagogue where the wedding would take place.

Another sign advertised a restaurant called ToXani, where we would eat dinner later that night – a multi-course feast put together by the genial owner. It was our introduction to Cretan cuisine, including my new favourite, fennel pie, and – to end the meal – Raki, a highly alcoholic grape-based spirit that's a local specialty.

Before the wedding, we stopped in to see the synagogue. Originally a Venetian Catholic church, it was given to the Jewish community by the Ottomans when they took over Crete in the 16th century.

We were charmed by the open-air treed courtyard paved with pebbles, and by the arched walls and carved dark wood in the sanctuary. Rabbinic graves and an ancient mikvah beyond the sanctuary underscored the building's history. Sadly, the Jews who remained in Hania in 1944 perished en route to Auschwitz. The community had been among the oldest in Europe, dating back 2,400 years, according to the synagogue website (etz-hayyim-hania.org).

Four days after the wedding, we returned to Etz Hayyim for a Friday night service and partook of hearty challah filled with seeds, nuts and fruit. It was baked by Nicholas Stavroulakis, the synagogue's director, who officiated at Joe and Ariana's wedding. The founder and former director of the Jewish Museum of Greece in Athens, Stavroulakis was the driving force behind the restoration of the synagogue in the late 1990s.

The nuptials – a rare event for a town with a Jewish population of less than 10 – were featured on local television news.

Joe and Ariana pose for pictures at the harbour.

On the afternoon of the wedding, a glorious October day, Joe, Ariana and some 30 wedding guests walked a few blocks to the harbour for picture-taking, led by a quintet of pied pipers – Ariana's two brothers, L.A.-based musicians who have their own group, and three of their musician friends, one American and two from Europe.

Continued on page B08

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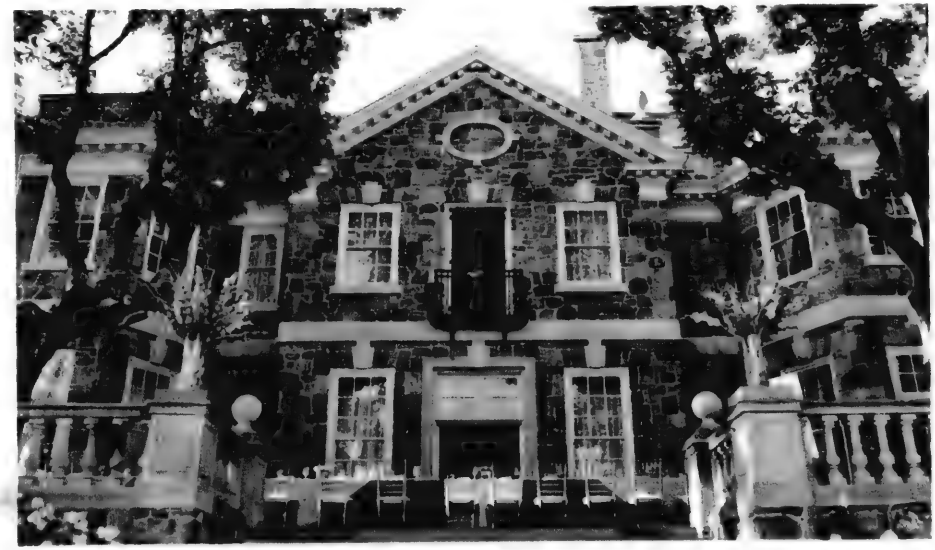

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Music, champagne, and good karma

Continued from page B07

The night before the wedding, at a restaurant overlooking the harbour, we danced spontaneously as the five musicians played. It was like a scene from a movie.

By coincidence, shortly before the wedding, a real movie was filmed in Hania. In early October, actors Viggo Mortensen and Kirsten Dunst were in town to shoot *The Two Faces of January*, a thriller expected to be released in December of this year.

While Joe and Ariana's wedding was a more modest production, it didn't go unnoticed.

My daughter and two cousins were late for picture-taking, and had to ask for directions more than once. "Wedding? That way. Five minutes ago," they were told.

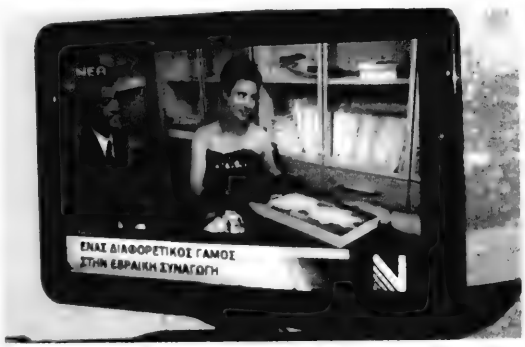
As we walked through the labyrinth of streets and alleys from the hotel to the harbour and back, merchants greeted us from their doorways, and residents took pictures from apartment balconies.

After the formal pictures, which Joe had arranged with a photographer he found online, we headed back to the hotel for a drink before returning to the shul, about a one-minute walk away.

Earlier in the day, my husband and I had accompanied Joe's mother to search for plastic champagne flutes and other last-minute items. It seemed miraculous when we finally found the glasses at a tiny store so packed with merchandise that there was only a narrow path in the middle for customers.

"When I think back on the wedding," Joe told me recently, "I think about how little we planned in advance, and how it all came together so perfectly. I feel blessed."

The wedding – enhanced by a silk chupah hand-painted by Ariana's mother – was very casual, compared to a typical synagogue wedding in North America. Joe and Ariana were dressed formally, in tuxedo and gown, but Stavroulakis wore blue jeans and sat in the pews with us before the ceremony began, talking about Jewish weddings and recounting local Jewish history. He wanted us to feel like a community before the wedding began, he said.



The wedding was featured on the local news.

Guests included staff members from our hotel, people affiliated with the synagogue, and close friends and relatives from the United States and Canada. We ranged in age from under a year to septuagenarian, but somehow meshed pretty quickly in the two days before the wedding, getting to know each other over leisurely al fresco meals – breakfasts at the hotel and long dinners at the end of the day.

In what seemed to us like a Greek touch, Joe and Ariana wore floral wreaths linked to each other by a long ribbon. But Stavroulakis said the wreaths were an ancient Jewish wedding tradition that has been discontinued.

The musicians began to play as soon as Joe broke the glass, and we danced horas in the sanctuary before proceeding to the courtyard to drink champagne and nibble on green and black olives, tomatoes, cucumber and cheese.

Eventually we made our way to Tamam Restaurant, a former Turkish bathhouse, where we had another multi-course feast. Music and dancing made for a lively celebration, and a multitude of toasts added sweetness, good karma, much laughter, and a tear or two.

The next few days, for us, included beach time, a visit to Hania's hundred-year-old market, and a couple of excursions – one to the Palace of Knossos, a Minoan archeological site, and Heraklion, the capital of Crete; and the other to hike the Samaria Gorge, a scenic but challenging 18-kilometre descent. As well, we tried the vegetarian restaurant to Stachi, where we were treated to owner Stelios' kitchen wisdom along with delicacies like chestnuts and onions, and eggplants with pine nuts and raisins.

Joe and Ariana left the day after their wedding to drive around the island, but ended up returning to Hania sooner than planned, drawn again by its magnetic pull.

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Couple renews their vows after 45 years

Carolyn and Daniel Kayfetz

Vicky Toblanah,
Special to the CJN

It was the summer of 1958 in Jackson's Point, Ont., when 12-year-old Carolyn Gelman was learning how to swim. She perfected the breast stroke but never managed to dive, bellyflopping when she caught the eye of Daniel Kayfetz, a 14-year-old swim instructor.

"I didn't teach her, but I saw she was the best in the class," says Daniel, now 69. That was the first time the two Toronto natives met – and the beginning of their long life together.

"Who knew about a relationship when you're 12?" says Carol, now Kayfetz, 66. But the friendship quickly blossomed.

"On our first real date, we went to a friend of mine's sweet sixteen party. She wore a gown and she had her hair done up," says Daniel. "My first high-heel shoes," Carol adds.

"My father drove us and picked us up. It feels like only yesterday," says Daniel, as they turn to look at each other.

More than 45 years have gone by, and they're still best friends. "A lot of people grew apart, we grew up together," says Daniel. "Not a lot of people are that lucky."

As a child, Carol worked at her mother's bakery. When Daniel would come in, Carol's mother would always give him a chocolate donut.

"My mom really liked Danny. It was either him, the milkman or the bread man, and I chose Danny," says Carol.

They got married on Oct. 15, 1967, in Toronto.

Continued on page B11

A *Simcha* at Beth Sholom Synagogue

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'We've never looked back'

Continued from page B10

"When I marched down the aisle, I was 100 per cent sure I was doing the right thing," says Carol. "We've never looked back. In all the years I've known Danny, he, to this day, treats me like a princess and always boasts that I'm the prettiest girl at the party. He says it all the time."

The late Rabbi David Monson performed their wedding ceremony. During World War II, Rabbi Monson fought alongside Davey Kayfetz, Daniel's father. When Davey showed the rabbi a picture of his son Daniel, the rabbi said, "With God's help, I will perform his wedding ceremony when the good time comes," Carol recalls. He delivered on his promise.

They married while Daniel was still in law school, so they didn't have much to their name. They lived with his parents for a few years until they had saved enough money to buy their own house. "The total amount we got as presents was $1,200," says Daniel. "Four of our friends chipped in and got us a kitchen table and chairs, which we still have today. I can't think of anything we had that was new." "The crystals," Carol chimes in.

In 1969, they bought a home in Toronto for $13,000. Taxes were only $24 for the entire year. "I took a month off. I gutted the house. With these two hands," says Daniel, as Carol lifts his hands in the air. That's how they started out.

"My mother gave me a start by giving us a place to live. My wife gave me a start by giving me love," Daniel says as he reaches for his wife's hand, staring at their intertwined hands.

And although time has passed since their days of living in their parents' basement, trying to make ends meet, their relationship itself has not changed. They're still best friends who do everything together, says Carol.

So nothing was more fitting than a surprise vow renewal ceremony for a couple still in love, which their children planned for their 45th wedding anniversary last October.

"They told us we were all going out to a restaurant, to wait upstairs, and they'll let us know when to come downstairs," says Daniel. When they came downstairs, their close family and friends were waiting. But that's not all. Their kids planned it so that every few minutes, a new friend or family member would walk in the front hall, and the couple would be surprised all over again. "It was like a circus, when all the clowns keep getting out of the car," says Daniel. "We kept wondering who's next."

Their children handed Carol a bouquet of roses. And it was the perfect celebration for a couple that had gone through a lot.

In February 1995, Carol had open-heart surgery. Although successful, her heart stopped a couple of hours after the surgery. "The surgeon could not start it. He opened her chest and massaged her heart by hand for six hours. He would not declare her dead," recalls Daniel. The doctor said she was too young and healthy to die, so he tried to keep her alive by using a ventilator, but her heart was still not beating. Ten days later, her heart gave its first beat. Although it was a good sign, her legs needed to be amputated from losing blood circulation for so long. She spent three months in a coma before waking up.

"Then one day she started breathing, one day she moved and then one day she woke up," says Daniel. "That day, the surgeon told me for the first time, not one person in medical history in the entire world has ever lived without their heart beating."

That near-death experience taught them to celebrate everything. "We have very large parties," says Danny. "You gotta count your blessings."

That's also their secret to a lasting marriage. "You close your eyes, and you make concessions on everything. You can always come to a middle ground," says Danny, unless, of course, they're discussing which tie he's going to wear that day.

"Our biggest fight is when I say you're not going out wearing that tie. Were you sleeping when you put on that tie? Everything else besides the colour of the tie is negotiable," says Carol, laughing.

Carol starts scrolling through pictures of their vow renewal ceremony, as Daniel begins playing with her red, curly hair. "There's a picture of us kissing," says Carol. "It's a nice kiss."

It's getting late and the couple – who spend a few months of the year in Florida – need to get ready for their evening activity. "We're gonna go for our swim," says Carol. Fifty years since they first met, they're still swimming together.

The ice storm wedding

Lynn Etinson
Special to The CJN

Talk about a strange irony. We were told about all kinds of superstitions prior to our engagement – but who would have thought so many of them would come true?

They say that for any bad luck that nature brings you before your wedding, you will have 10 times the good luck for the marriage. Well, we sure felt the luck. We had been dating for almost six years, and had actually been neighbours for 20.

We met at the party of a common friend in 1992 and started talking and laughing, and we did not want to be apart. We became great friends so quickly and – here comes the irony – not only was it raining that night, but after we went our separate ways to go home, I decided to walk our family dog as usual, but stopped for minute in front of Kenny's house.

He wasn't there, but when I returned home, who was sitting on my steps but Kenny? It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

We got engaged 5-1/2 years later on an isolated lake in Pennsylvania, where I was working for the month. It was the happiest moment of our lives and the start of the one of the biggest waves in the history of natural and other disasters.

We weren't totally crazy in scheduling a wedding in Montreal in January. There were reasons – my sister Lisa was living in India at the time, and it was the best time for her to come. And we planned to get married on a Saturday night so that people could stay and party as late as they wanted.

It was all easy at first, as we are both very close to our families. Our mothers, Gayle Garfinkle and Janie Etinson, agreed on everything, and our fathers, Robert Garfinkle and Mike Etinson, naturally followed suit.

We stayed a bit out of it in order to avoid any chaos, but that's when forces beyond our control stepped in and decided to take over.

Our invitations were to go out in early November, and they were ready and gorgeous. The post office, however, went on strike. We're pretty sure it wasn't personal, but who knows?

This was the first hump to get over. So, we got into our cars and hand-delivered all the local invitations, then drove to the U.S border to mail them to our American friends. We had our out-of-Montreal friends deliver them in their respective Canadian cities. Luckily, the strike ended, and we were able to receive the replies. Practically everyone was coming – but so was the ice storm.

As the wedding approached, the weather got worse. We were getting married at the peak of the storm. But positive attitudes prevailed, and we all took it with a grain of salt, literally.

Five days before the wedding, I got a call from the dressmaker whose power was off, and she was not sure how she was going to finish my dress. My heart skipped a beat, and my eldest sister, Cory, called her up, worked some magic and said we would be there on Wednesday.

We got there, and I tried on the dress by candlelight, and it was beautiful. That same night, friends kept calling to say they were not sure they would be able to make it into town, as all the airports were closing.

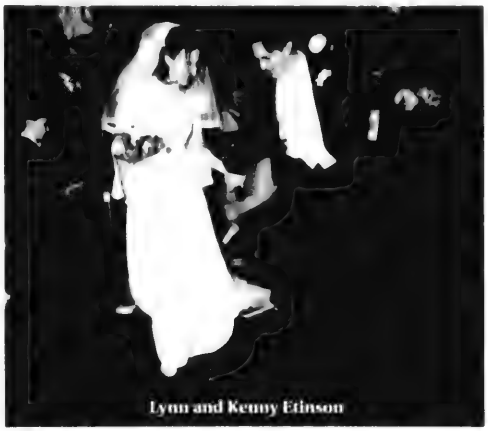
My mother tried to hide her tears, but we were all getting a little nervous. Not to mention that both of our parents' houses lost power, as did the synagogue and the hotel where we were to take our pictures before the ceremony. It was getting scary! For some reason, our apartment never lost power, even though all the buildings around us had done so – someone was looking out for us.

Our rehearsal was to take place at the synagogue Thursday night with a party afterward at my parents' house. The synagogue somehow got power for three hours just at the time we needed it. Of course, most of the bridesmaids and ushers were in transit, but we did it anyway since our siblings, Cory and Lisa Garfinkle, Ryan, Elan, Adam and Neil Etinson were willing to double as the whole bridal party.

The dinner ended up at the house of some family friends, Harriet and Marty Kimmel, and their home became the main shower, sleeping and party spot for our families from then on. That was when our closest friends really shone. This family hosted everything and catered to our every need.

We had friends driving for nine hours to make it in from all over the United States and Canada. People were on the phone with the airlines to get our friends and family into town. It was a true miracle that in all the turbulence, we all got closer.

The night before the wedding, Kenny and I had to sleep in our apartment. We had thought we would be a little traditional by having me stay with my parents the night before the wedding, but we ended up having friends stay with us, and our families had to stay with friends. As we went to bed in a bit of panic, Kenny turned to me and said, "Lynn, all that really matters is that we get to spend the rest of our lives together, whether by candlelight or generator, that's all that counts."


Lynn and Kenny Etinson

I knew then that the next day was going to be perfect.

I woke up in the morning and headed out with my dad to get ready. Kenny, trying to respect my desire to not see each other on the day of the wedding, kept his eyes shut and talked to me through our friends.

When I got outside, the rain had finally stopped and I noticed Kenny's car was gone. It had been towed, and he spent his first waking hours searching for his car, laughing at our luck.

After chasing down the tow truck, Kenny was directed to his car, which had been towed two blocks away. There was no fine, only a note saying, sorry, but the car had been moved so that they could clean the street.

Naturally, I couldn't get my hair done where I had planned, as they had no power either, so the hairdresser came to us instead.

After that, I headed over to Annie Young's for makeup. Little did we know that CTV would be there, too, to film the lucky "ice storm bride." At least all those who couldn't come in for the wedding got to see me on our big day.

Well, I was as pretty as I was going to be, and Kenny was on his way to the hotel for pictures, so off we went.

As my father and I pulled into the hotel, we were forced to dodge falling ice from the roof and had to park illegally, as there were no spots. I literally carried my dress in over my head. Meanwhile, both Kenny and I were in shock at what was happening in the hotel, which did have power.

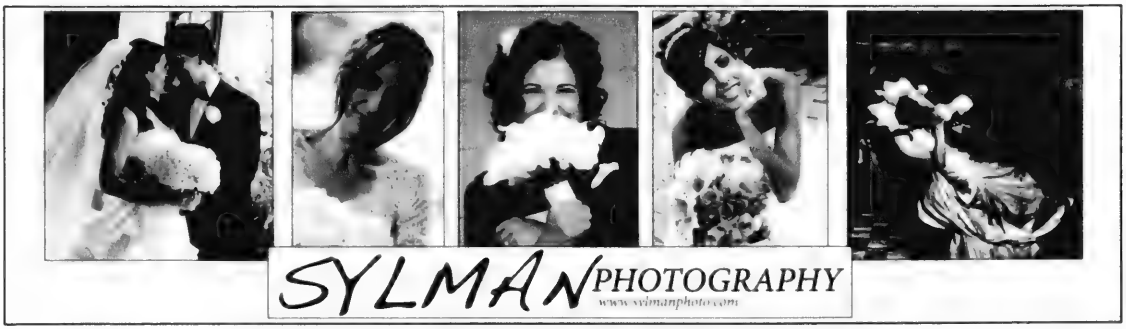
It seemed as if the hotel was the only place in the area with power, as everyone and their pets were walking into the hotel to seek shelter.

Picture this: ladders were being carried up all the stairs to fix the shattered glass, generators were being placed everywhere, dogs were running around this beautiful hotel, and kids played on the floor with their toys.

Still, we kept our smiles on, even with the big, black circles under our eyes, as we knew this was just the beginning of the day, and if we had made it this far, we could continue for another 24 hours.

When we saw each other for the first time, Kenny in his tux and me in my bridal gown, we were both filled with awe and forgot all the craziness. The photo shoot went off without a hitch. OK, maybe one: one of the bridesmaids and one usher ran in after five hours in the car coming from Ottawa, just as we were ready to start the bridal party photos. At least they made it on time, even if they had to brave sleet and snow. Not hail, nor storm, nor postal strike, nor falling ice was going to stop this wedding.

And as promised, there is a happy ending. We have been married for 15 years now, have three beautiful sons ages six, eight and 10, and are living happily ever after.



Family traditions – the ties that bind

Heidi Zackon
Special to The CJN

For Tevye, the iconic "Papa" in *Fiddler on the Roof*, tradition was all about the roles and expectations for each member of a family. Today, this definition has broadened, as traditions have become uniquely personalized to represent the many ways families come together in both daily life and times of celebration.

"My best memories of childhood are all about the things we did together as a family year after year," Sharon Silver of Montreal says. "Of course, we had the traditions and rituals surrounding the various holidays, but often it was the little things we did on our own that I remember most fondly."

Silver describes setting the holiday table with her brother by pretending they owned a hotel and were preparing for the fancy guests who would arrive. Or, how after a long Passover seder, all the cousins would take turns sitting in their grandfather's big reclining chair and eating special candies out of a crystal dish.

For Silver, 49, everyday things were just as important as holiday rituals, and she reminisces about fresh bagels for Sunday morning brunch, the whole family squishing into the car bundled in ski clothes for a day up north, or roasting marshmallows together after the weekly summer barbecue.

"These memories are of the simplest things, but that's why I appreciate them," she says.

Now, as a parent herself, Silver recognizes how important these little rituals are in bringing her own family together in special ways.

"When my son Michael was younger, we would have a scavenger hunt for his birthday. If he was turning eight, I would place eight little notes in different spots around the house and he would have to find them all throughout the day. It was something he would look forward to each year."

Silver recalls how her older son, Jason, started a birthday tradition when he was six by sharing his favourite cake with his great-grandmother, as their birthdays were just days apart. Now, years later, Silver still bakes the same cake every birthday, making it both a celebration and a special way of remembering a cherished relative.

With her children older now and their lives becoming busier each year, Silver realizes the family's traditions create opportunities to come together and stay connected. This year for Chanukah, they made sure to get together each night even though their schedules had them running in different directions. Silver brought out the family menorah, hand-painted by her son years ago, and they fell into the usual routine of each one alternating turns to light the candles. Afterward, everyone went off again, back to their own lives.

"My boys were the ones who asked what time we would be getting together each night, even without my reminding them. It was just as important to them now too," Silver says. "Even though our time together was short, the feeling of coming together is what mattered. That's what really lasts."

A hand-painted menorah brings light to a special family tradition. *[Photo supplied by Heidi Zackon]*

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More North American couples are marrying in Israel

Lisë Stern
JNS.org

Picture a wedding in an ancient Roman amphitheatre on the shores of the Mediterranean. Or in the mystical city of Safed, the sun setting over the Galilean Hills. Or in the multi-level garden by the Tower of David in Jerusalem. All these are possible options for destination weddings in Israel, a growing industry.

"It is estimated that there are over 1,000 weddings annually of people from abroad coming to get married in Israel," says Lian Matias, who operates the website Hatunot (www.hatunotblog.com) with Tracey Goldstein. The two-year-old organization, described as "the English speaker's guide to planning a wedding in Israel," acts as a clearing house of details on the wedding industry, with links to planners, venues, photographers and more.

A sunny day on the Tel Aviv-Jaffa beach *(Flash90 photo)*

Weddings held by foreigners in Israel differ somewhat from native Israeli weddings, says planner Naomi Tabor, owner of Imagine Weddings in Israel (www.israel-wedding.com). A native of France, she started planning weddings in Israel six years ago when she married an Israeli. Tabor notes that Israeli-style weddings are generally quite different from those of out-of-staters.

"Most Israelis dress down for weddings, while Americans and others dress up. Israelis are very relaxed, with no speeches," she says. "Most of my clients have a more intricate plan, a precise sequence of events. For the meal, most Israelis do a buffet." The sit-down meal approach is now called "American style" in Israel.

And then there's the invitation – because of the nature of the wedding (namely the fact that travel plans are needed), many couples send out invitations or "save the date" notifications six to 12 months in advance – compare to the two weeks' notice or so for Israeli weddings.

Israeli weddings also tend to be huge, with 400 to 600 people and more, and the traditional gift for such nuptials is almost exclusively cash. Destination weddings can be that large, but the average is closer to 150 to 200, and some are as small as 20 to 50.

Nikki Fenton of Bespoke Weddings (www.nikkifenton.com) made aliyah from England in 2007 and has been planning destination weddings in the Jewish homeland ever since. "The energy of weddings in Israel is unexplainable," she says. "Many of the guests are on holiday and have come because they love the couple and their families and the couples chose Israel because they love the country – therefore the energy in the wedding is electric and has a whole lot of soul. I wouldn't want to work on weddings anywhere else because they are so special and beautiful here."

Matias agrees. "Because Israel is so unique and diverse, it abounds in wonderful locations and venues for weddings."

Tel Aviv-Jaffa is the most popular location, followed by Caesarea, Jerusalem, and the Galilee. Venues include hotels, each with their own character. The 24-storey David Intercontinental (www.ichotelsgroup.com) in Tel Aviv is good for larger groups who want the backdrop of modern Tel Aviv.

Continued on page B15

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Outdoor weddings are especially popular

Continued from page B14

The boutique-style modern-meets ancient Mamilla Hotel (www.mamillahotel.com) outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem has a rooftop space and a fashionable elegance.

But hotels and event halls aren't the only options. "Many weddings are held in private homes," says photographer-turned-planner Danny Marx of Danny Marx Ltd. (www.marx.co.il). "We planned an amazing wedding of two days in the desert for a couple from New York. Two hundred guests stayed the night and enjoyed the experience of special desert breakfast and camel tour."

Some weddings may have a theme revolving around the food, a favourite colour or a movie. "I planned a wedding where theme was entirely Alice in Wonderland," Fenton recalls. "We even made the aisle to the chupah multi-coloured stripes to match the theme."

Outdoor weddings in Israel are especially popular, in deserts, by the water (Red Sea, Dead Sea, Mediterranean, Lake Tiberias), on farms, at vineyards or in forests. "You absolutely know from May to September you're not going to have rain," says Tabor. "You can choose your dates in peace." And if you want a winter wedding, head way south. "It's amazing to get married in Eilat in January – it feels like June or July."

Tourists on the north beach in Eilat *(Israel Sun photo)*

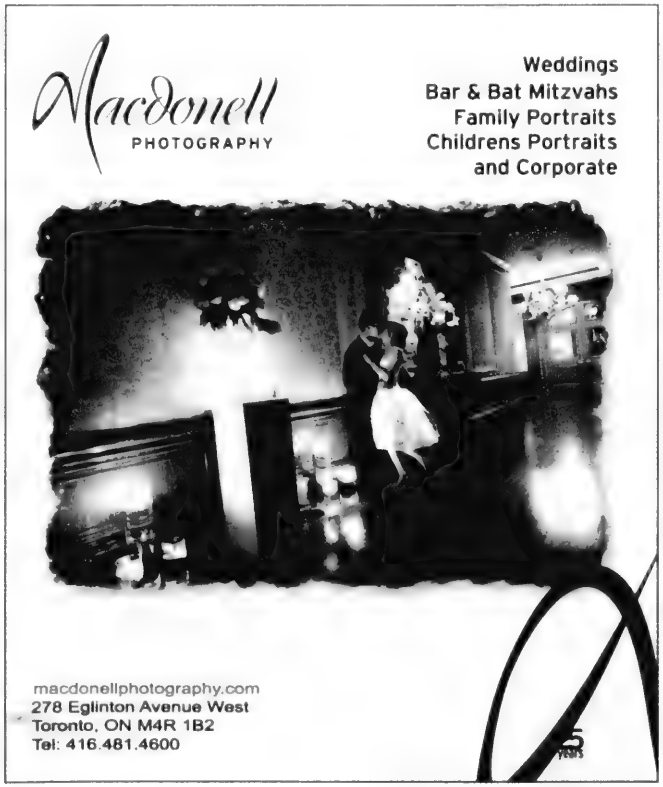
Given the logistics of arranging a wedding from afar, a wedding planner seems almost a necessity, though a wedding can be arranged without one. There are so many components to co-ordinate: venue, menu, drinks, table décor, flowers, band, photographer, ceremony, the rabbi and more. "I think it's very, very hard, aside from it being my business," Tabor says. "One reason that gets overlooked is that I will get better prices than a foreigner who picks up the phone and calls the venue speaking only English – they're going to get the 'tourist' price."

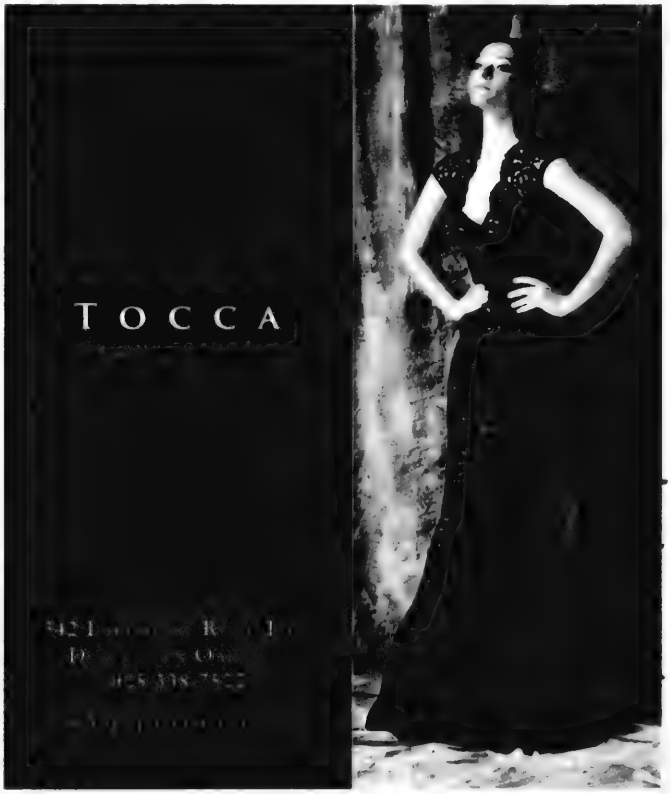
"Planners are highly skilled and experienced people in the wedding field here that will make your wedding day dreams come true and will be able to do all that through long-distance planning," Matias says.

Tabor says the popularity of Israel as a wedding destination has almost tripled since she started.

The cost for a destination wedding has a wide range, but several wedding planners agree that rates start around $200 per person. This includes the location and meals (but not the dress!). Planners may charge a set fee, or 12 to 15 per cent of the cost of the wedding. And couples marrying in Israel do need to apply for an Israeli marriage registration if they want the wedding to be considered valid in Israel. This can be a bureaucratic process. It includes providing documents verifying that both bride and groom are Jewish and single. A good wedding planner helps take care of this, too.

"I know how to do it *chik-chak* [quickly]. I do it all the time," says Tabor.





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Newlyweds renovate 'hideous' house

Ellen Lechter Green
Special to The CJN

When newlyweds Debbie and Michael Newman moved into their early 20th-century "craftsman"-style home three years ago, they were less than charmed by the outdated décor.

"Quite simply, the house was hideous," says Debbie, who co-owns a security company with her husband. "The main floor walls were painted operating-room green, but I knew that would be an easy fix. I realized right away that the house had good bones."

Although the couple were recently married, they were ready to take on a renovation project together. "Michael's family is in construction, and he had hands-on experience with previous renos," says Debbie. "We felt we could tackle this project together."

All the original oak hardwood and window casings, stained-glass windows and the iconic square-posted "arts and crafts" staircase were still in good condition. "It wasn't a complete reno, just a cosmetic one," she says. "I researched the original colours popular for both the design and time period in order to maintain the integrity of the house. I wanted to complement the colour of the medium-brown wood with earth tones."

After one painting error, when the dining room was painted macaroni-and-cheese orange, they settled on butternut yellow with hints of french provincial blue throughout the entire living and dining area and adjoining hall. To address the dark interior, they added recessed lighting in the living room and hallway. However, nothing seemed to brighten up the space.

"The walls were a bright colour, but the rooms remained gloomy. I tried adding cheerful artwork and area rugs, but nothing seemed to work," she says. "After living with it that way for a while, I realized the house badly needed a fresh, modern look."

The couple decided to paint the mouldings and window casings a crisp pure white and the walls ivory. "I had a concept of an urban New York brownstone with dark floors and staircase and light walls with simple splashes of colour from art," she says. "We live in an urban midtown neighbourhood, and I believed the style of the house would lend itself well to the concept. The goal was to keep the charm of the house, while getting rid of its dull tired appearance."The fireplace was also remodelled. The blue bricks and dull wood mantelpiece were replaced with staggered stones in a simple palette of beige and white. "We laid a slab of black granite for the hearth and used recycled wood on the mantel, which was sanded and stained ebony," Debbie says.

The focal point of the living room, which has a remodelled fireplace, is the artwork.

Built-in shelving to match the mantel and to showcase sculptures and art now flank the fireplace. "We're big on collecting art, and I want the art to be the focal point of each room," she adds. "The light tone on the walls plays off against the bold pieces, which was the look I was going for."

The stained- and leaded-glass windows have been put into newly white frames, and furniture has been scaled back in each room for a sleek more minimal design.

The couple, who enjoyed the renovation and decorating process so much together, is next planning to replace their hand-carved Victorian antique dining table, chairs and buffet with something less elaborate.

"The craftsman-style homes were built using simplicity of form, local natural materials and the visibility of handicraft," Debbie says. "The décor of our house is now far more in line with that very ideal."

Niagara Falls a giant pretext in this engagement story

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

It was years in the making and is set to last a lifetime.

After just under three years of dating, Adam Sweet asked Ariela Shvartsman to marry him, and she said yes.

Although Adam had been planning to propose for quite some time, when the moment came, the words didn't quite make it out.

"I opened the box and showed her the ring," said Adam of his engagement in Niagara Falls in mid-December. "Ariela paused for a moment and said, 'Wait, you didn't ask me anything!'

"For fun," Ariela interjected.

"Well, it was part of my plan to figure out what she liked, and didn't like, and put the thought [of getting married one day] in her head," Adam said.

Ariela liked the idea as well, but she didn't want to get engaged while she was still in school.

So, on the night of her final exam, just two days before he proposed, Adam went over to Ariela's house while she was still at school and informed her parents.

On the following Saturday, Adam told her that he had to go to St. Catharines for a work emergency, but that he would have a room booked for them in Niagara Falls.

She took the bus to meet him there.

Adam had already arrived at the hotel, with a dinner for the two (which, though he won't admit it, was made by his mother), and a ring box in his pocket.

She started to wonder what was going on when Adam told her there was no work emergency and that this was more of a congratulations for finishing her final exam.

"I managed to put her suspicions at ease when I told her that I wanted to watch the [Ultimate Fighting Championship] fights that night," Adam said.

"Yeah, the UFC really threw me off," Ariela said.

After dinner, Adam suggested that they go look at the falls, which is something he had never been interested in doing.

"I just thought, OK," Ariela said. "I'm not going to say anything, because I always want to go look at the falls and he never does."

They went to a special area by the falls, and once they were alone, Adam, after some good-natured prodding by Ariela, got the words out to propose.

"I'm a little worried that at the wedding, she's going to try and pull the same thing," Adam said.

"No," Ariela said. "If you ask me, I will answer you."

"Well, the rabbi's going to ask," Adam said. "All I'll have to do is say yes."

"OK," Ariela said. "Then there won't be a problem!"

Adam and Ariela plan to get married on Aug. 5, much to the delight of their parents.

"So then I asked her to marry me."

There was a similar situation early in their relationship, when Adam felt they were ready to date seriously.

"She kept saying, 'Yes, what are you trying to say? Keep going, out with it'," Adam said.

The two of them originally met in high school, but they were just acquaintances until they kept bumping into each other.

"It would be in really random places, where you wouldn't expect to see that person," Ariela said.

They bumped into each other in the student union office at the University of Toronto's Mississauga campus, which surprised Ariela, since Adam wasn't even a student there.

"Then, I saw him driving one time while I was on the bus," said Ariela, who waved until Adam spotted her. The same thing happened a while later, when Adam walked past her work.

They ended up at a few birthday parties of mutual friends, and then, in February 2010, Adam asked Ariela out.

"He did it on Facebook. It was very romantic," said Ariela with a laugh.

The pair became inseparable, and Adam knew very quickly that she was the one he wanted to be with forever.

"We went on our first cruise together after five months of going out," Adam said. "At one of the first islands, I wanted to look at rings, and so she started trying them on."

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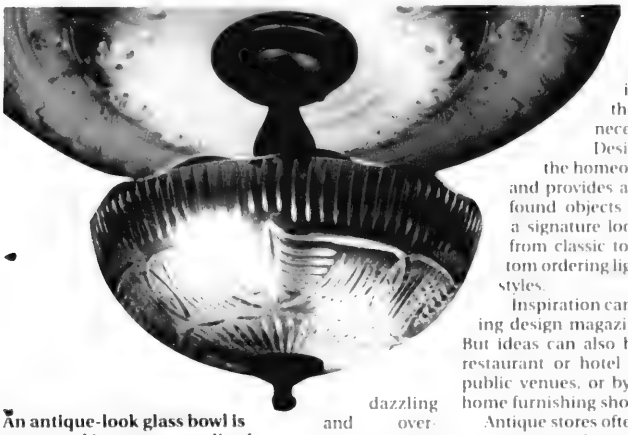
Romantic lighting enhances home decor

Anita Szabadi-Gottesman
Special to The CJN

While furniture, accessories and wall colour set the tone in home decor, effective lighting puts the finishing touches on any room.

The choices available in the marketplace are at once dazzling and overwhelming. A welcome alternative is to get custom-made light fixtures to create a personalized look that complements and enhances any room.



An antique-look glass bowl is converted into a personalized fixture for a front hall.

[Anita Szabadi-Gottesman photos]

We've come a long way from one standing lamp in the corner, and choosing the right type of lighting will completely alter the look and feel of any space. Wall sconces, table lamps, chandeliers and work/study task lighting are just some of the alternative light sources that work together to shine up a home.

The first thing to consider is the amount of natural light that is already present in the room. Using one central light can cast unwanted shadows, and it is therefore essential to plan different light sources for every room.

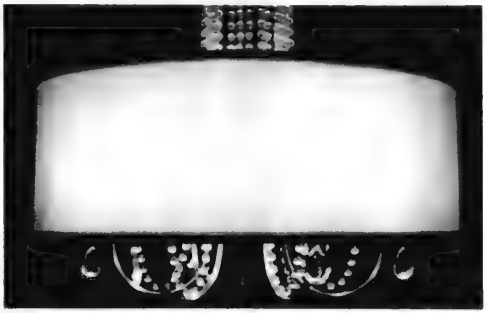
Dark corners come to life with appropriately placed, recessed sconces or wall lighting. Form must meet function, and the next step is establishing the purpose for which each light source will be used. More subdued bedside reading lamps will complement the brighter overhead lighting necessary in dressing areas.

Designing custom lighting allows the homeowner to add a personal touch and provides an opportunity to use unique found objects as the inspiration to create a signature look in the home. Styles range from classic to modern and retro, but custom ordering lighting can combine any number of styles.

Inspiration can come from many sources including design magazines and home renovation shows. But ideas can also be borrowed from your favourite restaurant or hotel lobby decor, museums or other public venues, or by taking a leisurely stroll through home furnishing showrooms.

Antique stores often provide unique options, and the wiring in most lamps can be replaced to meet modern safety standards. Try taking a blown glass vase and having it turned upside down into a one-of-a-kind hanging lamp. The special qualities of blown glass allow it to be crafted in any desired shape, from flared to fluted or cylindrical. Spectacular chandeliers can be designed using various crystals in a rainbow of colours from deep amber to baby blue, or even clear to match or complement any decor. Famed Swarovski crystals can be incorporated into any design. And you can frequently find interesting pieces online or by scouring fairs and antique alleys.

Customized lighting also allows for unique finishes on lighting hardware. Choose any tint, and finish lighting with a satin, antique or high-gloss effect. Topping off the lighting with custom lampshades highlight your custom look.



Custom-made chandelier with hanging crystals and crystal draping and a made-to-order round shade reflects the signature style of the homeowner.

It's important to recognize that you may need help. Working with an interior or lighting designer can ensure that any ideas you have will serve both form and function. An untrained eye will not necessarily get the proportions right. A designer's educated eye and expertise will focus on proper dimensions to ensure that the sought-after effect will be reflected in the finished product. A trained professional will, for example, measure the dining room table and recommend the appropriate size for a fixture that will spread the light evenly for all the diners. Height is also a factor when placing lamps and sconces. Measuring counter heights and adjusting overhead lighting appropriately are important to guarantee correct placement over a work station or kitchen island.

Select the appropriate light bulb to create a glow with old-fashioned incandescent bulbs, or choose brighter, more intense hues with LED (light-emitting diode) bulbs. Look for unique shaped bulbs to add whimsy and style to light fixtures. Install dimmers for an enhanced ambience.

Honeymooners do volunteer work together

Anita Szabadi-Gottesman
Special to The CJN

Couples are adding meaning to the traditional honeymoon voyage by choosing to do volunteer work together as newlyweds.

The *Huffington Post*, along with other publications and wedding watchers, have been using a newly coined word lately "honeyteering." Rather than relaxing on the beach, more couples are choosing to give back while strengthening their new bond.

Worthwhile projects include building schools in Africa, helping at an orphanage or getting involved with the multitude of other volunteer opportunities in the developing world. Many volunteers assist at environmental cleanups or work with abandoned or injured animals.

Volunteer opportunities exist in Israel, including working on army bases, assisting ambulance technicians from Magen David Adom and fighting fires, to name a few.

Volunteer opportunities also exist closer to home, including for newlyweds who are concerned with local animal protection.

The province of Quebec continues to distinguish itself as the puppy-mill capital of Canada. Provincial authorities raiding long-established puppy mills and illegal backyard breeders are constantly in the news.

The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, the national voice for humane societies and Canadian branches of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), reports that, in Canada in 2010, 42,000 dogs were picked up from puppy mills or abandoned, along with 90,000 cats. Many thousands of animals had to be euthanized. Just over 50 per cent were adopted, and some were returned to their original owners. The statistics are staggering, especially as municipal shelter statistics are not included in the numbers. More people are choosing to help abandoned animals one dog at a time – to foster, rehabilitate and work toward adoption.

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals volunteer Debbie Weinberger-Burak cares for former puppy-mill dog, Lizzie, and her five puppies until they are ready for adoption. *(Anita Szabadi-Gottesman photo)*

Debbie Weinberger-Burak, Agence Ometz family life educator by day and mother of four, has taken up the gauntlet to help animals in need. After volunteering at her local SPCA for several years and seeing the many abandoned animals, Weinberger-Burak recently took her avocation one step further by fostering a young mom, Lizzie, and her five pups. They were seized in one of the biggest puppy-mill raids on record in Quebec. "I am passionate about animals and knew I had to help," Weinberger-Burak says.

Despite having a three-year-old family dog, Weinberger-Burak was undaunted. She brought the new young family to a warm corner of the basement family room of her home. These temporary members of her family had been housed in the E Wing of the SPCA on Jean Talon Street. "If there is a dog that is under stress at the regular shelter or arrives from a puppy mill, he or she is transferred to the E Building, which provides a quieter environment," Weinberger-Burak says. "We are making their living conditions a little more tolerable until they are adopted."

From the most recent puppy-mill dogs housed at the SPCA, some 90 puppies were born. They need hands-on care until they are weaned from their mothers and given health checks and vaccines that prepare them for adoption. "Fostering a mom and her pups is the spirit of tikkun olam at work," says Weinberger-Burak. "My children get to experience first-hand that need and compassion go hand in hand [while] taking this canine family from abuse to love."

The Burak children help with the daily routine of washing and towelling the five puppies, as well as cleaning their cage. They take the time to play with and socialize the puppies and make sure mom is not forgotten – they take her outside for some much-needed playtime.

Weinberger-Burak stresses that anyone can become a volunteer. "You can give as little or as much time as you have," Weinberger-Burak says. Volunteer duties encompass basic care, including walking the animals, feeding them and cleaning their cages. "Much of our work is very unglamorous, but we are making a difference in these animals lives," she says.

Most agencies have a co-ordinator ready to place volunteers according to their interests. Couples looking to honeyteer abroad should consult the agencies directly by phone or email.

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Today's brides favour eco-friendly fashions

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

Brides today have an interest in protecting the environment for future generations. When they plan their wedding, honeymoon and home wardrobe, they often look for sustainable products.

American author Summer Rayne Oakes is a media star, fashion model, eco-friendly consumer activist and entrepreneur. She's also a graduate of Cornell University with degrees in environmental science and entomology.

Her book, *Style, Naturally: The Savvy Shopping Guide to Sustainable Fashion and Beauty*, is a perfect gift for brides. Distributed by Raincoast Books in Canada, it includes information about and colourful illustrations of clothing, shoes, beauty products, handbags, jewelry and accessories.

Oakes has some excellent tips for brides in this book. The eco-friendly fashion guru offers money-saving tips, healthy hints and style-savvy suggestions. In fact, this tome is for every woman who wants to feel confident that she's looking chic.

Oakes describes herself as an eco-advocate committed to environmental stewardship. She takes her role seriously and is a popular interviewee on talk shows and contributes to online sites. She's not afraid to speak out and tell readers and audiences what's on her mind, and she does praise fashion designers who follow sustainable practices.

[Photo courtesy of Raincoast Books]

Oakes lets readers know that everything they do from applying makeup and styling their hair to zipping jeans and lacing sneakers affects the environment. Ultimately, it influences the health of all inhabitants of the Earth. The good news is it's just as easy to select sustainable eco-friendly cosmetics, clothing and accessories as it is to opt for products that are detrimental to the environment. She also says natural products tend to be economical and equally efficient.

The most successful companies use sustainability as a source of innovation, she says. A good shopper is an "edited" shopper. Instead of grabbing the first pretty purse or fashionable shoe off the shelf, a savvy shopper checks out the product. She also asks herself, "Do I need this?" and "Will I get wear out of it?"

According to the author, a sensible buy may be a scarf or shirt that helps build awareness for breast cancer or products made from materials that don't cause environmental havoc.

Although she doesn't advocate getting rid of entire wardrobes, Oakes does provide hints on how to responsibly clear out unwanted items.

She interviewed Julie Gilhart, the senior vice-president and fashion director of Barneys, N.Y. Gilhart acknowledged that the fashion business is all about trends. Nevertheless, she told the author that she doesn't see the interest in eco-friendly lifestyles and products disappearing.

For more information about Oakes, visit www.summerrayne.net

Love after 50

Ellen Lechter Green
Special to The CJN

Sharon Kleinberg and Sid Stermer are proof that when you're least expecting to find love, you often do.

Although Kleinberg, 54, and Stermer, 60, shared mutual friends for years, they never really got to know each other. Then almost three years ago at a gathering one evening, all that changed. "It was all about the timing," says Kleinberg. "We had known each other for years, but on that particular day we just started to talk. We were two people at the right place at the right time. It was all so easy."

Kleinberg, who works in sales and production for a textile importer, never felt she needed to get married in order to complete her already full and successful life. "I wasn't looking for a partner to fulfil me," says Kleinberg. "And although I had been in other relationships, I never considered getting married before. I preferred to be single than to settle with someone for the wrong reasons."

Kleinberg admits that in her 20s and 30s, her criteria for what she looked for in a partner might have been slightly different than it is today. "The qualities I was looking for in a partner back then were pretty shallow," she says, laughing. "They've changed significantly over the years."

Kindness, friendship and compatibility were topping Kleinberg's list of an ideal partner when she and Stermer finally began dating. "I immediately recognized all those qualities in Sid, along with his generosity of spirit," she says. "He is willing to share his whole life with me as I am with him. What is his is mine and vice versa, so the transition of combining our lives together has been seamless."

The couple honeymooned in Barbados.

Stermer works in commercial real estate and is the father of four children: two adult daughters and 13-year-old twins. "We both went into this relationship without any rose-coloured glasses on," Kleinberg says. "There were never any games or pretentions. We are just two people who were ready to find each other and we did."

And although Kleinberg never thought she'd see herself walking down the aisle as a bride, the couple's formal hotel wedding last summer turned out to be especially poignant and meaningful. "We were surrounded by all the people we care about and who care about us," she says. "We felt very blessed and grateful."

The couple started off married life in the house they share with the twins before setting off for a weeklong honeymoon in Barbados. Since then, they resumed their lives together easily, as has been the case throughout their entire relationship. "It's so true that when you're not looking, you find love," says Kleinberg. "We both consider ourselves very lucky."

Decorate with shades of white

Anita Szabadi-Gottesman
Special to The CJN

Newlyweds today are using a white palette – shades of white – to decorate their homes, creating a look that is far from the sterile and uninspired white rooms of yesteryear.

Known for top-quality indoor and exterior paints, Benjamin Moore carries 151 shades of white in its collection, and big-box do-it-yourself trendsetter Home Depot stocks 175 white hues from a gamut of manufacturers. The tones range from crisp and clean, with whimsical names of seemingly overwhelming choices.

White-on-white pairings in furniture or paint create a signature look for the bride and groom setting up their new home together. *[Anita Szabadi-Gottesman photo]*

A dizzying array of white options is available in all manner of décor, from sofas in white fabrics and leather to accent tables and curl-up-in chairs. White has seemingly become the ultimate decorating option in urban expression.

Start with white on the walls. White was once considered an uninspired white wash to clean and refresh a room. Today, however, you can choose a white paint shade from a myriad of choices. Scanning any paint manufacturer's white colour palette will illustrate the sheer numbers such as Right White and Llama White, to whites with a hint of grey including Dry Martini and Little White Lie, all from the Glidden paint line. You can mix and match various tones of white on baseboards, ceilings and doors as long as the tones are from the same family.

Lynda Reeves, editor of *Canada's House and Homes* magazine, suggests choosing a mix of cool blue whites for a modern, crisp-looking home and using warm vintage whites when creating an antique-inspired look. Whatever the final choice, the caveat is to make sure that all the whites stay within the same family – cool whites across the board or warm whites throughout. Mismatching whites from the various families disrupt the natural flow of the room or rooms forming the white landscape. Canada's *Style at Home* magazine recently dedicated a complete issue to creating a flowing white palette throughout the home.

Whitewashed floors can offset a white dinette set placed on a white shag rug. You can complement the mood of a room with white Roman window treatments, adding a white lampshade to a somewhat tired-looking table or floor lamp and adding some white candles atop the newly gifted candlesticks.

Mixing it up a bit works well with white and is often a sought-after look. Placing white wooden chairs around an antique pine dining table will make not only the table but also the whole room pop with a bit of the unexpected.

Eclectic furniture pairings are de rigeur today, not only allowing for the easy personalization of the home but enabling the bride and groom to mix and match a bit of old and new brought into the marriage. Family heirlooms, often needing some restoration or cleaning, can be painted or stained white by even the least experienced amateur artisan.

WINNING RECIPE

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2 heaping cups of understanding
4 teaspoons of time and patience
A dash of humor
A pinch of personality
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Add two cups of understanding.
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Note:
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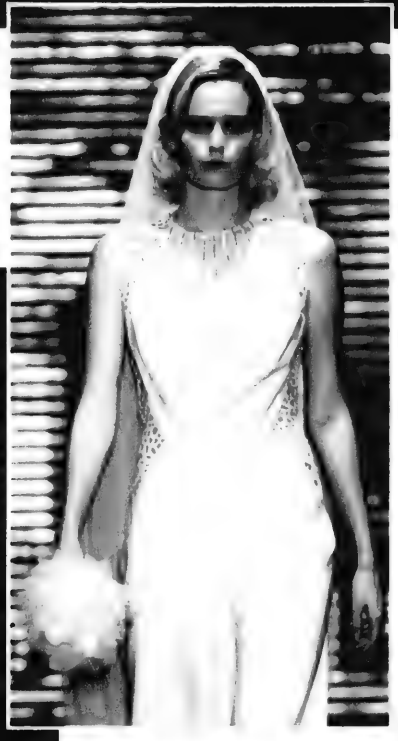

Models wear wedding gowns created by fashion students from the Shenkar College of Engineering and Design, at a show during Tel Aviv Fashion Week in December. The show featured wedding gowns inspired by models of synagogues on display at the Beit Hatfutsot Museum in Tel Aviv.

[Flash90 photos]

Marriage and the name-change debate

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Months before my wedding I sat down with my parents, in-laws and fiancé and told them my decision: I'd be keeping my maiden name.

Lauren Kramer and Mark Aginsky

There were a few minutes of stunned silence before my dad objected vociferously: "Oh no you're not, young lady!"

I'd known for years that my maiden name was staying put, but 16 years ago, it still seemed like an unusual decision that needed hefty justification.

"What about your kids?" I was asked. "What if the school needs to call you someday and you don't have the same last name as your children?"

I was confident it would all work out. My kids would take my husband's name, and their future schools would not be stymied by our different last names. But I was also saddened that what I perceived as an act of loyalty to my personal identity was being construed as an insult to my husband's family name. I had nothing against his name. I just thought the idea of name-changing itself seemed antiquated and quite absurd. It wasn't a tradition I wanted to follow.

The name-change question remains a touchy subject for some, and one that's reached no firm consensus over the past decade. There was a time when hyphenation was wildly popular and married women were patiently spelling first their maiden name and then their husband's in an attempt to keep everyone happy. It made for some long, complicated surnames and it's not a trend that's remained prominent today.

It's a big decision, changing one's name, says Susan Shapiro Barash, author of *The Nine Phases of Marriage* (St Martin's Griffin, 2012). "Not changing one's name seems bold, even today," she says, adding that 90 per cent of wives take their husband's name. "In our present culture, a young wife subscribes to what she believes will make her marriage more fluid, thus changing one's name is more common than not."

Still, it's a decision worthy of thought and consideration, especially given the high divorce rate. "Women should consider how much taking one's husband's name is a statement of their commitment to their husbands and of their view of traditional marriage, where this was always the way it was done," Barash says.

It certainly takes some commitment to change your last name. Consider the laborious paperwork involved in informing a myriad of agencies that you have a new name, including banks, credit card companies and drivers' license renewal offices, and changing the information on your lease, mortgage, tax returns and social insurance.

Suzanne Venker, author of *How to Choose a Husband and Make Peace with Marriage* (WND Books, February 2013), says changing your name makes an important statement about the family unit. "It's silly, impractical and a pain in the butt to keep your maiden name," she insists, adding a caveat for women who've made a significant name for themselves in their careers. None of Venker's friends has kept her maiden name, she says, and when she married 15 years ago, it never occurred to her not to take her husband's name.

Changing your name has nothing to do with losing your identity, she argues. "You can be a traditional wife and mother and still be an independent person, because marriage, in and of itself, doesn't take that away from you. You don't have to keep your maiden name to make a statement. By simply carving out some space for yourself that's separate from your husband and your kids, you can make a statement about your independence."

Barash recalls a time in the 1970s and '80s when keeping one's maiden name was considered very modern and sent a message of independence.

"Now I see a backlash to this, and the millennial bride is more apt to simply conform and take her husband's name," she says.

Still, there are lots of factors involved. How will a name change affect a woman's identity in her workplace, where she's long been associated with her maiden name? And though it's uncool to mention the high divorce rate before a wedding, it's still worthwhile to mull over a "what if?" Do you change your name for marriage and then change it again after a divorce? If you remarry, how many times, exactly, are you required to keep changing your name? And what if, for example, you really don't like your husband's last name?

Whether you change your name is a personal decision for each couple, and Barash says she's interviewed women who are extremely comfortable with changing their last names and those who wrestle with the issue.

In addition, "some husbands become old fashioned about it and request it of their wives," she says.

Clearly, there's no right or wrong way to go here, just a sense of personal comfort and identity that will sway a woman one way or another.

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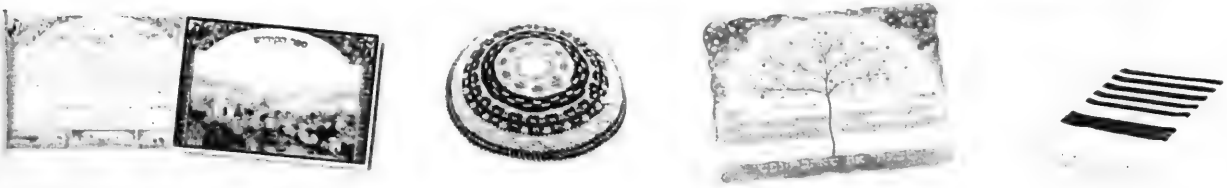

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This Week

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PM launches Religious Freedom office. ***Page 6***

Toronto teens head to Washington, D.C. ***Page 15***

Live & Learn

Learning is for all ages. ***Section B***

Heebonics

Young filmmaker loves silent movies. ***Page 42***

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Papal candidate has sought dialogue

Canadian considered a favourite to succeed Benedict XVI

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Quebec's Cardinal Marc Ouellet, considered a leading contender to become the next pope, has shown a sensitivity and openness to the Jewish community in recent years.

In 2006, while archbishop of Quebec City and primate of Canada, Cardinal Ouellet invited a Jewish delegation to his residence to mark the recent 40th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, the historic declaration by the Second Vatican Council modernizing relations between the Roman Catholic Church and non-Christian religions.

The delegation was composed of representatives of Canadian Jewish Congress and the local Jewish community, as well as Rabbi Leigh Lerner of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom. Then-Israeli consul general in Montreal, Marc Attali, was also included and spoke at the gathering.

"I personally could not have envisioned such a meeting taking place in my youth," then-CJC Quebec region chair Jeffrey Boro said at the time. "Cardinal Ouellet is to be commended for having initiated this remarkable encounter."

Cardinal Marc Ouellet
(Photo courtesy of CCCB)

The following year, Cardinal Ouellet issued a rare acknowledgement of the church's past "errors," including antisemitism, and asked for forgiveness. Besides its spiritual import, the unusual public statement significantly came in the midst of Quebec's acrimonious debate over the "reasonable accommodation" of religious minorities.

It also came during the year leading up to an important Catholic conclave, the International Eucharistic Congress, that was to be hosted in Quebec City.

Continued on page 28

Violence returns to West Bank

Palestinians once again have taken to the streets in violent protest against Israel. The man seen here setting the tires alight last Friday is outside the Ofer prison near Jerusalem where four Palestinians, released in the exchange for Gilad Schalit, were incarcerated. More violence was directed at Israel on Monday after a Palestinian prisoner died in custody.

Please see the related story on page 30.
(Flash90 photo)

Ki Tisa
Candlelighting: 5:47
Havdalah: 6:52
Greater Toronto Area

Canadian and Israeli navies sail together – please see page 30

CANADA

CIJA Visits Israel

TORONTO — A delegation from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs was in Israel for four days earlier this month for meetings with key Israeli and Palestinian officials. Led by CIJA chair David Koshchitzky, the 22 delegates on the Feb. 10-13 trip met with Yesh Atid leader Yair Lapid and Bayit Yehudi leader Naftali Bennett, as well as senior members of the Likud, Labor and Yisrael Beiteinu parties and the Prime Minister's Office. They also met with Israeli Strategic Affairs Minister Moshe Yaalon, Home Front Defence Minister Avi Dichter and Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz, in addition to Jewish Agency chair Natan Sharansky, journalists, academics, clergy and PA negotiator Mohammed Shtayyeh.

Drabinsky Released

TORONTO — Fallen entertainment mogul Garth Drabinsky was released on day parole earlier this month after serving 17 months in jail for fraud. He had been granted parole in October after serving 13 months in a minimum-security prison in Gravenhurst, Ont., but had to wait for space to open up in Toronto's crowded halfway houses, the *Toronto Star* reported. The former CEO of the Cineplex Odeon movie theatre chain was convicted in 2011 of fraud related to the 1998 collapse of his Livent live-theatre company. His latest venture, Tiberius Entertainment Group, is reportedly working on a remake of Drabinsky's 1980 horror film, *The Changeling*.

Historic Book Marks 30th Anniversary

OTTAWA — Toronto-area MP Mark Adler hosted an event this week to honour the 30th anniversary edition of the book *None Is Too Many* by Irving Abella and Harold Troper.

The event featured speeches by Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney and by Abella.

The 1983 book detailed that Canada had the worst record among western countries in admitting Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe between 1933 and 1948.

Irving Abella

"The book *None Is Too Many* is a significant historical account of Canada's shameful immigration policies during World War II," Adler said. "Unlike the disgraceful policies during the war, the Harper government is now a world leader when it comes to welcoming refugees, combating anti-semitism and promoting Holocaust awareness."

Adler added: "I am proud our country has taken a leading role in Holocaust education efforts and in fighting racism, prejudice and discrimination in all forms."

In addition to the speeches, the Ottawa Jewish Community School choir performed at the event.

WORLD

New Claim Deadline

NEW YORK — Jews who owned property seized by the Nazis in what became East Germany have a last chance to get compensation. For the first time in a decade, the Claims Conference has agreed to review new claims by potential heirs to Jewish-owned property in the former East Germany. On Feb. 19, it announced a fund worth $67 million for eligible heirs. The Late Applicants Fund will be open until Dec. 31, 2014. After German reunification in 1990, Jewish heirs had until 1993 to file claims to property in the former East Germany. Those with no established heir were handed over to the Claims Conference under a 1990 deal that netted the Claims Conference some $3 billion in recovered assets. It sold most of the properties and spent more than $1.6 billion of the proceeds on home care for elderly Holocaust survivors, grants for groups that serve survivors, and Holocaust education. Another $940 million went to a goodwill fund for claimants who missed the deadline to file claims, which let them receive proceeds from the sale of properties that Germany had restituted and were sold.

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End-of-life support embodies Jewish values

Making death as comfortable as possible isn't a new idea

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Dr. Michael Gordon

When many people think of palliative care, they imagine a frightening, impersonal hospital ward or hospice where patients go to live out their last days.

But doctors and other health-care workers who have devoted their careers and time to this vital field say the common perception is a myth.

It's an area of medicine that's more about an approach to care than about its location.

"Palliative care is not a place. It's a philosophy," says Dr. Michael Gordon, medical program director of palliative care at Toronto's Baycrest Health Sciences, a world-renowned institution in research and seniors care.

"When we talk about palliative care, we talk about symptom management, comfort, and physical and emotional support – making sure the patient is as pain-free and comfortable as possible."

Palliative Care

First of a 3-part series

Gordon has written and spoken widely on end-of-life situations, especially in relation to the elderly.

He's a member of the University of Toronto's Joint Centre for Bioethics and is involved in ethics education primarily for health-care providers. "End-of-life care is non-specific, though. The terminal phase of a disease can have a long course."

In an interview at Baycrest, Gordon said the birth of modern palliative care is credited to Cicily Saunders, a British nurse and social worker who founded the first modern hospice in London, England, in 1967.

In Judaism, however, the concept goes back to the Middle Ages. "Making one's death as comfortable as possible is not a new idea," he said.

The biblical commandment, "and you shall return it [a lost object] to him [its owner]" (Deuteronomy 22:4) is seen as the halachic basis of a doctor's obligation to heal patients. The 12th-century Jewish philosopher and physician Maimonides interpreted this broadly to mean restoring a patient's body, money and mental health.

Continued on page 41

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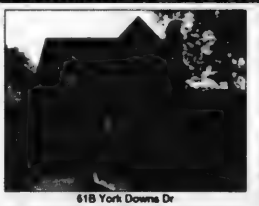
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The Galloway veil

From the editor's desk...

When the veil falls away, truth has no place to hide.

So it was last week with British MP George Galloway. And the truth he revealed to the world is an ugly one.

The vociferous member of Parliament has established quite a reputation as a pro-Palestinian advocate. He often and gleefully shouts anti-Israel invectives from the low ramparts of his base ideology. He does so in the name of free speech and democratic values on behalf of the Palestinian people whose sovereign, independent homeland he strives earnestly to help bring about.

But his dedication to free speech and democratic values is quite selective. He invokes it for himself and for his causes but not for others or their causes.

That was clearly evident when he quit a debate at Oxford University Feb. 20 in which he was participating after his opponent began to speak. The motion under consideration was: Israel should immediately leave the West Bank.

Galloway spoke for 10 minutes. Then, it was his opponent's turn. When Galloway discovered that his opponent, Eylon Aslan-Levy, was an Israeli citizen, he stormed out of the room, proclaiming that he did not recognize Israel and that he utterly refused to debate with Israelis.

By dashing Aslan-Levy's right to freely and openly debate with him, Galloway effectively tore away the thin veil of his loyalty to democratic principles that he flouts so ostentatiously and sanctimoniously.

But it seems a great many of the anti-Israel activists wear the same veil.

Their loyalty to democratic values and practices extends only as far as the ideas and opinions that they share.

For example, the *Times of Israel* reported that earlier last week, Israel's deputy ambassador, Alon Roth-Snir, had to abandon a talk at the University of Essex, in England following sustained disruptions by students who did not like what he was saying. He also had to abandon an attempt to deliver his lecture to a smaller group and he then needed protection to leave the building.

Israel's ambassador to Britain, Daniel Taub, had three anti-democratic experiences last week at three different universities. As reported by the *Times of Israel*, Taub was greeted by loud demonstrators at the University of Ulster and required heavy security protection. At Queen's University in Belfast, his audience was restricted to 12 staff members. And at a third university, in northern England, his identity was kept secret from the audience until minutes before he spoke in order to prevent protests.

To their credit, Israeli embassy staff in Great Britain are not cowed by the craven bullying by the anti-Israel thugs. Ambassador Taub continues to visit as many universities as he can.

The bravery and courage of the Israeli embassy staff in Britain notwithstanding, the point must be made over and over that there should be no need for courage and bravery for anyone to speak on a university campus in a debate or to a gathering of students.

This week, the students at Oxford University were scheduled to vote on a motion calling for boycott, divestment from and sanction (BDS) of Israel. The motion will then be placed on the agenda at the National Union of Students conference in Sheffield in April.

Technically speaking, advocating BDS is not synonymous with advocating anti-democratic values. However, the intellectual underpinning of BDS – especially as proposed against a democracy, indeed, the only democracy in the distinctly undemocratic Middle East – is an affront to conscience.

And, as we have witnessed time and again, during the worst of the Israeli Apartheid Week calumnies, it is the BDS proponents who invoke democracy's rules for themselves but allow none for Israel's advocates.

A spokesperson for the Israeli embassy in London poignantly noted that the verbal abuse, the muzzling, hectoring and physical menace was a betrayal of everything universities should stand for.

"These confused and violent students make a mockery of the very foundations of freedom of speech, a pillar of the academic world. Such behaviour should be strongly condemned by all those who cherish democratic values," the spokesman said.

But as we see so sadly and so regularly, that brutish anti-democratic behaviour is not widely condemned. Indeed, it is a favourite weapon brandished against the Jewish state.

As a member of Parliament, Galloway works at the institution that is the foundational embodiment of democratic values. Yet, he champions democratic values only as it suits him.

It is his veil.

But it no longer hides the truth. It has fallen from his face. And it was his obsessive hatred of Israel that tore it away.

–MBD

Allan Gould fought 'peacefully for justice'

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

OBITUARY

Allan Gould – a prolific writer, a former *CJN* columnist and a popular teacher at Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning – died suddenly of a brain aneurysm Feb. 21. He was 68 years old.

A native of Detroit who moved to Toronto to marry his wife, Merle, in 1968, Gould wrote, co-wrote or edited more than 40 books, including *The Great Big Book of Canadian Humour*; *First Stage: The Making of the Stratford Festival*; *Toronto Street Names*; *Fodor's Toronto*; *What Did They Think of the Jews?*, and *The Unorthodox Book of Jewish Records and Lists*.

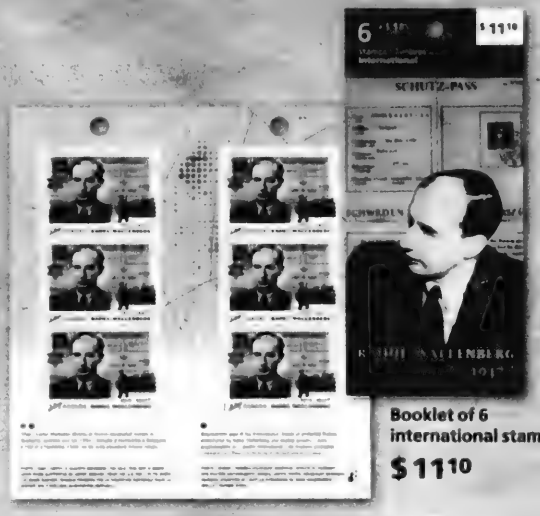
Danny Siegel – Gould's co-author on the latter book and a close friend from their teenage years in United Synagogue Youth – said in a eulogy that Gould had a palpable "*zeeskeit*" (sweetness), and spoke with a profundity that often astonished those who heard him.

Siegel recalled Gould's "constant chatter and banter and free association" and his ability to make others laugh.

"Beyond the unending stream of words, there was a tzaddik," he added, referring to Gould's love of tikkun olum, tzedakah, his "insistence on treating people with dignity," and the donation of his organs.

Gould's son, Judah, said in his eulogy, that his father "believed he had to use his skills to fight peacefully for justice in our broken world," and expressed pride in his father's activism. Gould taught literacy in a "freedom school" in rural Mississippi in 1964 as part of the "Freedom Summer" project, aimed at helping the local black population register as voters.

For the complete obituary please go to cjnews.com



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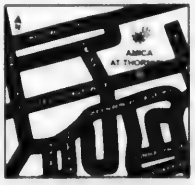

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Prime Minister Stephen Harper, centre, Andrew Bennett, right, and Lal Khan Malik, national president of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada, discuss the new Office of Religious Freedom in Maple, Ont. on Feb. 19. ***[PMO photo]***

Community praises new religious freedom office

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Major Jewish community organizations united in praising last week's launch of the federal government's new Office of Religious Freedom.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper officially inaugurated the office – it was first conceived in 2011 – on Feb. 19, with an announcement in Maple, Ont., at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at mosque.

The office will operate under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and has a $5-million annual operating budget.

Harper appointed Andrew Bennett, 40, a practising Catholic, academic and dean of Augustine College in Ottawa as the office's first "ambassador."

According to the government, the office will "promote freedom of religion and belief, consistent with core Canadian values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law" both domestically and worldwide.

It will also "support programming aimed at raising greater awareness of threats to religious freedom and by promoting pluralism."

Harper praised Bennett as a "man of principle and deep convictions" who will promote Canadian values wherever he speaks.

"In Iran, Baha'is and Christians face harassment, imprisonment, and, in some cases, death. In Pakistan, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Shiite Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and Hindus are vulnerable to persecution and violence. In China, Christians who worship outside government-approved boundaries are driven underground and their leaders are arrested and detained while Uyghur Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists, and Falun Gong practitioners are subjected to repression and intimidation," Harper said.

"Elsewhere we watch in horror as sanctuaries are destroyed and believers are attacked and in some cases slaughtered, Shia Muslim pilgrims in Iraq, Coptic Christian adherents in Egypt, Christians at worship in Nigeria – the list, appallingly, goes on and on. In the face of these injustices and atrocities, Canada will not be silent."

The Jewish community was quick to laud the establishment of the office, with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), B'nai Brith Canada and Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center Canada (FSWC) all issuing statements within hours of the prime minister's pronouncement.

CIJA chair David Koschitzky, commended the government for the initiative, saying the office is "in keeping with Canada's best traditions of advancing human rights" internationally.

"As history has painfully shown, a given country's treatment of religious minorities is a barometer of its human rights record as a whole," he said. "We look forward to working with the new Office of Religious Freedom and Canadians of all backgrounds in support of this urgent and noble cause."

Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, said the office is a "positive step forward" for freedom.

"When you protect the rights of religious minorities, you make real strides towards protection of the rights of all."

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of the FSWC, also lauded the new office and Bennett's appointment, saying his group is "proud" to support the initiative.

Speaking to reporters on a Feb. 21 conference call, Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney said Bennett will soon assemble an advisory board that will include Jews and representatives of other faith groups.

The CJN asked Kenney whether his ministry would be monitoring reports and recommendations by Bennett to reconsider countries on Ottawa's new list of countries that don't typically produce refugees if conditions in those countries change. He replied that there are already mechanisms in place for that purpose, but he believes Bennett's office could play a role in providing more information for such decisions.

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A spark in dry brush

The Palestinian "street" of late has become a more violent and volatile place. After prayers last Friday, Palestinians, mostly youth, hurled rocks at Israeli troops in Jerusalem's Old City. The rock-throwing, of course, led to a more violent exchange with the Israeli soldiers.

While Palestinians were throwing rocks at Jews from the sanctuary of the Temple Mount, others took to the streets and did the same in Hebron and outside Ofer Prison near Jerusalem.

The ostensible cause of the protests was the re-detention of four Palestinians who had been freed for Gilad Schalit. Another prisoner died in jail, apparently of a heart attack. The cause of his death was being investigated as of this writing. His death sparked even more protest and violence in the streets. The real cause of the protests, however, is the plotting of the Palestinian Authority. The PA has decided to foment an atmosphere of crisis ahead of the upcoming visit to Israel, Jordan and the West Bank by U.S. President Barack Obama.

Of course, there is no surer indicator of crisis in relations between Israel and the Palestinians than violence and possibly even death and "martyrdom" on the streets of the West Bank and Israel. And there has been no surer response to such crisis in the past than pressure by the American administration upon the government of Israel.

Seeing his popularity wane while Hamas popularity rises, and hearing no mention of his cause in the American president's recent State of the Union address, PA President Mahmoud Abbas has decided to stoke the flames of urgency in Obama's Mideast policy. Urgency in Mideast matters has usually translated into the need for Israel to come forward with "confidence-building measures."

Writing for the Gatestone Institute last week, Abu Khaled Toameh, the noted Israeli analyst, quite explicitly defined the PA's goals.

"Palestinian Authority leadership has been encouraging its constituents lately to wage a 'popular intifadah' against Israel, each time finding another excuse to initiate confrontation. Now the Palestinian Authority is using the issue of Palestinian prisoners who are on hunger strike in Israeli prisons as an excuse to call for street protests and clashes with the Israel Defense Forces. The belief in the Palestinian Authority is that the violence on the ground will push Obama to exert pressure on the Israeli government to comply with the Palestinian conditions for resuming the peace process, namely a full cessation of settlement construction and the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails."

As Toameh also noted, the violence has thus far remained on "a low flame." But as all observers will attest, Abbas' tactic of directed confrontation is very dangerous.

There is very little trust between the two peoples and their respective leaderships. Trust and mutual respect have been unnourished for years, like very dry brush, where all is brittle, spindly and quite without life. The spark that Abbas has thrown onto the brush could start a conflagration.

Once again, he harms his own people. Alas.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The final day of the year-long trial of accused war criminal John Demjanjuk ended in Jerusalem with his wife, son and daughter rushing the dais and shouting "liar" in response to the chief prosecutor's claim the defence had hired known antisemites to collect evidence.

Dry Bones PRISON TALES

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Palestinian and Israeli co-operation

As Israelis prepare for U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Israel, March 20 to March 22, obviously with the intent of reactivating peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, it is worth noting the benefits currently enjoyed by the Palestinians through the benevolence of the Israeli government. Israel collects and turns over to the Palestinian Authority taxes it collects from Palestinians working in Israel. Israel has equipped and trained the 50,000-member Palestinian police force and co-operates with it to eliminate potential terrorist attacks. There is co-operation between the entities with respect to the use of water and the sale of manufactured goods. With regard to Gaza, Israel provides electricity and fuel and permits the delivery of essential foods, drugs and building supplies. All there remains to be resolved – and of course, these are big issues – are the final borders, the Palestinian refugee situation and, last but not least, the recognition of the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish state.

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

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Kwinter and Jewish education

I'd like to congratulate Monte Kwinter on the longevity of his political career and for making "no secret" of the fact that he is Jewish ("Kwinter becomes Ontario's oldest-ever MPP at 82," Feb. 14). The York Centre Liberal MPP proudly tells of visiting Kiev with a group of Ukrainian Ontarians and successfully suggesting a memorial for the victims of the Nazi massacre at Babi Yar. In my opinion, the victims of the Holocaust would have chosen to be remembered with fewer memorials and more support for future generations of Jews. I, therefore, find it unfortunate that Kwinter does not feel strongly enough to break from his party over their disregard for the Jewish community by removing the tax credit for Jewish education while continuing to fully fund Catholic education far beyond constitutional obligations. One has only to glance at *The CJN* editorial "Summit on education" (Feb. 14) to appreciate that this is an issue that should be a deal breaker for a Jewish politician.

Gila Martow
Thornhill, Ont.

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LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

Remembering Rabbi David Hartman

Permit me to add to the excellent piece "Educator, activist dies at 81" (Feb. 14) about the late Rabbi David Hartman. During the struggle of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel, Rabbi Hartman was at the centre of all demonstrations for Soviet Jewry. I believe that we should remind *CJN* readers about Rabbi Hartman's contribution to the Soviet Jewry episode. I was with him in that struggle, along with my late daughter.

Baruch Cohen
Montreal

• • •

Jews live in poverty in FSU

I commend Dov Harris for his essay on Jews who are living in poverty in the former Soviet Union ("In the shadow of Operation Exodus," Feb. 14). It's for most of us a case of "out of sight, out of mind." The issue of their abject poverty, in many instances, is what strikes a chord. The Brandeis University report, which Harris quotes from, clearly indicates that those in dire straits are clearly pinpointed and accessible, and not just lost in the maze. If UJA Federation of Greater Toronto increased the percentage it annually contributes to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the lead organization battling poverty in the former Soviet Union (FSU), it wouldn't affect the other essential campaigns. There is lots of food for thought, and hopefully swift action.

Colin Romain
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

Penny-wise

Rabbi Erwin Schild's guest voice, "Penny ante," (Feb. 14), is a factual, profound, romantic, informative and humorous piece of literature on his objections to the abolishment of the one-cent coin. I can still recall as a child, with great nostalgia, my mother's important search – yes, the dire need – for pennies to deposit into many of her tin tzedakah boxes before she would light the Shabbat candles and say her many Shabbat prayers. I heartily agree with Rabbi Schild's views, all of which make good common cents. We still have two jars filled for his support.

Albert Waisglass
Thornhill, Ont.

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'May my actions benefit all residents'

Ruth Calderon was elected to the Knesset on Jan. 22 as a member of Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid party. She is one of the 27 women in the Knesset and one of 48 individuals elected to the Knesset for the first time. The following is an adapted and abridged version of her inaugural address in the Knesset.

Ruth Calderon

Mr. Chairman, honourable Knesset, the book I am holding [a volume of the Talmud] changed my life, and to a large extent, it is the reason that I have reached this day with the opportunity to speak to the Knesset of Israel as a new member.

I did not inherit a set of Talmud from my grandfather. I was born and raised in a quaint neighbourhood in Tel Aviv. My father, Moshe Calderon, was born in Bulgaria and immigrated to this land as a young man. After the difficult war years, he began studying agriculture at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and was immediately conscripted to defend Gush Etzion during the War of Independence. Eventually, he specialized in entomology and became a global expert in grain storage.

My German-born mother, who had the combined "misfortune" at that time of being Jewish, left-handed and red-haired, made aliyah as a teenager and met my father as a result of the British siege of Jerusalem. By the time the siege ended, my father's Bulgarian neighbours could not say anything but, "She's really nice, Moshiko, but are there no Jewish girls left? You have to marry an Ashkenazi girl?"

I am recounting all of this in order to say that I grew up in a very Jewish, very Zionist, secular-traditional-religious home that combined Ashkenaz and Sepharad, [Revisionist] Betar and [socialist] Hashomer Hatzair, in the Israeli mainstream of the '60s and '70s. I was educated like everyone else my age – public education in the spirit of "from Tanach to Palmach." I was not acquainted with the Mishnah, the Talmud, Kabbalah or Hasidism. By the time I was a teenager, I already sensed that something was missing.

Something about the new, liberated Israeli was good and beautiful, but lacking. I missed depth. I lacked words for my vocabulary. A past – epics, heroes, places, drama, stories – was missing.

The new, Hebrew person created by educators from the country's founding generation realized their dream and fashioned a courageous, practical, and suntanned soldier. But for me, this contained a void. I did not know how to fill that void.

When I first encountered the Talmud, I became completely enamoured with it – its language, its humour, its profound thinking, its modes of discussion, the practicality, humanity, and maturity that emerge from its lines. I sensed that I had found the love of my life, what I had been lacking.

Since then I have studied in *batei midrash* [Jewish study halls] and in the university, where I earned a doctorate in talmudic literature at Hebrew University. I have also studied *lishma*, for the sake of the study itself. For many years I have studied *daf yomi*, the daily page of Talmud with a *chavrutah* [study partner].

It has shaped who I am. Together with others, I founded Alma, Home for Hebrew Culture in Tel Aviv, and Elul, Israel's first co-ed beit midrash for men and women, religious and secular.

A Jewish renaissance movement has begun to flourish, in which tens and hundreds of thousands of Israelis study within frameworks that do not dictate to them the proper way to be a Jew or the manner in which their Torah is to become a living Torah.

I am convinced that studying the great works of Hebrew and Jewish culture are crucial to constructing a new, Hebrew culture for Israel. It is impossible to stride toward the future without knowing where we came from and who we are.

The Torah is not the property of one movement or another. It is a gift that every one of us received, and we have all been granted the opportunity to meditate upon it as we create the realities of our own lives.

No one took the Talmud and rabbinic literature from us. We gave it away with our own hands when it seemed that another task was more important and urgent: building a state, raising an army, developing agriculture and establishing industry. But the time has come to re-appropriate what is ours, to delight in the cultural riches of our past heritage.

Instead of telling you about this book's beauty, I wish to tell you a story from Talmud, one small story, the story of Rabbi Rechumei, which appears in *Ketubot* 62b, and through it to say some words about this moment and about the tasks I will set for myself in the Knesset.

Rabbi Rechumei was constantly with Rava in Mechoza. It was his habit to come home every Yom Kippur eve. One day, he became involved in a study topic.

His wife, however, was anticipating his arrival. "Here he comes. Here he comes." But he didn't come. She became upset. She shed a tear. He was sitting on a roof. The roof collapsed under him, and he died.

Rechumei in Aramaic means "love." Rechumei is derived from the word *rechem*, womb, someone who knows how to include, how to completely accept, just as a woman's womb contains the baby. This choice of word for "love" is quite beautiful. We know that the Greek word for "womb" gives us the word "hysteria." The Aramaic choice, rather, is to take the womb and turn it into a meaning for love. It is a feminist gesture by the Sages.

He (Rechumei) could constantly be found before Rava, the head of the yeshiva at Mechoza. He had been accepted for study in one of the four yeshivot, the "Ivy League" of Babylonia: Nehardea, Mechoza, Pumbedita, and Sura.

It was, however, his habit to come home.

In my view, the Sages do not like people who do things out of habit. In general, when someone in the Talmud is described as doing something out of habit, someone dies within a few lines.

In Aramaic, "home" also means "wife." The word encompasses both wife and home. That is, a man who has no wife is homeless. A woman who has no man, however, is not homeless. But a man without a wife is also without a home.

The Gemara says "he [Rechumei] would habitually come home *every* Yom Kippur eve." There is a certain rabbinic irony here. What does "every" mean? It means once a year – that is, not very often.

What day is that to choose to come home? Yom Kippur eve? It is not exactly a day for intimacy. It is generally a day for prayer and not even spent at home.

But one day of one time of one year, the topic he was studying drew him in. The study in the beit midrash so fascinated him that he forgot to go home to his wife. He could not abandon his studies, and he did not go home.

But his wife anticipated his return: "Here he comes. Here he comes."

One can hear the hopeful tone of her words in Aramaic: "*Hashta atei*," Here he comes." This expectation – every text message, every phone call, every footstep, every knock at the door – you are certain it is him. Here he comes. Here he comes.

But he did not come home.

At some point, she realizes he is not coming this year. She becomes upset. This woman, who waited all year, who for many years has waited all year for her single day with her husband, cannot stand it anymore. She becomes upset. She is disappointed. She is sorrowful. She loses control. She sheds a tear. This is an active verb, not a passive one. She allows one tear to fall from her eye onto her cheek after years of not crying.

Now we must imagine a split screen: on one side is a close-up of a female character, a woman with one tear running down her cheek. On the other side, sitting on a rooftop in Mechoza, is Rabbi Rechumei, dressed entirely in white and feeling holy (because of the holiday). He studies Torah on the roof, under the stars, and feels close to the heavens. He sat on the roof.

But, as the single tear falls from the woman's eye, the roof caves in under him. He falls to the ground and dies.

What can I learn from Rabbi Rechumei and his wife about this place [the Knesset] and my work here?

I learn that one who forgets that he is sitting on another's shoulders will fall.

I learn that righteousness is not adherence to the Torah at the expense of sensitivity to human beings.

I learn that often in a dispute, both sides are right. My disputant and I – Rabbi Rechumei and his wife – both feel that we are doing the right thing and that we both are responsible for the home. Sometimes we feel like the woman, waiting, serving in the army, doing all the work while the others sit on the roof and study Torah. Sometimes the others feel that they bear the entire weight of [preserving] our tradition, Torah and culture while we go to the beach and have a blast.

Both I and my disputant feel responsible for the home. Until I understand this, I will not perceive the problem properly and will not be able to find a solution.

It is my aspiration to bring about a situation in which Torah study is the heritage of all Israel, in which the Torah is accessible to all who wish to study it, in which all young citizens of Israel take part in Torah study as well as in military and civil service. Together we will build this home and avoid disappointment.

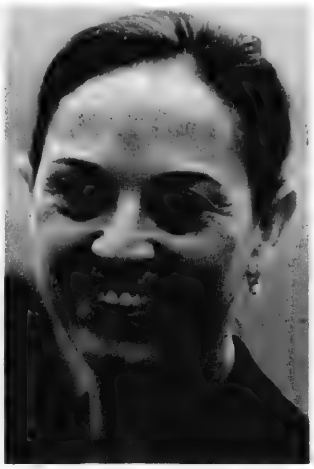
I long for the day when the state's resources are distributed fairly and equally to every Torah scholar, man or woman, based on the quality of their study, not on their communal affiliation. Through healthy, scholarly competition, the Torah will be magnified and glorified.

I wish to conclude with a prayer composed by my colleague Chaim Hames.

May it be Your will, Lord our God, God of our fathers and mothers, that I leave this house as is entered it – at peace with myself and with others. May my actions benefit all residents of the State of Israel. May I work to improve the society that sent me to this chamber and cause a just peace to dwell among us and with our neighbours. May I always remember that I am a messenger of the public and that I must take care to keep my integrity and innocence intact. May I and we, succeed in all our endeavours.

This translation by Elli Fischer was based on the transcript available on the Knesset website. It first appeared in the New York Jewish Week.

New MK outlines her vision for the State of Israel



Ruth Calderon

Why my son couldn't go to Beitar games

My son, Natan, loves Jerusalem's most popular soccer team, Beitar Yerushalyim. He can name every player, his stats and position on the pitch. He reminds me a bit of me when I was about his age and was crazy about the Toronto Maple Leafs, they of Keon, Ellis, Henderson and Salming.

My friend, Howard, and I frequented many a Leafs' Wednesday-night game at the edifice at Carlton and Church, and we'd wait outside the dressing room after they ended, hoping to get players' autographs. They were my prized possessions.

My Leafs' experience was different from Natan's with Beitar. Beitar plays at Teddy Stadium, named after Teddy Kollek, Jerusalem's legendary mayor of yesteryear, and literally a five-minute drive from our home. But Natan has never been to one of their games, because my wife and I won't let him go.

It's not because of the verbal and sometimes physical violence that erupts when some of Beitar's diehard fans/hooligans become frustrated with their team's performance or with a ref's call, although that's reason enough not to send a young teenager to the stadium. Rather, it's mostly a matter of principle. For years Beitar's fan organization, and particularly a vocal group calling itself "La Familia," have prided themselves in the fact the team has never had Arab players on its roster, unlike many of the other Israeli Premier League soccer teams.

And every year, matches played against teams based in Arab towns or cities – this year Maccabi Um El Fahem and Bnei Sakhnin – necessitate the presence of hundreds of police and security guards to ensure public order in and around game venues. During these matches, Beitar fans often shout niceties such as "Death to Arabs" and "Muhammad is dead," while some Arab teams' fans annoyingly refuse to stand for *Hatikvah* at the beginning of games.

Yair Lootsteen
in Jerusalem

But the story is more complex. Since 2005, Beitar has been owned by Arkadi Gaydamak, a Russian-Israeli billionaire with business and other ties to the former Soviet Union. In early January, he took the entire squad on a two-day jaunt to Grozny, the formerly war-torn and predominantly Muslim capital of the Russian republic of Chechnya, where the team played a friendly match with a local squad, took part in laying a foundation stone for a new synagogue and met with Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, a Putin appointee.

Soon after the team's return home, management announced it was signing two Muslim Chechens, Zaur Sadaev and Gabriel Kadiev, in an act that was clearly intended to combat Beitar's racist image.

La Familia was unpleased, to say the least. At a game held at Teddy just days later, fans displayed their rage by cursing Gaydamak and others team officials vociferously, and by unfurling huge banners reading: "Beitar is Pure Forever" and "70 Years of Principles."

It didn't end there. When it became evident Gaydamak and Beitar would not capitulate to fans' demands, someone, unidentified as of yet, torched the team's clubhouse, including its trophy room, with many historic team relics.

This was the absolute "red line" for many of Beitar's more moderate fans (yes, there are some), as well as for the police and public officials known for their support of the team.

As chance would have it, the team's very next game was played at Teddy against Bnei Sakhnin. Once again, heavy security was deployed to separate fans of both teams. This time, however, things were different. Anyone wearing a La Familia shirt was denied entry into the stadium and 96 louts (from both sides) were thrown out during the game.

More importantly, the team and its fan club made a concerted effort to project a more tolerant appearance. Banners throughout the stadium expressed anti-racist slogans, and in the 80th minute, when Chechen defender Kadiev was brought into the game as a replacement, his debut was met with a rousing standing ovation from many in the stands, as well as from Natan in our living room.

Not all was rosy. Whenever Kadiev touched the ball, he was jeered by the diehards, although many others tried to drown out their taunts.

I'd like to believe this was a turning point for Beitar, although much work has yet to be done – mostly in education and law enforcement.

After the Sakhnin game, I told Natan I'd take him to future Beitar games. He's still not sure he wants to go.

Facts, footnotes and political warfare

On Jan. 15, the *New York Times* – which claims to report "all the news that's fit to print" – belatedly published a front-page article on newly elected Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi's crude antisemitism. This did not fit the image of Morsi as the main hope of what was once advertised as the "Arab Spring," but the evidence was clear and incontrovertible. MEMRI (the Middle East Media Research Institute) had Morsi's words on video – referring to Jews and Zionists as "bloodsuckers," "descendants of apes and pigs," and calling for the removal of Jews from "Palestine" – in other words, ethnic cleansing.

In this and other instances, MEMRI's detailed documentation has had a major impact in bursting the ideological bubbles and wishful thinking that infect much of western discussion and policy on the Middle East. A major part of this upside down world is the portrayal of Arab and Islamic leaders (including Palestinians, beginning with the late Yasser Arafat) in a positive and heroic light, while Israel is presented as the main source of violence, rather than its primary victims. MEMRI presents a much-needed reality check, letting the evidence speak for itself.

Similarly, the indisputable videos and quotes distributed by UN Watch are playing a central role in unmasking the deep immorality of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and its allies. Based in Geneva, UN Watch holds a mirror up to the UNHRC's anti-democracy and anti-Israel behaviour.

Like MEMRI, UN Watch avoids inflated rhetoric and screaming slogans – the unembellished reality is devastating enough. As a result, the UNHRC and its officials are laughing stocks and no longer taken seriously, even in Canadian ministries and among politicians that once worshipped the UN. (NGO Monitor, which I founded to provide accountability and independent analysis of the biases and gross distortions of powerful human rights groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty, is modelled on the approach taken by UN Watch.)

Similarly, the hard work of media monitoring groups such as Honest Reporting, CAMERA and Canada's Media Action is having a steady impact in countering journalists who are quick to propagate the demonizing myths about Israel. CAMERA has been instrumental in exposing false claims and unprofessional reporting in major newspapers, including *Ha'aretz* and the *New York Times*, often resulting in the publication of corrections and putting the journalists and editors on notice that their biases and mistakes will be caught. Honest Reporting recently exposed an absurd claim by a *Financial Times* correspondent alleging that Israel had "paid off" the Bulgarian government in exchange for detailing Hezbollah involvement in a terror attack against Israeli tourists. The embarrassed reporter apologized and his reputation is permanently suspect.

Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

The point highlighted in all of these examples is that solid and consistent research to document false claims, double standards and crude biases (including antisemitism) are central to defeating the demonization campaigns targeting Israel. In contrast, over-the-top emotional outbursts and unsupported allegations, including blog-based rumours and easily refuted urban legends are counterproductive in these difficult battles. Finding, analyzing and exposing the lies about Israel requires detailed and consistent documentation. MEMRI has recorded and published thousands of videos, most of which did not have the explosive impact of Morsi's antisemitic statements.

The fact that much of the reporting about Israel is wildly inaccurate, emotional and biased does not mean that we are free to do the same. In this asymmetric political war, the two sides are allowed to play by different rules, reflecting the power of the anti-Israel myths that have been propagated in the media, on university campuses and by powerful political groups claiming to promote human rights.

As a result, in order to break through the myths and have a long-term impact, we cannot afford even a single and minor error in our reports and documentation. The successes are based on a well-earned reputation for credibility and accuracy, and the ability to embarrass and professionally damage those who repeat false claims or who blatantly ignore information that does not fit their political agendas. In this long and difficult war, quotes and footnotes are our most effective weapons.

Uncertainty besets Israel's relations with Egypt

From the moment Egyptian street protesters forced Hosni Mubarak to step aside as president two years ago this month, Israeli government officials quickly realized, much to their consternation, that Israel's pivotal relationship with Egypt had entered more difficult terrain.

Mubarak, a secular authoritarian leader who inherited the presidency from the murdered Anwar Sadat in 1981, was hardly an ideal partner. Although he preserved the 1979 peace treaty, the first between Israel and an Arab state, and regularly conferred with Israeli prime ministers and cabinet ministers in Cairo – he refused to travel to Israel, except to attend Yitzhak Rabin's funeral – he kept bilateral relations on a distant level.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

He also tolerated antisemitic articles and commentaries in state-supported newspapers and magazines, twice recalled Egypt's envoy in Israel – in 1982 and again in 2000 – and did not crack down hard enough on the contagion of lawlessness in the Sinai Peninsula, a haven for disaffected Bedouins and preying jihadists under the influence of Al Qaeda.

Israel's worst fears materialized during the interim post-Mubarak period, when Egypt was temporarily ruled by a military council headed by the defence minister, Mohamed Hussein Tantawi.

Eight Israelis, including two soldiers, were killed by Arab marauders in a cross-border attack in August 2011. In hot pursuit of the terrorists, the Israeli army accidentally killed several policemen in Egyptian territory.

About a month later, an Egyptian mob stormed and ransacked the Israeli Embassy in Cairo as Egyptian police looked on passively. The entire staff was immediately evacuated to Israel, and the embassy was shuttered. A replacement embassy building has yet to be found.

Beyond these disquieting incidents, the biggest challenge to Israel's bond with Egypt turns on Mohamed Morsi, its first democratically elected president in modern history. Morsi, the candidate of the viscerally anti-Israel Muslim Brotherhood, has moderated his public pronouncements on Israel since assuming office last June, yet he remains unalterably hostile to the Jewish state.

Morsi has pledged to respect the peace treaty, but largely to appease the United States. On the minus side, he has frozen Egypt's already cold relations with Israel and steadfastly refuses to meet its leaders, which means that Israeli contacts with Egypt are maintained through its security/intelligence apparatus.

Last July, in an unmistakable sign of the times, he actually denied having sent Israeli President Shimon Peres a friendly letter in which he expressed hopes for regional security and stability. Three months later, Egypt's new ambassador to Israel, Atef Salem, presented Peres with a letter from Morsi in which he described Peres as a "great friend" and went on to express a desire for strengthening bilateral ties.

A Muslim Brotherhood official dismissed the letter as a hoax, but Morsi's spokesman acknowledged it. Still another Muslim Brotherhood official, a founder of Morsi's Freedom and Justice party, accused Morsi of treason and urged him to resign.

Mohamed Morsi

Shortly afterward, video footage from a prayer service in an Egyptian mosque showed Morsi silently mouthing "amen" to incendiary comments made by the director of a religious endowment, who declared, "Oh Allah, destroy the Jews and their supporters. Oh Allah, disperse them and rend them asunder."

Early this year, the Middle East Media Research Institute released the transcript of a 2010 interview posted on the Internet in which Morsi lashed out at Zionists and Jews. He described Zionists as "bloodsuckers" and the descendants of pigs and apes, and suggested that "criminal Zionists" had no national rights in Israel. And in a page out of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, he accused Jews of sowing civil strife in countries where they are citizens. On a visit to Berlin, Morsi claimed that his comments had been taken out of context and that he respected Judaism. But his apology was abjectly lame and utterly unconvincing.

On the day he issued this clarification, an Egyptian government official close to Morsi, Shihab Eddim, the editor-in-chief of state-controlled Egyptian newspapers, brazenly called the Holocaust a "myth," claiming that the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis had in fact moved to the United States during World War II.

To members of the Muslim Brotherhood, such ahistorical comments are neither jarring nor inappropriate. Since Morsi's accession to power eight months ago, a succession of Muslim Brotherhood officials have issued a steady stream of vitriolic comments that truly reflect opinion within that Islamic organization.

Last August, Ahmed Subei, a media advisor to Morsi's Freedom and Justice party, denounced Egypt's peace treaty with Israel as "a mark of shame" and demanded that it be amended. Last September, Mohamed Saif al-Dawla, Morsi's adviser on Arab affairs, referred to Israel as "occupied Arab Palestine." Last October, Mohamed Badie, the Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, demanded Israel's destruction and claimed that Jews "spread corruption." Last December, a senior Muslim Brotherhood official, Essam el-Erian, urged Egyptian Jews living in Israel to return to Egypt and leave Israel for the Palestinians.

On the brighter side, Morsi has promised to spare no effort to rid Sinai of Islamic fundamentalist terrorists, but his officials have called for the revision of the peace treaty, a pillar of stability in the Middle East, and have warned that Israeli incursions into Sinai to deal with fleeing terrorists will be met with force.

Despite the depth of anti-Israel opinion within Egypt's elite, Egypt, in concert with Israel, has taken firm steps to try to wipe out terrorism in Sinai. Since jihadists killed 16 Egyptian border guards last August, Israel has temporarily waived clauses in the peace treaty pertaining to Egyptian troop limits and permitted Egypt to carry out massive anti-terrorist raids in Sinai.

Last summer, for the first time since the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Egypt deployed aircraft, missiles, heavy artillery and tanks to restore a measure of calm there. Since then, Egypt has seized tons of military equipment and munitions bound for Gaza, some of them from Libya, and flooded arms smuggling tunnels used by Hamas and other groups, saying the tunnels destabilize the Sinai.

Israeli Minister of Strategic Affairs Moshe Ya'alon has applauded these efforts, which are plainly in Egypt's interests, but in the meantime, Israel has continued to build a 232-kilometre-long security fence from Gaza to Eilat to keep out infiltrators and African refugees. But as Israeli chief of staff Gen. Benny Gantz says, the barrier will not be foolproof.

Last November, just before voicing support for the Palestinian campaign to win upgraded observer status at the United Nations, Morsi played a key role in ending Israel's eight-day border war with Hamas and its Islamic allies in the Gaza Strip. But on the first day of the war, he condemned Israel's operation, threatened to cancel the peace treaty in the event of an Israeli invasion of Gaza and recalled Egypt's newly installed ambassador in Tel Aviv.

Shortly after his election, in a dramatic shift away from Egypt's formerly cool attitude to Hamas, Morsi invited Ismail Haniyeh, the prime minister of Gaza, to Cairo, and eased restrictions on Palestinians crossing into Egypt from Gaza.

Clearly, a new and uncertain era has dawned in Israel's relations with Egypt.

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ROMSPEN

Bedouin first non-Jew to head Israeli college

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

When Israel's Achva Academic College installed Alean Al-Krenawi as its new president last year, it made history.

Al-Krenawi became the first-ever non-Jewish head of an Israeli academic institution and a hero to Bedouins across the country.

Alean Al-Krenawi

The school, which offers degrees in education, is located between Tel-Aviv and Be'er Sheva and is "dedicated to diversity."

Born and raised in a Bedouin tribe that bears his family name in the Negev, Al-Krenawi said he's one of 15 siblings and the only one to have attended a high school and university. He earned a bachelor's degree from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and a master's from Hebrew University, both in social work, as well as a PhD in the same subject from the University of Toronto in 1995.

Al-Krenawi, 51, was a visiting professor at the University of Calgary in 2009-2010. He then became dean of the school of social work at Memorial University of Newfoundland from 2010 to 2012 before moving to Achva College.

He said he feels a deep kinship with both Canada and Israel, particularly with the Jewish communities of both countries.

Toronto has a "special place in my heart," he said. "I used to celebrate holidays with the Jewish community here all along Bathurst Street."

Speaking at the Lipa Green Centre to journalists and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's committee on Israeli and Arab issues – which brought the professor to Toronto in conjunction with the Israeli consulate in Toronto – Al-Krenawi said he decided last year that it was time to help bring more of his fellow Bedouins into the academic realm.

Almost 20 per cent of Achva students are Bedouin, he said.

Al-Krenawi said he also felt a need to build better relations between Jewish and Bedouin Israelis.

He said he was strongly encouraged by Jewish friends and colleagues to take his current job at Achva College.

One of the first things he did in his new role was make it a priority for students and staff to interact with Bedouins. The aim was to give them role models at an institution of higher learning and inspire them to dream of achievements outside their traditional tribal existence.

Bedouins rank among the lowest socio-economic groups in Israel.

Of the 3,000 or so Bedouin teens who graduate high school annually in Israel, only 20 per cent go to university or college, Al-Krenawi said.

Bedouin parents are typically very resistant to sending their children away to school, he added.

Much of the opportunity for Bedouin students to go to schools of higher learning comes from philanthropic sources, he said.

"The departure point for Bedouins is not the same as for [Jewish] Israeli students. They start with less resources and money. But we're trying to shift the Bedouin from a traditional life to modern life," Al-Krenawi said.

Asked whether he encountered friction from Jewish staff at Achva as the college's first non-Jewish president, he said some faculty members weren't happy, but he chooses not to dwell on the negative.

"In my life, no matter where I am, I always look at people as human beings. I don't go into politics. I'm not a politician, but I do believe that when you get to know others, you start to know yourself," he said.

Al-Krenawi said he believes Bedouins will be motivated by his example and that his appointment will help "change the Israeli discourse" on inter-communal relations.

"I'm asking for your help," he told the committee. "I want other Arabs in Israel to look at me and dream and know they too can get there. In this, I am supported from all cultures in Israel.

"We are a big family [in Israel] and big families always have different opinions. But I want it known that any non-Jew can achieve what I have. We are all Israelis."

He did sound a note of caution, however, noting that the cost of tuition at most Israeli universities is prohibitive for Bedouin students. As a result, many choose to attend Palestinian schools, which offer subsidies but often inculcate "negative ideologies" toward Jews and Israel.

"This is a great danger," Al-Krenawi said. "It poses a risk when the control of what is being taught is taken out of the hands of those trying to integrate the societies."

It can also lead to radicalization of some students.

"We need to open up the Israeli society to give Bedouins and other Arabs opportunities. Equal opportunity should be the policy of the government" toward education, he said.

came to the US after surviving the Nazis' Bergen Belsen concentration camp. She started the international organization "Hineini" which has inspired tens of thousands of Jewish men and women to their rich Jewish heritage. The Rebbetzin is the author of five best selling books which have been translated into Spanish, French, Russian, Hebrew and Portuguese. She has spoken at nearly every major venue around the world.
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Kol Ami celebrates 25 years

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

A series of activities to celebrate Temple Kol Ami's 25th anniversary resumes March 1, when Jewish singer/songwriter Alan Goodis participates in Shabbat evening services at the Thornhill congregation.

The following morning, Goodis, who grew up at Temple Har Zion, will teach music at the temple's Saturday morning religious school.

As well, a gala celebration will take place May 26.

Rabbi Micah Streiffer, who became spiritual leader in 2011, said the congregation, with 170 families, is undergoing a "renaissance" and has begun to grow.

But a lot of people still aren't familiar with the congregation, he noted. "I think name recognition is our biggest challenge."

Being a small congregation comes with challenges, but also benefits, he added. "It's an intimate community, a warm community, a welcoming community, because we're relatively small."

Rabbi Micah Streiffer

To introduce the temple and its religious school to new families, it is running a program called "Taste of Kol Ami." For $36, children can attend the school on Saturday mornings and Wednesday nights for seven weeks, beginning at the end of March.

On Shabbat mornings, kids go upstairs for classes, while parents stay downstairs for Torah study and then religious services. At noon, the families come together for a half-hour family education service.

For the future, Rabbi Streiffer said, "my hope is that we can continue to build on our program of learning, worship and social action, and continue to be a presence within the Toronto community."

Kol Ami president Kathy Stein, who joined the congregation with her husband and two children, now 22 and 25, 22 years ago, remembers when there were fewer than 50 families at the shul.

She and her husband Barry, a past president of Kol Ami, became involved early on, and were youth advisers for 10 years.

She said one of the biggest challenges over the years was "meeting people's expectations" as the shul grew.

One expectation was "a place of our own. That was a challenging time as we evaluated several paths."

Kol Ami, which had rented space at Leo Baeck Day School in Thornhill for many years, bought land in 2001 at 8777 Dufferin St., but never ended up building there. The land was sold in 2010. There were also plans to move to the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan and partner with Bialik Hebrew Day School, but those fell through.

"In the long run, we decided that ... there's no place like home," she said. That led to a partnership with the school and the renovation of what is now Kol Ami's permanent home.

Selling the land at a profit, and creating a reserve fund, "gave us the ability to do what we've done at Leo Baeck," Stein said, referring to renovations in the sanctuary, common rooms, small chapel and youth lounge for both the school and the congregation to use.

She described the congregation as "extremely participatory. Over 80 per cent (of members) either come to services or school, or volunteer... We are not a three-day-a-year synagogue. It's extremely welcoming."

Arlene Blostein, a founding member and longtime choir member, recalls attending High Holiday services at Leo Baeck's former location on Kenton Drive, when the congregation was just getting off the ground. At the time, there were only 13 families, and Rabbi Steven Garten – then the school's director, and now the rabbi of Temple Israel in Ottawa – led the services.

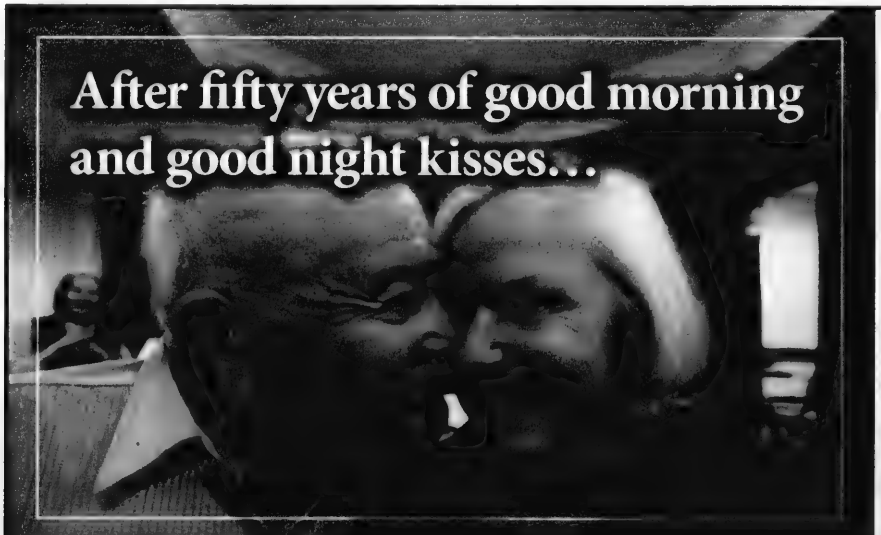
"I don't think we had a name yet, and I don't think we knew whether things were going to continue," Blostein said.

Rabbi Nancy Wechsler became the founding rabbi after conducting a summer service in a member's backyard. "That was it, from then on," said Blostein.

Rabbi Wechsler was with the congregation until 1996. She was followed by Rabbi Daniel Gottlieb, who preceded Rabbi Streiffer, with Rabbi Sharon Sobel serving as interim rabbi for six months before Rabbi Streiffer began.

Blostein said that for her and her husband Barry, and for other young families at the time, the congregation "became our focal point for everything, not just religious needs but social needs and community."

"I guess I like the fact that we have stayed true to our initial sense of what we wanted to accomplish... We wanted to remain very community oriented, family oriented... and make it enjoyable and accessible to all."



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Searching for the next Einstein

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (CFHU) are hoping their contest will bring out Canadians' inner Albert Einstein.

"We're living in a world where people are sometimes too hesitant to express their ideas or points of view," said Rami Kleinmann, president and CEO of CFHU. "We want to create the environment for people to not be too concerned or shy or afraid to let their mind flourish."

Rami Kleinmann

That's the concept behind their new contest, Searching for the Next Einstein, in which participants will submit 300-word outlines of their best idea to improve the world.

The competition comes with a $10,000 prize and the opportunity to present the idea in June at the Israeli Presidential Conference in Jerusalem. The conference, created by Israeli President Shimon Peres, brings together experts in various fields from around the world, including this year's guests, former American president Bill Clinton and former British prime minister Tony Blair.

Kleinmann said he felt the Einstein contest was a natural fit for a conference that honours great thinkers and leaders.

Contest entries are not limited to ideas in the field of science. Albert Einstein, who was one of Hebrew University's founders, was a great thinker in so many aspects of life, such as arts and philosophy, so the idea can improve any aspect of the world.

Submissions will be posted online for a popular vote, and they will also go through a panel of judges. The entry with the highest points from both the online voting and the judges will be the winner.

The panel of judges consists of experts in a variety of fields, which will allow them to consider entries from these various areas of study. Nobel laureate Robert Kornberg is the chairman of the judging panel, which consists of seven judges all of whom have a connection to Hebrew University, either as alumni, scholars or scientists.

The fact that so many major corporations are sponsoring the contest means it could reach 25 million people, said Miriam Pilc-Levine, national director of communications and marketing for CFHU. She believes it may be the largest outreach campaign ever done on behalf of a Jewish organization.

"It's exactly symbolizing that when you come up with a good project and exciting message, you can get a support even if there's a big Israeli stamp on it," Kleinmann said, explaining that most of the sponsors are not specifically Jewish or Israel-focused. "We get support from everybody."

The contest ends on April 22, which is also Earth Day. Kleinmann said this date was picked because they wanted to counter the fact that so many people spend the days outlining the negativity and problems of the world.

Instead, they hope to give a positive spin to the environment-awareness day, to show how people love the world and want to improve it, Kleinmann said.

Anybody can enter the contest, since a brilliant idea can hit a person at any point in his or her life, he added.

The fact that so much innovation has come out of Israel, despite it being surrounded by enemies and facing years of war, is something that should encourage people, he said.

"If Israel can reach all the achievements in [so many] fields, there's no reason the individual... can't make a substantial contribution to the world."

For more information about the contest, visit http://cfhu.org.

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Toronto teens take part in BBYO convention

Compiled by CJN Staff

Twenty-nine Toronto-area teens were among 2,000 Jewish teen leaders, educators, volunteers and philanthropists from 18 countries who gathered in Washington, D.C., recently for BBYO's annual International Convention (IC).

This year's convention, from Feb. 14 to 18, included delegations from Albania, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, France, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Macedonia, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and from across the United States.

For nearly 90 years, IC has served to bring together the rising leaders of BBYO's AZA chapters (for young men) and BBG chapters (for young women) and to set the course for the coming year, determine strategies for strengthening BBYO as a youth-led movement and connect teens to the worldwide Jewish community.

Ten teens who will serve on the 2013-14 AZA and BBG International boards were elected at IC.

The convention began with a video message from U.S. President Barack Obama, welcoming participants to Washington. He said that the IC is a gathering that "gives you a chance to affirm your faith and recommit yourselves to the enduring values this organization represents." He encouraged the teens to return home, spread their enthusiasm and show the important role that young people play in making a difference in society. Visit tiny.cc/icvideo to watch Obama's complete video message.

Canadian delegates celebrate their arrival at BBYO convention in Washington, DC.

Judy Feld Carr, who rescued thousands of Syrian Jews in the 1970s; Ben Keesey, CEO of Invisible Children, and Michael Froman, assistant to the U.S. president and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs, spoke at the convention.

Froman, an alumnus of BBYO and former Grand Aleph Godol (International Teen President), said BBYO contributed most to who he is today.

At the BBYO Stand UP Day of Service and Advocacy plenary, BBYO welcomed alumni engaged in Jewish communal service, educational and entrepreneurial work around the world. At the plenary, Democratic National Committee chairwoman and Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) received the BBYO Stand UP Lifetime Achievement Award. She spoke about the importance of standing up for critical causes of the day. Josh Mandel (R-Ohio), a Marine Corps veteran and State Treasurer of Ohio, also addressed the group. Wrapping up the plenary, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, delivered a call to action before the delegates went into the D.C. community for hands-on service and advocacy training.

"BBYO's International Convention brought together an amazing community of partners, guests, alumni, speakers and performers," said Logan Miller, International Teen President of BBYO. "The magnitude and stature of our guests is a testament to the work of our members across the world this year, doing everything bigger and better on behalf of the Jewish future."

Other programs and events during the convention included a day of learning, when teens attended more than 30 learning sessions on such topics as Israel, Global Jewish Peoplehood, Jewish Continuity and Media and Entrepreneurialism.

At the convention, 24 teen-led Shabbat services celebrated the pluralism of BBYO. Ben Stein, an actor, writer, lawyer and commentator on political and economic issues, and Laurie Moskowitz, a senior director for U.S. Campaigns at The ONE Campaign (which presses governments to deliver change that will improve the lives of people living in extreme poverty), received BBYO's Alumni of the Year awards.

For more information about BBYO in the Toronto area, contact Kevin Goodman, executive director, at 416-398-2004 or kgoodman@bbyo.ca.

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Giant matzah ball presents some challenges

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

When Zale Turner wanted to do something different at his fundraising event for Beit Halochem Canada, he hired a company called DareSeeker to create something his guests would remember: the world's largest matzah ball.

"When people go to war, you can lose an arm or a leg," said Turner, who chose to work for Beit Halochem because the money raised supports disabled Israeli war veterans and victims of terror. The goal was to raise $100,000.

"We also wanted to relate to that courage and dare," he said. So they called on DareSeeker to help them.

The company quickly got to work to meet the dare and produce what they believe is the world's biggest matzah ball –Guinness World Records lists a 267-pound matzah ball prepared in New York City in August 2009 as the largest, and a group in Tucson, Ariz., made one in 2010 that they said weighed in at 488 pounds.

Bagel World at Bathurst Street and Wilson Avenue donated the ingredients and utensils, and the DareSeeker team got started. They bought a four-by-four-foot custom-made pot in which to cook the 524-pound matzah ball, and spent five hours preparing it, using 1,200 eggs, 150 pounds of matzah meal and nine litres of grapeseed oil.

But that was the easy part. It took more than 30 hours for the matzah ball to cook, and they were constantly worried that it would boil over or break.

"It was twice as big as the stove," said Alex Shafran, one of the founders of DareSeeker. Luckily, he said, they managed to perfect the one-handed egg crack early on. In total, they spent 48 hours non-stop, cooking and sleeping at Bagel World.

From left are Alex Shafran, Spencer Shafran and Aiden Parker of DareSeeker. *[Michelle Gelman photo]*

"A couple of times, we came in and it started smoking," Shafran said. "We hooked up some fans and got some air blowing."

But even after the matzah ball was cooked, they had to transport it downtown to The Hoxton, the venue where the Feb. 13 fundraising event, Love of Courage, was taking place, and where about 500 young professionals were waiting for the world's largest matzah ball.

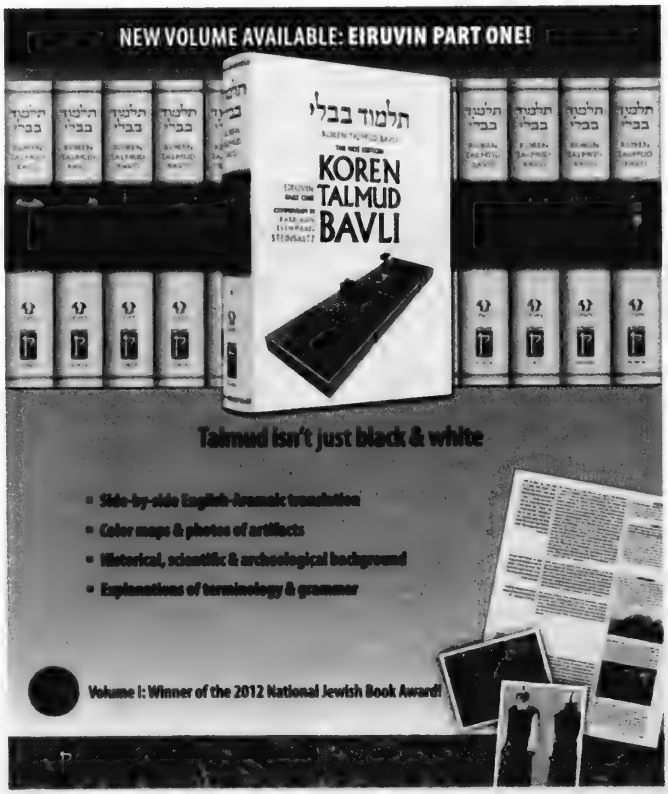
"I was sitting in the back, hugging the matzah ball to my chest," said Spencer Shafran, co-founder of DareSeeker. "At every bump and turn, I prayed, 'Please don't break.'"

The 500-pound-plus matzah ball made it to the party safe and all in one piece. It was put on display at the event, covered in a thick, yellow, felt blanket in a makeshift enclosure to keep it from breaking, and garnished with carrots and dill. It didn't exactly look like a matzah ball – it turned out to be dark brown and had a surprisingly soft touch on top, but was much tougher at the bottom. Although they were proud of their cooking skills, the Shafrans didn't recommend tasting it.

It was long, hard and sweaty work, but that's what they signed up for. DareSeeker, which launched in 2012, is a site where users can suggest dares they want other people to do – or dare themselves.

"It's like the new version of America's funniest home videos," said Aiden Parker, vice-president of marketing for DareSeeker. They hope to do more publicity stunts and larger dares like this one, and if it involves raising money for charity, that's a bonus, he said.

Turner wants to educate his peers about Beit Halochem while they have fun. "It's a charity that's small, and no one our age knew about this, even though it's well-known in the older generation," he said, adding that creating the world's largest matzah ball was a good way to get their attention.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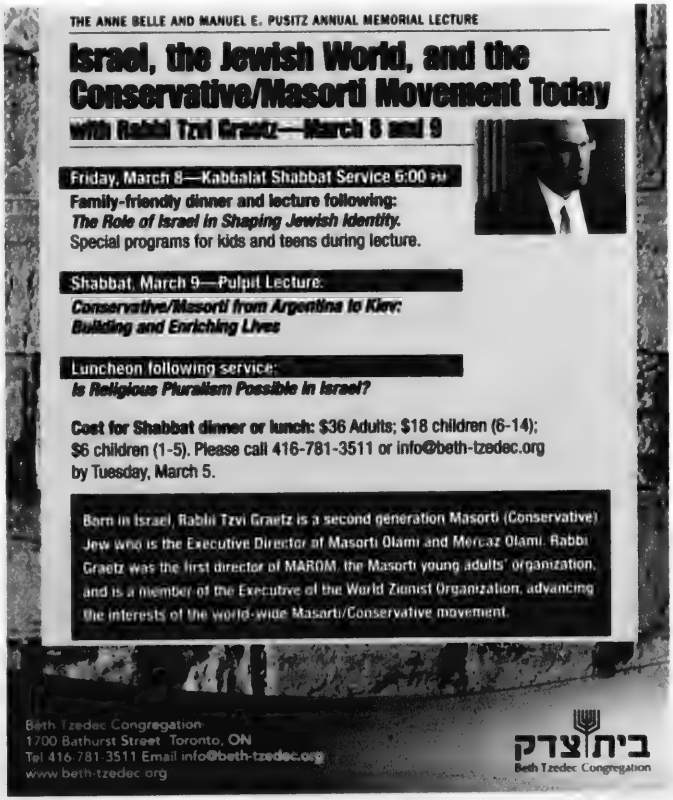
THE ANNE BELLE AND MANUEL E. PUSITZ ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE
Israel, the Jewish World, and the Conservative/Masorti Movement Today
with Rabbi Tzvi Graetz—March 8 and 9
Friday, March 8—Kabbalat Shabbat Service 6:00 PM
Family-friendly dinner and lecture following:
The Role of Israel in Shaping Jewish Identity.
Special programs for kids and teens during lecture.
Shabbat, March 9—Pulpit Lecture:
Conservative/Masorti from Argentina to Kiev: Building and Enriching Lives
Luncheon following service:
Is Religious Pluralism Possible in Israel?
Cost for Shabbat dinner or lunch: $36 Adults; $18 children (6-14); $6 children (1-5). Please call 416-781-3511 or info@beth-tzedec.org by Tuesday, March 5.
Born in Israel, Rabbi Tzvi Graetz is a second generation Masorti (Conservative) Jew who is the Executive Director of Masorti Olami and Mercaz Olami. Rabbi Graetz was the first director of MAROM, the Masorti young adults' organization, and is a member of the Executive of the World Zionist Organization, advancing the interests of the world-wide Masorti/Conservative movement.
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בית צדק
Beth Tzedec Congregation

Seen are some of the members of the Elysa's Angels dance group: from left, Elysa Lipson, Susan Koffman, Marni Cohen, Lisa Gardner Plant, Mara Shapiro and Gloria Benaim.

Friends dance to help cure cancer

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Lisa Gardner Plant and a group of friends want to dance to end cancer.

The women are joining together to take part in the second annual Dance to Conquer Cancer – Disco Days and Boogie Nights, hosted by Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation.

The event, to take place March 3 at the Paramount Conference and Event Centre in Woodbridge, Ont., features fitness guru Richard Simmons and the singing group the Pointer Sisters.

Beginning at noon, about 500 participants will take part in a three-hour dance-a-thon, in which they will be challenged to dance 10,000 steps with moves from the 1970s and 1980s.

At 6 p.m., the evening portion begins with dinner, dancing and entertainment by the Pointer Sisters.

Gardner Plant said her group of 10 Jewish women, who all work out together, have a special reason to be participating in the event.

One of the dancers, Elysa Shaffron, 44, is battling adrenal cancer and is currently undergoing treatment at Princess Margaret.

Gardner Plant said that although each dancer must raise $500 to participate, the goal of their team is to raise as much money as possible.

Paul Alofs, president and CEO of the hospital's foundation, said in a press release that "we hope our Dance to Conquer Cancer fundraiser will inspire those touched by cancer, while offering people a one-of-a kind engaging event using the elements of dance and disco."

To register or to purchase tickets, visit www.dancetoconquercancer.ca.

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February 24-March 17, 2013

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Although the Nazis forbade Jews in the Lodz Ghetto to possess cameras, a few Jewish photographers were commissioned to document the efficiency of Ghetto labour. At their own initiative and at personal risk, they took thousands of photographs that reflect the efforts of ghetto inhabitants to maintain their dignity and culture in unspeakably harsh circumstances.

Assembled by the Topography of Terror Foundation in Berlin and mounted at the United Nations in New York, the exhibition will be complemented by a series of lectures, films and panels.

Opening lecture and reception:
March 3, 2013, 4 pm
(Exhibition open until 7:30pm)

Moot Court - Room 1005/1006 Osgoode Hall Law School

Introductory remarks by the Exhibition Curator,
Thomas Lutz, Director, Memorial Museums at the Topography of Terror Foundation

Jan T. Gross, Professor of History, Princeton University
"On the Periphery of the Holocaust -
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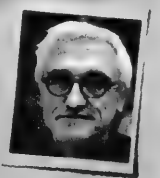
Professor Gross's books include *Neighbors, Fear and Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz.*



Jan T. Gross, Professor of History, Princeton University

The exhibition, reception and lecture are free and open to the public.
Parking passes provided for Nelson Road Parking Lot.

The exhibition, reception and lecture are cosponsored by Osgoode Hall Law School, The Azrieli Foundation, and The Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education - Learning from the Past, Teaching for the Future.

For further information and directions:
www.yorku.ca/cjs, 416-736-5823, or cjs@yorku.ca

The Azrieli Foundation
OSGOODE HALL LAW SCHOOL
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Yeshiva U students head abroad

Torontonians take part in community-building missions

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Sometimes the best education happens outside the classroom.

That's why Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future sent 91 undergraduate students, including three from Toronto, on community-building missions to Israel, Nicaragua, Mexico and the United States last month.

One of these trips, called Jewish Life Coast to Coast, took 20 students to Texas. Among them was Toronto native Elianne Neuman, a graduate of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto who is now a first-year student at YU's Stern College for Women.

"The trip showed me that a leader can be anybody. It doesn't matter how old you are, what you are doing, where you live – it matters that you have passion and a vision," said Neuman, 19.

While visiting the Jewish communities in Houston, Dallas and San Antonio, Neuman and her peers met with community leaders, rabbis, pastors and business leaders. For her, one visit in particular stood out.

"We met with this young Jewish guy, under 30, with four kids, who is trying to open a Jewish day school all by himself," she said. "He's basically our age. Which one of us would think we'd be 28 and opening a Jewish day school by ourselves? But we [got to see] this example in front of us."

The opportunity to learn about different Jewish leaders was what attracted her to the trip. She said YU wants students not only to succeed academically but also to learn how to become a community leader, which was one of the main goals of these trips. "There's a real sense of community here on campus, and I think that they want their students to be able to continue that sense of community when they're off campus," she said.

Elianne Neuman, right, teaches students at Yavneh Academy in Dallas about Tikkun Olam. *[Aliza Abrams photo]*

And if you're going to become a Jewish leader, you need to learn about Jewish communities all over the world.

Elyashiv Gemara, who grew up in Toronto, is now studying business management at YU. Gemara, who said she had always heard about these missions, had the opportunity to go on one of YU's "winter camps" in Israel. At the camp, 39 YU students taught English enrichment through art to 450 students in Jerusalem, Kiryat Malachi and Dimona.

"Every day we had a lesson planned out – a direct educational program and then an art project that had something to do with the lesson given," said Gemara, 22. "The lesson was given in English, and it was unbelievable to see the improvement in the kids' English in just one week."

At the end of the week, the kids all hung up their art projects. "The kids absolutely lit up," she said. "It was amazing to see that after just one week many of the quiet kids were ecstatic about what they were able to accomplish."

Daniella Philips, a marketing student at YU's Stern College for Women, didn't realize that when she signed up to teach low-income kids in Israel she would be learning a lot herself.

"I really underestimated the job that we were doing. I thought we would go down for a week, teach the students in class and then leave – a one-week mission," said Philips. "I hadn't realized the impact and the friendships that were developed over a short week. The students were crying as we said 'bye' to them and danced us to the bus."

She said it opened her eyes to the power of giving back to someone else. "These missions let you experience things you wouldn't have the chance to otherwise," she said. "It's an opportunity to get to know a different Jewish community other than your own and to get to know Jews who live differently than you do. It's about showing that no matter where you're from, we're all Jewish and we're all connected."

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Generous gift creates Silber Family Centre for Jewish Camping

New Centre part of UJA Federation's Jewish camping initiative

By Daniel Koren

Now, it's even easier to send your kids to camp.

Thanks to Toronto community leader and philanthropist Allan Silber and his family, who recently made a generous gift of $1.2 million to UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Jewish Camping initiative, the newly established Silber Family Centre for Jewish Camping will usher in a new era for Jewish overnight camps.

The Centre will be investing in innovative programs and services that will increase the number of Jewish campers in the Greater Toronto Area.

The Silber Family gift and the creation of the Centre has already made a significant impact on Jewish camping with the expansion of Toronto's groundbreaking campership incentive program, TopBunk, to include day school students and three additional camps.

Over the past five years, TopBunk has brought over 1,600 campers to overnight camps by offering a grant to families of first-time campers. Now, the Silber Family Centre is looking to reach over 500 new campers a year.

This year, The Centre, in conjunction with the Foundation for Jewish Camps, is launching a multiyear institutional strengthening program for Ontario's Jewish camps, bringing cutting-edge knowledge and professional development to our local camps.

Allan and Hinda Silber

"Our camps, while diverse, all offer tremendous experiences, where the kids have a wonderful time and engage in outdoor sports, swimming, hiking, and more. What separates us from other camps is that we do it with a Jewish atmosphere, with a Jewish peer group where we nurture Jewish values," said Bryan Keshen, UJA's Vice President of Emerging Communities and Jewish Camping. "Every camper benefits from having such a profound Jewish experience so early in their lives."

First-time campers whose families have utilized the TopBunk incentive grant have spoken highly of being in a fun learning environment that teaches them the importance of Jewish values like community and *tzedakah*. "The Jewish camp experience has given me a lot of good friends and a lot of new Jewish values that will stay with me forever," said one enlightened camper, 18-year-old Raffi Massil. "If it wasn't for camp, I wouldn't be connected to Jewish life."

As many of the camps host young Israeli emissaries and students, the experience also gives Canadian youth the chance to meet Israelis their own age, fostering a deep and lasting relationship between them and the people of Israel.

And it's not just Canadians who understand the value of Jewish camp. TopBunk is the Canadian equivalent of an American program, One Happy Camper, which is also supported through the Foundation for Jewish Camps. The Foundation has confirmed its plan to merge the two programs, to be known as One Happy Camper, later this year.

Visit www.topbunk.ca to apply for a $1,000 grant today. Participating camps include Camps; George, Gesher, Kadimah, Moshava, Northland, Ramah, Shalom, Solelim & Shomria.

Jewish Free Loan Toronto introduces new "Mitzvah Loan"

On July 12th, 1924, 12 devoted members of Toronto's Jewish community established the Toronto G'milath Chasodim Association, a free loan agency that would help local Jewish residents in dire need of temporary financial assistance. As the community continued to flourish, the agency expanded to support any applicant deserving of relief that could benefit from this unique, interest-free micro-loan.

Today, through its mandate of "helping people to help themselves," the not-for-profit association now known as Jewish Free Loan Toronto (JFLT) continues to support our community by offering three different kinds of loans: personal, education, and small business start-up.

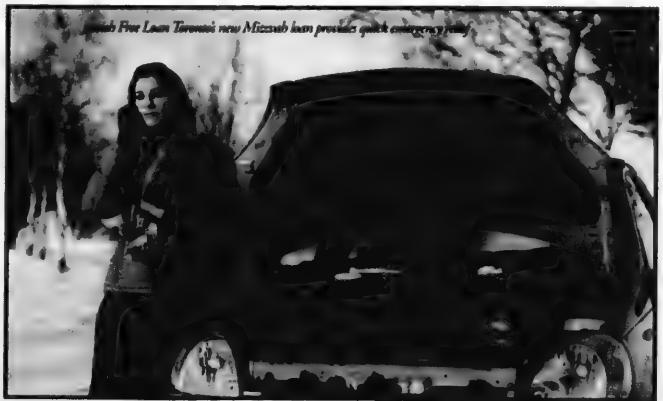
Now, for the first time in 88 years, JFLT, whose operating costs are funded through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and United Way, is offering a new kind of loan, one whose name is coincidentally synonymous with the organization itself.

The Mitzvah loan, unlike other JFLT loan categories, is available without the consent of a guarantor, providing applicants with immediate emergency assistance and a cheque for up to $720 within two days of first contact. It is JFLT's way of reaching out even further to our community. Whether your car broke down, or you have unforeseen medical/dental expenses, or there is simply a family emergency where a little extra money can provide quick relief, the Mitzvah loan offers Jewish Toronto's working class a hand-up, not a handout.

"This is our way of continuing the traditions handed down to us, and finding new and useful ways to better serve our community," said the organization's Executive Director, Michael Freedman. "It's these kinds of new initiatives that will make more people aware that our organization exists and that we are here to help in any way we can."

As if the Mitzvah loan wasn't enough, JFLT offers loans to university and college students up to $7,500, personal loans up to $5,000, and start-up business loans up to $15,000. Each loan is interest-free, and is repaid on a pre-determined, monthly basis. "It's a cycle," said Freedman. "When we finish helping somebody, the money goes back into the pot and helps the next person, and so on. I guess you could say we're the original recyclers."

In the last few years, 92% (on average) of those who applied were successful in receiving loans from Jewish Free Loan Toronto, located in the Lipa Green Centre for Jewish Community Services on Sherman Campus. Loans are available to Jewish residents of the GTA who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada. According to Freedman, the agency will be coming out with even more types of loans this year to appeal to a broader demographic within Jewish Toronto.



Jewish Free Loan Toronto's new Mitzvah loan provides quick emergency relief.

Running in Tel Aviv

My View

Lawrence Hart

In any serious distance runner's calendar, late April is marked off for the Boston Marathon and early November for the 42.2-kilometre race through the five boroughs of New York City. For those seeking to compete in Europe, there are, of course, the celebrated springtime runs in London, Paris and Rome or the fall races in Berlin and Amsterdam.

However, late winter into early spring has become Israel's time, and not for just one marathon. Almost as though rivalling each other for bragging rights, high-profile internationally recognized marathons are held within two weeks of each other during March in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

For a land as small as Israel, the numbers these runs attract are impressive. The 2013 Jerusalem Marathon will draw more than 17,000 participants, while Tel Aviv will host an estimated 35,000 runners on March 15 (hailed as "chag marathon," a marathon holiday), making it the largest event of its kind ever held in that part of the world. Several other competitions will run concurrently with the full marathon, including a half-marathon, two "kids mini-marathons" and 10-kilometre and 4.2-kilometre races.

Every big city marathon has its own memorable qualities. Whether it be Boston, New York, Washington, London, Toronto or Montreal – and I've run them all – each one is unique and fascinating, both in the context of terrain covered and landmarks seen, but even more so in terms of the challenges to body and spirit that motivate runners to get from start to finish in as satisfying a time as possible.

But inasmuch as established road races in the running meccas of Europe and North America are at once distinctive and inspiring, there is arguably little that can compare with running in Israel, whether it's in the Jerusalem or Tel Aviv events or in another, lesser known, marathon held annually in the Galilee.

What could possibly be more wonderful than starting a race at the Knesset and then taking in the vistas of Mount Scopus, the Old City, and the Jerusalem Forest, all of them marking the route of the Jerusalem Marathon? Or what about running along the shores of the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) or the Tel Aviv beachfront, which create such stunning backdrops to the Tiberias and Tel Aviv marathons, respectively?

I was able to be a part of the Tel Aviv half-marathon last year, running it with my Israeli son-in-law, Oran. Aside from just the sheer enjoyment of doing the race together, the experience was even more especially meaningful in that it was his first attempt at this distance and likely my last. With over 40 years, and countless thousands of miles, of pounding, my hips are showing inevitable signs of wear, so my days of competitive running are, sadly, coming to an end.

Oran will be at the start line of the half-marathon again this year, with my daughter, Ilana, entered in her first 10-kilometre race. And though the two of them live in Tel Aviv and know the city well, I suspect that even they will discover new panoramas of their urban landscape that are visible only to those who choose to run its streets and byways.

Mister President goes to Israel

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

When U.S. President Barack Obama touches down in Israel next month, he will be joining an exclusive club as he becomes only the fifth sitting U.S. president to set foot in that country. Today, a look at historic visits, unique moments and recurring themes as Mister President goes to Israel. **[http://bit.ly/ispres1]**

President Richard Nixon – June 1974

Less than a year after the Yom Kippur War, Nixon met with president Ephraim Katzir and prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. A hot topic at the time was the United States assisting Egypt to attain atomic power in order to sway it from Soviet influence. "The main catch," *Time* magazine noted, was "working out a foolproof safeguard system to guarantee that the Egyptians could not use the nuclear equipment to make atomic weapons." **[http://bit.ly/ispres12]**

President Jimmy Carter – March 1979

As he addressed the Knesset, Carter attempted to ensure momentum of the recently signed Camp David Accords. "I know from my intense personal involvement in these negotiations that president [Anwar] Sadat and prime minister [Menachem] Begin have not wavered from their often expressed commitment to peace… But we have not yet fully met our challenge. Despite our unflagging determination, despite the extraordinary progress of the past six months, we still fall short." **[http://bit.ly/ispres4]**

President Bill Clinton – October 1994, November 1995, March 1996, December 1998

It is Clinton's second visit to attend the funeral of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin that is most remembered. Clinton concludes his eulogy, "This week, Jews all around the world are studying the Torah portion in which God tests the faith of Abraham, patriarch of the Jews and the Arabs. He commands Abraham to sacrifice Yitzhak… Now God tests our faith even more terribly, for he has taken our Yitzhak. But Israel's covenant with God for freedom, for tolerance, for security, for peace – that covenant must hold. That covenant was prime minister Rabin's life's work. Now we must make it his lasting legacy… Shalom, *haver*." **[http://bit.ly/ispres6]**

President George W. Bush – January 2008, May 2008

On his second visit, Bush addressed the Knesset to commemorate Israel's 60th anniversary. He seemed to have grasped the Israeli sensibility when he prefaced his remarks by saying, "It's a rare privilege for the American president to speak to the Knesset. Although the prime minister told me there's something even rarer – to have just one person in this chamber speaking at a time." **[http://bit.ly/ispres9]**

President Barack Obama – July 2008

This won't be Obama's first trip to Israel. In July 2008, the Democratic presidential candidate visited "the brave citizens of this town of Sderot. For seven years they've endured constant threats to their security… I'm here to say as an American and as friend of Israel that we stand with the people of Sderot and with all the people of Israel… living alongside a viable and peaceful Palestinian state." **[http://bit.ly/ispres10]**

Obama then refers to the threat posed by "an Iranian regime that sponsors terrorism, pursues nuclear weapons and threatens Israel's existence. A nuclear Iran would pose a grave threat and the world must prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon."

Candidate Obama's comments will undoubtedly come up once again as President Obama returns to Israel almost five years later.

Highway@rogers.com

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גידי קורן וחברים

מוקי באום-המציאות שהופכת לאגדה

יש בקהילה שלנו אשה מופלאה שעונה לשם ד"ר נחמה באום, פסיכולוגית ועובדת סוציאלית. לפני עשרות שנים, כשנולד לנחמה ילד עם שיתוק מוחין, היא שינתה את כיוון חייה והקימה בטורונטו את "מוקי באום", מוסד טיפולי לילדים עם נכויות שונות, מאושיום, תסמונת דאון, הפרעות נפשיות ועד לשיתוק מוחין. המוסד מקיף את כל ההיבטים הטיפוליים והחינוכיים של הילד. עם התבגרותם , מצטרפים הצעירים לבתים בהם הם לומדים לחיות עצמאית בתוך משפחה ויוצאים לרכוש מקצוע ולהצטרף למעגל העבודה.

ובמשך כל השנים האלה ממשיך מוקי באום עצמו להתרים כספים למען המוסד שנושא את שמו, ועד כה התרים מעל לחצי מיליון דולאר. ממש לאחרונה זכו ד"ר באום ובנה מוקי לחוקרה מיוחדת על מפעל חייהם שהפך מוכר בכל העולם, כשהוענקו להם מדליות מיוחדות לציון ששים שנות מלוכה של המלכה אליזאבת השניה,אחד האותות הגבוהים ביותר של המלוכה, ה- DIAMOND JUBILEE זהו פרס שמוקיר אנשים שתרמו לפיתוח החברה שלהם. איחלים מכל הלב לנחמה, מוקי ומושיק, על ששינו את חייהם של כל כך הרבה אנשים ומשפחותיהם, שהגורל התאכזר אליהם, ונטעו בליבם תקווה והתחלה חדשה. אני מזמין אתכם להצטרף אלינו ולתמוך כספית במוקי באום:

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אלכסנדר מן קם לתחייה

מיעוטנו זוכרים את אלכסנדר מן בזכות מספר שירים שנשארו מימיו הטובים ("חיה או לא היה", "על גבעות שיך אבדך") , ורבים יותר בזכות הרומאן הקצר והמתוקשר לפני שמונים שנה עם מלכת התיאטרון העברי, חנה רובינא. אבל כמעט כולנו החמצנו את כל סיפור חייו הטראגי לצידנו, עד לפטירתו ב 1972. מי שלא שכח הוא הפסיכולוג והמטפל דחדו וייזר איש טורונטו.

"נולדתי בעפולה עם זכרונות משפחתיים על אלכסנדר מן שביקר את ידידו אלכסנדר זייד בגבעות שייך אבדך. סבי היה הקורבן הראשון לפרעות הערבים בעמק, וכל חיי אני חולך עם זכרונות אלכסנדר מן" אומר דחדו. אלא שבניגוד לרובנו, קם דחדו ועשה מעשה, ובמשך שלוש שנים עבד עם יורם צ'רקסקי באיסוף ועריכה של כל החמרים הקיימים על אלכסנדר מן. והתוצאה מאוד מרשימה.

"הסרט הזה מדגיש כמה נורא היה להיות חריג בשנות קדם המדינה. אלכסנדר מן היה קומוניסט, ולמרות שהממסד הספרותי העריך את כשרונו, בשנת 1935 הוא הוצא רשמית מאגודת הסופרים העבריים, הוחרם, וכשהיו משמיעים את שיריו אמרו ברדיו "מלים עממיות". וכל זה בגלל אינטרפרטציה מוטעית ל'פואימה לשלום' שכתב." דחדו מציין שהיחס הטוטאליטארי כלפי מי שלא נחשב ל"אנשינו" על ידי בן גוריון, הופנה גם לאנשי הימין, בראש ובראשונה אורי צבי גרינברג. ראינו את הסרט התיעודי בהקרנה מיוחדת לפני עריכתו הסופית .

יישר כוח דחדו, ואני מקווה שתימצאנה המסגרות המתאימות להראות את הסרט החשוב הזה לקהל הרחב ולבתי הספר כאן ובישראל.

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikoren.com

Purim – celebrating Jewish unity

Rabbi Zushe Silberstein

This past Sunday in most parts of the world we celebrated the festive yom tov of Purim. Although Purim tells of past events, its message is current.

The Mishnah in tractate Megillah says, *Hakore et Hameguila Lemafre'a*, he who reads the Megillah backwards has not fulfilled the mitzvah of Megillah reading. The simple meaning is that if one reads the story of the Megillah from the end to beginning, then he has not accomplished the mitzvah. Chassidic teaching suggests a deeper meaning: when one reads the Megillah backwards, as if it is a backward or old story, not a current message, then he has missed the point of the Megillah reading.

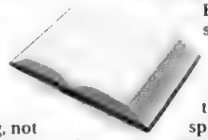
The Megillah relates that Haman phrased his request to kill the Jews as follows: "There is one nation scattered and dispersed among the peoples... and it is not to the benefit of the king to tolerate them." The rabbis explain that the mention of the term "the king" here is an allusion to God, King of kings.

Haman thought he could destroy the Jewish People because they were "scattered and dispersed." Instead of joining together in bonds of oneness, our people had separated themselves from each other. This distance was what caused God to contemplate their destruction.

For that reason, when Esther told Mordechai that she would approach Achashverosh to plead for the Jewish People, she instructed him: "Go and bring together all the Jews." Until this was done, there was no point in her approaching the king. Only when unity was restored was there hope that her mission could meet with success.

This is not just a story of the past. On the contrary, our observance of the Purim holiday should be

Rabbinic Reflections



with the intent of reliving, not merely remembering, the events of those days. Jewish unity is therefore intrinsically bound up with our commemoration of the holiday. Two of the mitzvot connected with Purim – mishloach manot (gifts of food to friends) and *matanot l'evyonim* (charitable gifts to the poor) – are clear expressions of the bonds of oneness that bring our people together.

Our sages teach us that in the ultimate future, all the festivals will be nullified except for Purim and Chanukah. The rabbis explain that the intent is not that we will cease observing the other holidays, but that they will no longer stand out as prominent days.

In the era of Redemption, the revelation of Godliness will be an ongoing aspect of existence, and the festivals will not be unique. They will be observed and all their laws will be kept, but the spiritual nature of the days will not stand out as special compared to the constant revelation that will characterize that era.

But, even within this setting of revealed Godliness, Purim will be special. Not only will we observe the laws of the holiday, its unique spiritual significance will stand out.

The same applies with regard to the experience of Jewish unity on Purim. The era of Redemption will be characterized by unity and oneness. Nevertheless, even in such a setting, the oneness our people experience on Purim will stand out.

Rabbi Zushe Silberstein is the spiritual leader of Chabad Chabanel – Maison Belfield and a Quebec prisons chaplain in Montreal.

Abraham Lincoln and the Jews

At the outbreak of the American Civil War, approximately 150,000 Jews lived in the United States. Seven thousand of them served on the Union side, and 3,000 in the ranks of the Confederacy.

President Abraham Lincoln's attitude toward Jews must be measured, in part at least, by his opinion of the "Know-Nothing" movement. The overwhelming majority of Jews were immigrants and included in the general Know-Nothing classification of unwanted aliens.

In 1855, Lincoln wrote, "I am not a Know-Nothing... How could I be? How could anyone who abhors the oppression of negroes be in favour of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we began by declaring that all men are created equal. We now practically read it, 'All men are created equal except negroes and foreigners and Catholics.'"

October 1861 was a bad time for the North. The Union Army was in the doldrums over military defeats. Yet, in the midst of burdensome problems, Lincoln found time to consider the small matter of Jewish chaplains. He understood the vital principle that was at stake. At his request, a bill was introduced and quickly passed authorizing the army not to exclude from the chaplaincy a regularly ordained minister of any religion.

All during the war there was an invisible second front. This was an economic war of greed and exploitation. Unprincipled merchants took advantage of the needs of both sides and fattened on the profits. From such a pattern of confusion,

Bookmarks

Bernard Baskin

nothing but anarchy could result.

It was in the midst of this chaos of profiteering and indecision that the most sweeping anti-Jewish regulation in American history was issued in 1862 from Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's headquarters. It provided for the expulsion within 24 hours of all the Jews as a class without trial or hearing from the general area known as the "Department of the Tennessee."

Although relatively few people were involved, this order became a minor sensation of the entire war. In the face of a general outcry, Lincoln quickly wrote a note to the general-in-chief of the army directing him to telegraph instructions for the cancellation of the order.

In later years, the mystery of Grant's notorious order was never cleared up. Grant denied responsibility. But, whether viewed as a grave mistake or a bad joke, Lincoln did not hesitate to quickly rectify a grievous wrong.

Two hundred and three years after his birth, wherein lies Lincoln's uniqueness? Why do men and women reverently refer to him as "Father Abraham"? Perhaps, because of him the world sees itself reflected. The triumph and the tragedy of living are mirrored in his image. The great virtues and achievements of Lincoln – his humour, his humanity, his understanding, the emancipation of the slaves and the preservation of the Union – are an imperishable part of history. But beyond all this, Lincoln achieved something even more precious and enduring – the creation of a noble personality. A human being of such profound sympathy and understanding that the world loves him not only for what he did but also for what he was.

His dealings with Jews remains a striking example of his truly democratic spirit.

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PURIM AT NETIVOT HATORAH: After months of planning and creating, the students transformed the lobby and second floor of Netivot HaTorah Day School into a "Megillah around the World" depicting scenes from the Book of Esther taking place in different countries. Seen with art teacher Rochelle Diamond are the b'not sherut, Israeli girls who come to work at the school for a year as part of their national service and helped the kids with this project. From left are Lior Luzon, Or Dugma, Avigail Cohen, Rochelle Diamond and Ayelet Wolf.

ADAR JOY: Students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Education Centre on Neptune Drive kicked off the month of Adar with a program on how to bring joy to other people's lives. To mark the day, they each received their own clown nose and watched part of the movie *Patch Adams*. Pictured are Grade 2 students Ressy Dalfen, left, and Danielle Shaulian. *(Moy Volcovich photo)*

PURIM SCENE: In honour of Purim, Harbord Bakery and Calandria is displaying a 1910 puppet stage with circa-1940 marionettes in a diorama of the Purim story, as retold by the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. In his retelling, Manger created a young lover for the soon-to-be Queen Esther, as well as a new take on Haman, modelled on a Czech farmer who betrayed three families of Jews in hiding. *(Harbord Bakery photo)*

PRE-PURIM FUN: Students from the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Nursery School and Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School's middle school enjoyed some pre-Purim fun by painting each other's faces in anticipation of the holiday. Pictured are Molly Katz, left, and Josephine Salamon.

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Married for 70 years, couple is on permanent vacation

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

After 70 years, Shirley and Hy Rabinovitch, both natives of Montreal, still remember their honeymoon fondly.

"Hy was in the air force, and he had an 18-hour pass to get married. I wore blue because I was a war bride," said Shirley, 90.

The couple, who have three children, nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild, and now live in Toronto, married two years after meeting at an AZA party in Montreal. "I think I liked him right away," Shirley said.

Shirley and Hy Rabinovitch, today, and at their wedding 70 years ago, below.

"We got married March 6, and there was a huge snowstorm," said Hy, 91. "We had no way of getting to the synagogue, but my friend managed to get his car out of the garage, and he drove us. It took until 10 p.m. to have the ceremony because of all the snow."

Shirley said they packed a lot into their short honeymoon. "We stayed at the Ritz Carlton, went to the El Morocco restaurant and night club, and saw *Casablanca*. Then Hy went back to the air force and I went back to my mother's house. *As Time Goes By* [from *Casablanca*] is still our song."

In an interview at their retirement home, Hy, with his hand constantly on his wife's shoulder, said there is no secret to their long marriage. "We just live. We take one day and then we take the next day. No matter what happens, we have to persevere. We don't fight much, we just correct each other.

"We always have a positive attitude and believe that things have a way of working out. I do say, though, that marriage needs a foundation. Most divorces come about because of money or infidelity. Make sure you can sustain yourself before you get married."

Life is different now compared to when they got married, Shirley said. "We were vagabonds. I followed Hy to Ottawa, Quebec and St. Thomas, [Ont.] while he was an air frame mechanic in the air force. We lived out of a suitcase and I got a job wherever we were.

Laughing, she said that Hy wanted to marry her because he got paid $1.35 per day more once he was married.

They travelled extensively throughout their marriage – Hy had a car dealership and then went into real estate – and visited Israel numerous times.

"We once motored from Hungary to Paris," said Hy, who still drives.

Just recently, they travelled to their granddaughter's destination wedding in Tuscany.

Retirement home living is like being on a permanent vacation, Shirley said. "After dinner, I feel like I have to put my coat on and go home. I still feel as if we've been out for dinner."

Hy said "there's nothing wrong with life in the retirement home. The alternative is much worse."

They then cut the conversation short, because their grandson, a Bialik Day School student, was in a Purim performance at their residence and they couldn't miss it.

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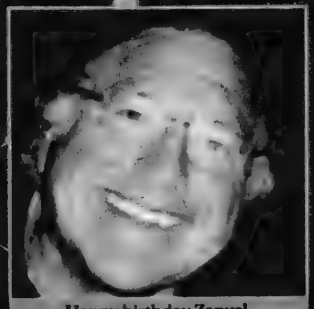
Mazel Tov מזל טוב

Zaidy Philip Bernatt. Mazel tov on your 100th birthday. Love from your grandchildren and great-grandchildren: Tarah & Caleigh, Bari & Dylan, Addison & Avery.

Five generations at a brit: Helen Margolis, 95, great-great-grandmother; Frank Margolis, great-grandfather; Sheryl Scher, grandmother; Doron Scher, father; Charles (Chuckie) Scher, baby.

Mazel tov to Ruthie & Murray Freedman on their 65th anniversary. They are truly loved by their children, grandchildren and great-grandaughter.

Ruby Jessie's first birthday brings joy to parents Marci Cook & Phil Tishler, sister Rylie, and grandmother Jeannie Cook. It honours the memory of Leo Cook, Jessie and Mendy Tishler.



Happy birthday Zanvel. You look fantastic! We love you more than you will ever know. Love, your wife, children and grandchildren.

Mazal tov to Jacob & Esther Weisbrod on their 64th wedding anniversary. From their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: March 4 is the deadline for the issue of March 14. March 11 is the deadline for the issue of March 21. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Feb. 28

RESUMÉ CRITIQUE

JVS Toronto offers one-on-one resumé critique/coaching every other Thursday, 540 Finch Ave. W. By appointment only, 416-649-1700. Free.

Friday, March 1

KOL AMI ANNIVERSARY

Temple Kol Ami celebrates its 25th anniversary with singer-songwriter **Alan Goodis** at services, 7:30 p.m., 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill.

CAMP GEORGE SHABBAT

Temple Sinai hosts a Camp George Shabbat. Dinner at 6:30, services at 8 p.m. RSVP by Feb. 28, 416-487-3281.

Saturday, March 2

JAZZ HAVDALAH

Beth Torah Synagogue hosts a jazz Havdalah service with the **Steve Koven Trio,** 7:30 p.m. Tickets $20/$25. Call 416-782-4495, ext. 24 or yourshul@bethtorah.ca.

FOLLOW ME

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation shows *Follow Me: The Yoni Netanyahu Story.* **Asaf Zohar**, who served in Netanyahu's IDF unit, speaks 8:30 p.m. $20.

TPM SHABBATON

Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Jeffrey S. Fox and **Lila Kagedan** from Yeshivat Maharat are the guests at Shabbat services sponsored by the Toronto Partnership Minyan, Reena Centre, 927 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. For lunch reservations, email debby@shaperopropp.ca.

WINE TASTING

The First Narayever Congregation hosts a kosher wine tasting, 7:30 p.m. $15. For tickets, call 416-927-0546.

Sunday, March 3

THE WHIPPING MAN

Director **Philip Aiken** discusses the play *The Whipping Man,* Temple Sinai, 10:15 a.m.

A special service, Applying the Passover Messages of Hope and Renewal, at 2 p.m.

CAVALCADE OF STARS

An evening of Jewish music starring KLEZconnection, The Shul of Rock and Gord Lindsay, a fundraiser for Jews for Judaism, at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 6:30 p.m. $25.

JOSHUA NELSON

Joshua Nelson, Prince of Jewish Gospel, performs at Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. $36/$18. 416-789-3291, ext. 224.

JERUSALEM MAKES MUSIC

A concert featuring works of **Osvaldo Golijov** to benefit the Jerusalem Conservatory of Music, 7 p.m., Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. $90. 416-635-5491 or lshlien@jerusalemfoundation.ca.

VENDOR MARKET

A market with 50 vendors and silent auction benefiting Uptown Chabad and B'nai Brith, 15 Hove St., 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

ARTISTIC TALK

Laya Crust presents her Jewish art, Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Continued on page 25

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Continued from page 24

PHOTOS FROM THE GHETTO
An exhibit of photos from the Lodz Ghetto runs until March 17, Osgoode Hall Law Library, York University. Opening reception and talk by **Prof. Jan Gross,** 4 p.m., Room 1005.

ISRAEL'S ARAB CITIZENS
Amal Elsana Alh'jooj, Shuli Dichter and others discuss "Israel's Arab Citizens: The Untapped Potential," 1 p.m. Lipa Green Centre. To register, cdrap erfisher@ujafed.org.

Monday, March 4

JEWISH HAPPINESS
A lecture on "What Is Jewish Happiness," at 8:30 p.m., the Chai Centre, 1098 Spadina Rd. $18. info@thechaicentre.com.

FRUMBA
Frumba classes are running at Beth Emeth Synagogue, Mondays at 7:30 p.m. frum badance@gmail.com.

Tuesday, March 5

USER-FRIENDLY JUDAISM
Rabbi Miriam Margles discusses "Feeling at Home in a Synagogue," 7 p.m., Eastminster Boardroom, 310 Danforth Ave. info@djctoronto.com.

ISRAEL TRUTH WEEK
Salomon Benzimra, co-founder of Canadians for Israel's Legal Rights, speaks at the Israel Truth Week conference, Victory International Church, 2799 Barton St. E. Hamilton. Call **Goldi Steiner**, 416-782-7021, or www.israeltruthweek.org.

ENJOY A MOVIE
Temple Har Zion shows *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 6

HALACHAH AND MODERNITY
Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky discusses "Matzah and Sugar: Halachah Confronts Modernity," 8 p.m., Bnai Torah Congregation.

ISRAELI SOCIETY
Amy Kronish discusses "Contemporary Issues in Israeli Society," Beth Tzedec synagogue. Dessert 1:30; lecture at 2 p.m.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Understanding the History of Christian Anti-Judaism," 8 p.m., Beth Torah Congregation. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, March 7

NONE IS TOO MANY
Prof. Irving Abella discusses "The Untold Story of *None Is Too Many*," 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion. $5/$10.

AFTER TEHRAN
Na'amat Canada presents **Marina Nehmat,** author of *After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed*, in an International Woman's Day celebration, 7:30 p.m., Borochov Centre, $20/$25. 416-636-5425 or www.naametevents.com.

OUR GENES, OUR DESTINIES
Dr. Peter Byers discusses "Our Genes, Our Past, Our Destinies," 8 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

PAUL PENNA OPEN HOUSE
Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School hosts an open house at 10 a.m. Call **Sheri Rapp**, 416-928-3537, or sheri@djds.ca.

RETHINKING THE DIASPORA
Prof. Rebecca Kobrin discusses "Bialystok and Beyond: Rethinking the Jewish Diaspora in the Age of Mass Migration," 7:30 p.m., Jackman Humanities Building, 170 St. George St., Room 100.

Other News

CARD GAMES
Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

When You're About to Separate – What To Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation, March 19, 9:30 a.m.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2-12. Starts March 21, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS
Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors Frank Simkevitz on "The Israel Nobody Talks About," 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim, Feb. 28. RSVP **Tammy**, 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, March 13. Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. March 5, **Sandra Whitely** on "Haiti and Foreign Aid: What Helps, What Doesn't," 10 a.m.; March 6, Post-Purim Persian Party, 1-3 p.m.; March 7, **Judy Weiss** on "Spring Is in the Air," 1:30 p.m.

Beth Tzedec Haverim: Norene Gilletz presents "Healthy Passover Pleasures," March 4, 1:30 p.m. $5.

New Horizons for Seniors is a discussion group meeting at Beth Tzedec, March 11, 1:30 p.m.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Register now. Social worker **Phyllis Flen** facilitates positive-aging group, 4 sessions, starts March 5.

Day Centre for Seniors provides a secure Jewish environment for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

A Support group for Russian-speaking seniors. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Centre Camp offers a March Break camp (March 11-15) at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre. Register at centrecamp.ca or 416-636- CAMP (2267).

Film lectures on "Produced and Abandoned Films," with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Shalom Singers, Thursdays, 10 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

How-to Passover Seder with **Noam Zion,** author of *A Different Night: The Family Participation Hagaddah*, March 3, 9:30 a.m. Ext. 277.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers, Feb. 25-April 29, 7 p.m.

Register now for the MNJCC Theatre Lab, March 7-May 30. Develop skills while rehearsing pieces from new Jewish theatre.

Night Without a Moon: Welcome the new month of Nisan with a celebration of women's voices, stories and song, featuring **Marni Levitt, Naomi Tessler**, March 9, 8 p.m. Ext. 154. $10.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Photos by Sheridan College graduates are in the gallery until March 17.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets March 13, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

60X60 Dance Toronto, presented by **Tova Kardonne** and Vox Novus, March 10, 8 p.m., at the Al Green Theatre. $20.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Jewish Parenting Class sponsored by Beit Rayim Synagogue, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3025.

Seniors bagel breakfast, March 15, 9 a.m. Seniors coffee hour, March 1, 1:30 p.m.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 22

Could Arab culture prevent two-state compromise?

In a Feb. 11 *National Post* opinion piece headlined "The peace paradox," Clifford May of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies wrote about his meeting with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and the prospects for Israeli-Palestinian peace. May argued that Fayyad is the sort of moderate, pragmatic Palestinian leader with whom Israelis could reach an agreement *if* they could negotiate with him and *if* Fayyad "could deliver a majority of Palestinians willing to accept a compromise solution to the conflict."

May put the chance of achieving such a deal with Fayyad at "[r]oughly zero to none," but he attributed that mostly to constraints related to Fayyad's unelected and unrepresentative status among the Palestinian people and the PLO. May also noted that Fayyad acknowledged that with the Palestinians split between the West Bank under Fatah and Gaza under Hamas, talk of peace is all the more remote – especially given Hamas' declared threat to destroy Israel.

What May did not mention is what's arguably central to the failure of all previous peace-making efforts (including Camp David in 2000 and Annapolis in 2008): the refusal of the Palestinian leadership "to accept a compromise solution."

Indeed, it's strange that May should have even felt the need to refer to a "compromise solution" as if to imply that there's any other type. After all, peace talks (and negotiations in general) depend upon both sides being able and willing to compromise. So it's redundant to even use the word "compromise" in this context. Or at least it should be.

Yet, the word seems to be increasingly cropping up these days in the very context of Israel-Palestinian peace-making. To cite just one other example, in a Jan. 31 *American Interest* blog entry ("Peace Process Sputters at the Starting Line"), Walter Russell Mead reflected on Hamas' firm denial of a report in the Saudi Arabian newspaper *Al-Sharq* that Hamas leader Khaled Meshal was prepared to endorse a two-state solution based on the 1967 borders. (Although this received a fair amount of attention, it's not the first time such a claim has been made about Hamas.)

The denial led to further discord between Fatah and Hamas, giving Mead pause to write: "And so we're back to square one." But he also used the occasion to make the following observation about Israel: "The substantial majority of Israelis who want a two-state solution (with some caveats) don't have much of an agenda to push in the absence of a strong Palestinian partner who is both willing to accept and able to deliver a *compromise* peace" (emphasis added).

Again, is there any other form of peace than one based on compromise? So why the need here, as in the May piece, to mention it?

It's not sloppy writing that leads to such an obvious redundancy. There must be something else at issue. And, arguably, it's that the concept of compromise appears exceptional not only for Palestinian politics, but for Arab political culture more generally.

Mark Lavie, a veteran foreign correspondent currently based in Egypt, reflected on the importance of this phenomenon in a December dispatch from Cairo. Compromise, Lavie wrote, "is the key ingredient of democracy. Yet the lack of the ability to compromise is evident all around us here in Egypt. It has kept the diverse and squabbling opposition groups from uniting. And in the current crisis, it has made it impossible to negotiate."

Other observers, such as former Canadian ambassador Michael Bell, have offered similar thoughts. Indeed this column cited Bell last December when, in a *Globe and Mail* opinion column about the political crisis in Egypt, he pointed to "long-held political and social traditions, where the art of political compromise remains rudimentary, if not alien, to the majority."

Lavie went one step further, however, noting that there "is no word for 'compromise' in Arabic."

This is not to say that compromise as it's understood in the West is impossible in the Arab world, rather, that it's very difficult – something that's not lost on Israelis themselves.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Young, Ray	Feb. 5/13	2 Covington Rd
Herman, David	Feb. 5/13	114 Glen Park Ave
Gurvits, Alexei	Feb. 6/13	Private
Abramson, Vera	Feb. 7/13	Private
Tobis, Ruth Rose	Feb. 8/13	484 Steeles Ave. W
Freeland, Lorraine	Feb. 8/13	769 York Hill Blvd
Mann, Robyn	Feb. 8/13	Private
Wallace, Howard Philip	Feb. 8/13	115 Robert Hicks Dr
Rotman, Efim	Feb. 10/13	4300 Bathurst St
Wise, Harry	Feb. 10/13	
Bogouslavskaia, Zina	Feb. 10/13	4455 Bathurst St
Basina, Sonia	Feb. 11/13	Private
Ryvkin, Igor	Feb/11/13	Private
Levitt, Donald Martin	Feb. 12/13	
Sonne, Lillian	Feb. 11/13	17 Michelle Dr
Boubli, Clement	Feb. 12/13	4455 Bathurst St
Pinchenko, Maria	Feb. 12/13	541 Finch Ave. W
Porgesz, Edith	Feb. 12/13	7 Townsgate Dr
Schonberger, Margit Sara	Feb. 11/13	546 Steeles Ave W
Burns, Jeffrey Howard	Feb. 13/13	23 Vonda Ave
Gershman, Anne	Feb. 13/13	556 Atlas Ave

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Edythe Stein	Feb 6/13	602 Melita Crescent
Bernard Braun	Feb 8/13	2 Covington Road
Peggy Birnberg	Feb 8/13	40 Merritt Road
Edith Rosenheck	Feb 8/13	366 Humewood Avenue
Anne Pollock	Feb 8/13	25 Brunswick Avenue
Zeana Rauch	Feb 9/13	644 Sheppard Ave. East
Frances King	Feb 10/13	28 Nugent Road
Ziva Davis	Feb 11/13	115 Florence Street
Steven Samuels	Feb 10/13	165 Elm Ridge Drive
Ida Blake	Feb 11/13	100 Antibes Drive
Barbara Harris Bonder	Feb 12/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Min Baker	Feb 13/13	55 Ameer Avenue
Donna Dale	Feb 12/13	2220 Lakeshore Road W.
Eli Fagen	Feb 13/13	110 Promenade Circle
Clara Stein	Feb 13/13	3500 Bathurst Street
Nancy Hersh	Feb 12/13	155 Kendal Avenue
Sharryn Ross Phillips	Feb 15/13	6200 Bathurst Street
Sylvia Weber	Feb 16/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Sammy Miller	Feb 16/13	19 Northern Heights Dr.

HEDREW BASIC

Mildred Bregman	Feb 7/13	529 Rushton Road

Margit Schonberger ז"ל

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Margit Schonberger on Monday, February 11, 2013. She is survived and will be greatly missed by her children: Rachel and George Mason; and Rabbi Joseph and Susan Schonberger. She will also be greatly missed by her grandchildren, Andrew and Rachel Mason, Lori and Jack Hurtig, Eliana Kayla and Samuel Oren Schonberger. She was the proud great-grandmother of Bailey Leah Hurtig and Noah David Mason. She will also be greatly missed by her sister Anna Farkas, and sister and brother-in-law Clara and Joe Bisztric. Mrs. Schonberger was predeceased by her loving husband, Dezso Moshe Schonberger, to whom she was married for 66 years. She missed him terribly. She was predeceased by her loving grandson David Zev Schonberger, brother-in-law Carl Stewart, sister and-brother-in-law Magda and Leslie Trattner, brother-in-law Bernard Farkas, sister Boske Hidvegi, parents Cecilia and Joseph Kelemen. Mrs. Schonberger was a Holocaust survivor who dedicated her life to the happiness of her family. She was a talented homemaker, cook, baker, and seamstress. She enjoyed crocheting, and even made a dozen beautiful kippot for the entire wedding party when her first grandchild got married. She made a special point of remembering and baking the favourites of each of her loved ones when they came for a visit. She was a giving and kind person who had a profound love for her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. There was never a shortage of food, cake, presents, hugs or kisses in her home. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Funeral Service was held at Steeles Memorial Chapel, 2 P.M. Internment took place at Mount Sinai Cemetery, Pride of Israel Section. Shiva was observed at AMICA of Thornhill, 546 Steeles Ave. West Donations in Margit's memory can be made to Beit Halochem of Canada, 1600 Steeles Ave. West, Concord Ontario Canada, L4K 4M2.

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Cora Bok Bakalarz ז"ל

Passed away in Buenos Aires, Argentina on January 16, 2013.

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Harry, Alon, Melissa and Jasmine

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Saskatchewan suddenly sprouts rabbis

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Two years ago, Saskatchewan was a wasteland for Jews seeking the services of rabbis, but that's no longer the case. The province's Jewish communities – largely in Saskatoon and Regina – now have three rabbis and a fourth on the way.

The first to arrive on the scene was Chabad Rabbi Raphael Kats – who established Saskatchewan's first Chabad presence in Saskatoon in June 2011. "The community has been fantastic, wonderful," said Rabbi Kats, who also serves Regina's Jewish community. "People have been extremely generous."

Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky

Rabbi Kats said he and his wife, Sarah, have been hosting holiday gatherings and offering classes. "We launched summer camps in Saskatoon and Regina last year," he added.

Rabbi Kats estimates that Saskatoon has an affiliated Jewish community of about 200 families. There are two congregations – Congregation Agudas Israel, a Conservative shul, and Congregation Shir Chadash. The latter is a smaller group that broke away from the former about a dozen years ago.

"We are also seeing more and more Jews attending our programs who are not affiliated with the community," Rabbi Kats said.

He added that there are plans to have a full-time Chabad rabbi setup in Regina in the next few months.

Rabbi Jeremy Parnes

For the past several years, Saskatoon's Agudas Israel had been led by Cantor Neil Schwartz. Last year, rather than renewing Schwartz's contract, the congregation recruited South American Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky. He and his wife, Rosy, and children, Amiel, 8, and Yoel, 5, arrived in Saskatoon last August.

Rabbi Raphael Kats

Rabbi Jodorkovsky received his smichah in 2002 from the Latin American Rabbinical Seminary of the Conservative Movement, the Jewish Theological Seminary's Buenos Aires branch. He has a BA in the management of non-profit organizations and studied for an MA in Jewish education, and he participated in the seniors educators program at the Melton Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The Santiago native said that he heard the calling to the rabbinate when he was a teenager. "I come from a traditional family. We were always involved with our synagogue," he said. "My father was executive director for 30 years and I was a youth leader. I was also close to our rabbi."

After receiving his smichah, Rabbi Jodorkovsky took a position in Medellin, Colombia. He spent two years there and another seven leading a congregation in Bogota, Colombia's capital city. Bogota has a Jewish community of about 4,000, he said.

Despite reports in the media about Colombia and its ongoing guerilla war (which seems to be coming to an end) and drug gangs, Rabbi Jodorkovsky describes Colombia as a great country. "In the city, you didn't see any sign of the wars," he said. "Delinquency was a problem, but it's the same everywhere in South America."

Rabbi Jodorkovsky said he and his wife decided to come to Canada – and Saskatoon – because they were looking for a better quality of life for their children. "We really like Canada," he said. "And a rabbi in a small shul can have an impact on everybody in the community."

He said that Agudas Israel has a membership of about 100 families, but added that Saskatoon is growing fast. "The city's population is expected to double within 10 years," Rabbi Jodorkovsky said. "We expect that the Jewish population will also increase, and we are seeing that happening already. The university also attracts Jewish students from elsewhere."

Although Rabbi Jeremy Parnes has been the rabbi at Regina's Beth Jacob Synagogue for just little more than a year, his connection with the congregation goes back nearly 30 years.

Rabbi Parnes, 61, hails from London, England. He was raised in an Orthodox home, sang in a synagogue choir and attended a Jewish boarding school. He came to Canada 35 years ago with the company he was working for. He lived first in Toronto, then six years in London, Ont. He was transferred to Regina 28 years ago and left the company soon after. He has been involved in a number of different business ventures over the years.

Fourteen years ago, Rabbi Parnes found himself in the position of acting prayer leader at Beth Jacob in Regina after the rabbi moved to New York. "We struck a search committee to recruit a new rabbi," he said. "The board asked me to lead services on a half-time basis until they could find a new rabbi. After a couple of years, they stopped looking."

While his position was initially half time, it soon morphed into a full-time job. "I had learned to lead services from the previous rabbi and I learned to read the Haftorah," Rabbi Parnes said. "I am still learning to read Torah."

Seeking guidance in his role as lay leader, he turned to Rabbi Alan Green, the spiritual leader of the Shaarey Zedek Congregation in Winnipeg. Rabbi Green encouraged him to study for the rabbinate. Following Rabbi Green's suggestion, he looked into the Jewish Renewal movement, which was co-founded by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and which Rabbi Green is part of.

"I went to a retreat and found myself feeling right at home," Rabbi Parnes recalls. "I joined the ordination program."

That was eight years ago.

He said the Renewal ordination program consists of the study of Talmud, Torah, Agudah, history and elements of Kabbalah. "I found it all amazing and enlightening," he said. "I was exposed to a deeper level of Torah than I ever experienced before."

Rabbi Parnes trained via long distance as well as through regular attendance at retreats such as Smichah Week, which he compared to being in a yeshiva.

"My community was very supportive," he said. "One couple in our congregation established a rabbinic endowment fund to help cover the costs of my rabbinic training. It is not an inexpensive process."

He received his smichah as a rabbi from Jewish Renewal movement in January 2012

"There is still money left in the endowment fund, which is available for others in our congregation who want to study to be able to help lead services," he said.

Beth Jacob has a membership of 95 families. (Regina also has a Reform Congregation – Temple Beth Tikvah – which was founded in 1990.) Like Rabbi Jodorkovsky, Rabbi Parnes said that his community's Jewish population is growing, thanks to an influx of Israelis.

"We have a lot going on here at the shul," he said. "More and more, Beth Jacob is becoming once again the centre for Jewish life in Regina."

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MENU #2
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Roast Chicken
Roast Brisket of Beef
Lockshen Pudding
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Cole Slaw
Lemon Roll
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Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
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MENU #3
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Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Cabbage Borscht
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MENU #4
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Roast Veal
Lockshen Pudding
Pan Roast Potatoes
Green Beans Almondine
Cole Slaw
Honey Cake
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
$199 for 5 people

MENU #5
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Roast Chicken
Roast Brisket of Beef
Chicken Fingers
Green Beans Almondine
Lockshen Pudding
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
Charoses
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MENU #6
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls
Sweet & Sour Meatballs
Poached Salmon
Pan Roast Potatoes
Green Beans Almondine
Lockshen Pudding
Chocolate Brownies
Seder Plate
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Charoses

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Cucumber Salad

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Salt & Pepper Gefilte Fish

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Fruit Compote
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Honey Cake
Macaroons
Mandlebroit
Mocca Cake
Passover Cookies

'CHAG SAME'ACH from YITZ'S

Israeli group fights terror in courts worldwide

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Fighting terrorism through litigation may seem like an impossible task, but one Israeli organization is doing just that in courts around the world.

The Shurat HaDin Israel Law Center, with a staff of 13, including 11 lawyers, partners with law firms around the world to fight for justice and compensation for victims of terror. Based in Tel Aviv, the non-profit organization works with a network of volunteer lawyers to file legal actions on behalf of survivors.

Its director, Nitsana Darshan-Leitner spoke to members of Ottawa's Bora Laskin Law Society Feb. 11 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre. Her talk described some of the cases the centre has worked on, as well as the detective work involved in discovering the assets of terror groups and regimes around the world, and the intense legal research used to unearth ways to sue in various countries and jurisdictions.

One example she cited was the halting of the second Gaza flotilla.

"The first flotilla was a big success for the organizers, so they tried to do it again the next year, bigger and better," she said, referring to Israel's May 2010 interception of six ships headed to the blockaded coastal territory. Israel's raid on one of the vessels, the Mavi Marmara, drew widespread condemnation after nine of its passengers were killed.

"We decided that all boats need maritime insurance, so we contacted all the maritime insurance companies in the world and told them they would be aiding and abetting terrorism, because the end goal of the boats was to help Hamas which is a designated terrorist organization. Lloyds of London then refused to insure the boats... and six boats pulled out due to lack of insurance."

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner

After using the same tactics with satellite communications companies, Shurat HaDin hired a law firm in Greece that alerted Greek maritime officials to check all the boats to make sure they had insurance and satellite communication equipment and were fit to sail. The result was the cancellation of the flotilla.

The organization has also managed to freeze terrorists' bank accounts around the world and has won judgments on behalf of terror victims and seizing assets, including real estate in the United States and Europe.

"Every day we get more and more calls from more and more terror victims who want to fight back," Darshan-Leitner said.

"Governments cannot do what we do. Governments cannot file lawsuits against other governments, against banks... We are private lawyers who represent private people. We have a goal to bankrupt terrorism, one lawsuit at a time."

"This is a war, and we are fighting for our national survival, and I promise you that at the end of the road, between them and us, we will be the ones who will win."

Darshan-Leitner impressed the room full of mostly lawyers, which included former deputy prime minister Herb Gray and Liberal MP Irwin Cotler.

"To hear Nitsana Darshan-Leitner talk about the tactics and ideas that she and her fellow counsel have come up with to hunt down terrorist funds, complicit banks and complicit governments is nothing short of incredible... her methods are sheer brilliance," said lawyer Russ Molot, adding that he'd "love to be of assistance to Shurat HaDin here in Canada and am talking with others of a like mind."

The founder of the Bora Laskin Society, Cory Olishansky, worked with the Embassy of Israel to bring Darshan-Leitner to Ottawa on the recommendation of society member Maya Weiss.

For more information on Shurat HaDin, visit www.israellawcenter.org.

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'A friend of the community'

Continued from page 1

In that 2007 open letter published in Quebec newspapers, he apologized for other egregious faults, including the church's handling of the sexual abuse of children and attitudes to minorities and women.

"I recognize the narrow-minded attitudes of certain Catholics, before 1960, that favoured antisemitism, racism, indifference towards First Nations and discrimination against women and homosexuals," he wrote. He called on the faithful to publicly repent for these past mistakes during the Christian season of Lent.

"Our Judeo-Christian tradition has made us a people who stand together and are charitable. We know how to help each other and we are capable of forgiveness with the help of God."

Then-CJC Quebec chair Victor Goldbloom, a pioneer in interfaith dialogue, welcomed Cardinal Ouellet's forthrightness and said it was in keeping with his past efforts to nurture a relationship with the Jewish community.

"He is a friend of the community, for whom I have a great deal of esteem," said Goldbloom in 2007. "He is certainly an open-minded and positive person, and I think [the letter] will have an influence on Canadian Catholics."

Goldbloom, a past president of both the Canadian and international Council of Christians and Jews, said last week that he continues to regard Ouellet, 68, as a beacon for dialogue and reconciliation. He would consider it good news if the Quebec cleric is chosen to succeed to Pope Benedict XVI.

"Cardinal Ouellet has been very positive on Catholic-Jewish relations and my contacts with him over the years have shown he is very supportive of dialogue," Goldbloom said.

He recalled that Cardinal Ouellet wanted to start formal dialogue with the Quebec City Jewish community, but perhaps because it is so small, that was never realized.

Although Cardinal Ouellet is regarded as a staunch conservative, Goldbloom said, "My intuition tells me that, if he is elected, we will see a continuation of the positive relations that now go back to John XXIII [1958-63]."

The German Pope Benedict, who steps down at the end of the month, is also viewed as conservative, yet has been supportive of Christian-Jewish relations, Goldbloom pointed out.

Pope Benedict did, however, make a couple of decisions that have shaken the Jewish community's confidence in that commitment, Goldbloom acknowledged. These include his revoking of the excommunication of British-born Bishop Richard Williamson, who has denied aspects of the Holocaust, and the restoring of the Latin Mass with its prayer for the conversion of the Jews.

"This is the kind of paradox we could have with Cardinal Ouellet, but, on balance, I look back at Benedict's papacy with a positive feeling," Goldbloom said.

In October, Goldbloom became one of the few non-Christians to be made a papal knight, a rare honour conferred by the pontiff.

Since 2010, Cardinal Ouellet, who is from the Abitibi region, has been the prefect of the Congregation for Bishops and president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, residing in Rome. He has been a cardinal since 2003.

Whether a candidate or not, Cardinal Ouellet is among those in the upper echelons who will be voting for the next pope.

In a 2010 interview published in the *National Post*, he expressed the opinion that the Second Vatican Council has been interpreted too liberally by many Catholics. But he also observed, "After the council, the sense of mission was replaced by the idea of dialogue, that we should dialogue with other faiths and not attempt to bring them to the Gospels, to convert them."

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Israel's effort to mend ties with Turkey fails

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — An Israeli-initiated effort to heal ties with Turkey, which saw Israeli officials meet their Turkish counterparts in Rome three weeks ago, ended in failure.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's national security adviser, Yaakov Amidror, accompanied by former Foreign Ministry director general Joseph Ciechanover, held talks in the Italian capital with Turkish Foreign Ministry Director Feridun Sinirlioglu, to try to formulate terms for easing the rift between the two countries that has strained relations over the past three years.

But the contacts did not produce a breakthrough, Channel 2 reported Feb. 23, and the Israelis came home empty-handed.

Hatnua Leader Tzipi Livni made her own effort to ease the strains by seeking a meeting in New York late last year with Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, but he refused to see her, the news report said.

It added that Israel is feeling the pressure to mend the rift ahead of U.S. President Barack Obama's visit here next month and that Livni's decision to join Netanyahu's nascent coalition might make the task easier. Obama is said to have urged both sides privately to heal their ties.

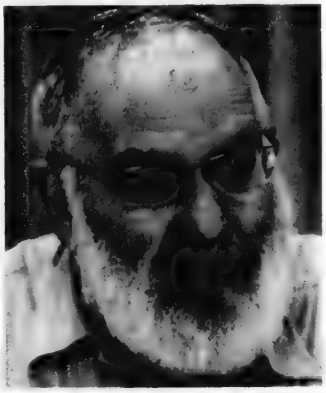
Similar talks took place in Geneva in November.

Israel has reportedly been prepared to apologize to Turkey for "operational errors" during its fatal raid on a May 2010 Turkish aid flotilla to Gaza.

As a condition to normalizing diplomatic ties with Israel, Turkey has demanded that Israel apologize for the death of nine activists who were killed when Israeli commandos raided the Mavi Marmara ship during a takeover operation in the Mediterranean.

The aid ship, chartered by the Islamist IHH organization, was headed to the Gaza Strip in defiance of Israel's naval siege on the Hamas-run area.

Turkey has also demanded Israel lift the siege, but is prepared to drop that demand, a report in Turkey's *Radikal* said last week.



Yaakov Amidror

Israel is prepared to offer compensation to the families of those killed, according to the report.

Such a deal was reportedly under consideration in the summer of 2011, but was scuttled in part because of objections by then-foreign minister Avigdor Liberman. Now facing trial on corruption charges, Liberman is no longer in government.

In related news, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly rejected an offer by Defence Minister Ehud Barak to write an apology to Barak's Turkish counterpart for possible "operational errors" that took place when the IDF raided the Gaza-bound Mavi Marmara in May 2010.

The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, citing unnamed Foreign Ministry sources, reported Sunday that Barak, who has advocated an apology since the incident, came forward with the proposal to try to repair the two countries' frayed relations after the elections, but that Netanyahu opposed it.

TimesofIsrael.com with files from JTA

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Prisoner's death sparks Palestinian protests

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas lashed out at Israel Monday, accusing it of killing Palestinian children hours after a funeral of a Palestinian who died while in Israeli custody.

Violence broke out at a number of spots around the West Bank Monday as thousands gathered in Hebron for the funeral of Arafat Jaradat, who the Palestinians say was tortured to death by Israel. Israel says the inmate died of a heart attack.

"Israel is killing our children with live fire," Abbas said during an address in Ramallah, adding that he won't let Palestinians waste away in Israeli jails.

His words come as Israel has called on the Palestinians to calm the West Bank in the face of what Jerusalem fears could be a widespread outbreak of violence or third intifadah.

Abbas accused Israel of creating the tension, but said the Palestinians would not allow it to get out of hand.

"We won't let Israel create chaos in the West Bank," he said. "We won't let that happen."

Earlier in the day, some 25,000 mourners escorted Jaradat's body from a Hebron hospital to a cemetery in his home village of Si'ir.

Riots were reported in the village of Beit Anoun, between Si'ir and Hebron, just before noon, where some 200 Palestinians gathered, Israel Radio reported.

Protests were also reported outside Ramallah and near the Ofer military prison, where hundreds threw rocks at Israeli security forces.

Palestinians return to violent protests against Israel. *[Flash90 photo]*

Forces also clashed with Palestinians at other spots around the West Bank, including Tulkarem and near Tekoa.

Officials had been on high alert, expecting another day of wide-ranging unrest centred around the funeral. Some Palestinians called for Monday to be a "day of rage" on the Palestinian street.

The army said it would expend every effort not to worsen the situation and let Palestinian security forces take control where possible.

Last Friday, Palestinian protesters reportedly fired flares and hurled stones at Israeli troops in the Old City in Jerusalem amid violent protests in the West Bank.

Several dozen Palestinians began hurling rocks at troops stationed outside the Mugrabi Gate after Friday prayers, *Ynet* reported.

When the troops pursued the men into the Temple Mount compound, other men fired flares at them. None of the Israeli soldiers was injured.

The Temple Mount, the site of Judaism's ancient temple that overlooks the Western Wall, is home to two mosques considered among the most holy in Islam. Clashes there have sparked extended conflict in the past.

Meanwhile, riots broke out in Hebron as dozens began to march in the direction of Beit Hadassah, an area inhabited by Israeli settlers. Protesters also hurled stones outside Ofer Prison near Jerusalem, where dozens of Palestinians prisoners are held, some under administrative detention.

The protests, according to *Ynet*, were over the detention of Samer Tareq al-Essawi, Ja'far Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din and Tareq Husein Qa'dan and Ayman Isma'il Sharawna.

Ynet quoted unnamed officials in Israel's Shin Bet, as saying that Sharawna and Essawi were released along with 1,025 in 2011 in exchange for Gilad Schalit, a soldier abducted by Hamas, but "returned to practice terrorism."

Monday was the 19th anniversary of the murder by Baruch Goldstein of 29 Muslim worshippers and the wounding of 125 others during a prayer service in a mosque at the Cave of the Patriarchs. Activists had planned a series of events distinct from the funeral to commemorate the shooting.

Under interim Israeli-Palestinian agreements implemented in 1997, Israel pulled out of 80 per cent of Hebron, where some 120,000 Palestinians live, retaining control of the remaining 20 per cent, where some 30,000 Palestinians live and where several Jewish settler enclaves are home to a population of some 700.

On Sunday, the PA said it had determined Jaradat was tortured to death in Megiddo Prison after his arrest last week, while Israel said that the prisoner died of a heart attack and that signs of trauma on his body were from resuscitation attempts.

The Palestinian announcement was expected to further escalate the tense situation in the territories, which some have already described as marking the beginning of a third intifadah.

Several thousand Palestinian prisoners held by Israel observed a one-day fast Sunday to protest Jaradat's death. On Monday morning, in Megiddo Prison, more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners again refused food.

Timesofisrael.com

– With files from JTA

Israel and Canada conduct joint naval exercise

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

The Canadian and Israeli navies conducted joint rescue and maneuvering exercises in the Gulf of Aqaba on Feb. 7.

Crews from the HMCS Toronto and the INS Kidon took part in a search-and-rescue and passing exercise – called "SAREX" in naval jargon – as well as an exchange of sailors as part of the manoeuvres.

Brig.-Gen. (Res.) Eden Attias, Israeli Ministry of Defence attaché to Canada told *The CJN* that the joint operation was another "significant step in our bourgeoning bilateral ties."

"As one of the first concrete achievements to come out of the 2011 memorandum of understanding on defence relations, the exercise was the result of nearly six months of co-ordination," Attias said in an email.

Israeli and Canadian military naval vessels conduct search-and-rescue and passing exercises in the Red Sea on Feb. 7. From right, an Israeli patrol boat leads the Canadian frigate HMCS Toronto and the INS Kidon, a Sa'ar 4.5 class missile boat. *[HMCS Toronto photo]*

Two years ago in Jerusalem, Canadian Defence Minister Peter MacKay and his Israeli counterpart, Ehud Barak, signed a memorandum of understanding on military relations.

"The security of both Israelis and Canadians is strengthened when our militaries work together sharing in experience and expertise," Attias said.

An account of the joint military exercise was published on the Department of National Defence's (DND) website on Feb. 21.

According to the DND, five Canadian sailors were sent to observe on the Kidon, while Israel sent seven sailors to the Toronto.

"These exchanges are a very important way for navies to interact with one another. It gives excellent insight into the operating procedures of allies so that when they are called on to work together in an operational capacity, they are aware of what is happening on the other vessel and they know what to expect," the department said.

Sub-Lieut. Drew MacLeod, one of the five Canadian seamen sent aboard the Israeli vessel, was quoted in the report as saying he was amazed at how "the language of warfare" transcends cultures.

"It was also nice to have the opportunity to have lunch with them and get a taste of Israel," he said.

HMCS Toronto's commanding officer, Cmdr. David Patchell, reported that the joint exercise was "an exceptional opportunity to work with our friends in the Israeli Navy, sharing ideas and medical procedures that can benefit both countries."

He complimented his Israeli counterparts, calling them "extremely professional and welcoming in working with Toronto."

THE OSCARS
For coverage of Oscar night please go to cjnews.com

Galloway refuses to debate Israeli

The Times of Israel

LONDON — British MP George Galloway quit a debate on Israel at Oxford University last week after discovering that his opponent was an Israeli citizen.

The Respect party legislator, who is renowned for being staunchly pro-Palestinian, stormed out of the building saying: "I don't recognize Israel and I don't debate with Israelis."

Galloway was first to speak in the debate, opining in favour of the statement "Israel should withdraw immediately from the West Bank" for 10 minutes. But midway into his opponent's address, in which the third-year student referred repeatedly to Israel as "we" and "us," Galloway inquired whether the speaker, Eylon Aslan-Levy, was Israeli. Upon learning that he was, the MP stormed out of the building with his wife, claiming that he was misled.

"I refused this evening to debate with an Israeli, a supporter of the Apartheid state of Israel," Galloway said in a statement late on Feb. 20. "The reason is simple; No recognition, No normalization. Just Boycott, divestment and sanctions, until the apartheid state is defeated."

British MP George Galloway

Aslan-Levy, 21, who has joint British-Israeli citizenship, described Galloway's remarks as "appalling."

"It's deeply offensive to refuse to speak to someone because of their nationality. It's pure racism," he said in an interview to the *Times*. "The fact that a sitting member of Parliament could do this is all the more astonishing."

Speaking to a university newspaper, debate organizer Mahmood Naji condemned Galloway's walkout and denied misleading him.

"At no point during my email exchange with Mr. Galloway's secretary was Eylon's nationality ever brought up or mentioned," he said, "nor do I expect to have to tell the speaker what his opponent's nationality is."

Galloway has long been a bitter critic of Israel. He accepted an honorary Palestinian passport from Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniyeh three years ago after organizing aid trips to Gaza. He has reportedly described Jerusalem and Baghdad as being "raped" by "foreigners," claimed Zionists control the British media, and blamed Israel for the assassination of Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri.

In 2010, Galloway was denied entry to Canada on national security grounds over his links to Hamas, though he was later permitted to visit.

Last March he won the Bradford West seat in northern England — a district that includes a large Muslim community — with a majority of more than 10,000 votes.

Timesofisrael.com

Bomb plot exposed in London

Miriam Shaviv
The Times of Israel

LONDON — Three men were found guilty Feb. 21 of planning a "spectacular bombing campaign" in the United Kingdom, including an attack on a synagogue.

Irfan Naseer, 31, Irfan Khalid, 27, and Ashik Ali, 27, wanted to carry out "another 9/11" by using eight suicide bombers armed with guns and explosives-filled backpacks to target "crowded places" in their native city of Birmingham, Woolwich Crown Court found.

The trio had not decided on a specific target, but in conversations secretly recorded by police, Naseer said that even if the group could not make a bomb, it could "get guns, yeah, from the black geezers, Africans, and charge in some like synagogue or charge in different places."

Two of the men, Naseer and Khalid, travelled to Pakistan twice for training, including a two-month stint at an Al Qaeda facility. They recorded martyrdom videos before returning to the United Kingdom in 2011, where they recruited Ali and experimented together in building bombs.

Naseer also helped send four other men to Pakistan for training and recruited two others for his own plot. All six have already pleaded guilty to related terrorism charges.

In addition to 12 counts of preparing acts of terrorism between December 2010 and September 2011, Naseer, Khalid and Ali were convicted of raising money for terrorism and recruiting others for a terror act.

The Community Security Trust, a charity that monitors antisemitism and provides security for the Jewish community in Britain, welcomed the guilty verdict, but said the plot "is yet another disturbing example of would-be antisemitic terrorism here in Britain. This is the third recent case in which terrorists have contemplated British Jews amongst other U.K. targets, the others being an Al Qaeda plot of 2011 and the stock-exchange plot of 2010.

"Worse still, it follows last year's Khans case, in which a married couple solely targeted the Jewish community of North Manchester," the Community Security Trust said.

"In Britain, terrorism threatens all of society. We are all at equal risk when using public places, such as transport hubs or famous buildings, but these cases demonstrate that British Jews face an additional level of threat, due to the sheer number of terrorists who regard Jews as amongst the priority targets for their actions."

Sentencing will take place in April or May. The judge has already warned the men they face life in prison.

Timesofisrael.com

Most British Jews live in London: statistics

JTA

LONDON — Britain's Jewish population is becoming more concentrated, with nearly 60 per cent of Jews living in London, new statistics show.

According to detailed figures from the 2011 census released this week, 90 per cent of the country's 263,000 Jews live in just 20 per cent of the city's neighbourhoods.

The most heavily Jewish area is the Orthodox suburb of Golders Green in northwest London, with 7,661 Jews, a growth of 35 per cent since the last census in 2001.

"This concentration into relatively few places often gives rise to the perception that there is a greater Jewish presence in Britain than is actually the case," said David Graham of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research. "Nationally, Jews comprise just 0.5 per cent of the population, but at the local level that proportion rises to as much as 40 per cent in some places."

He said that many of the areas that are growing fastest are haredi neighbourhoods in London and Manchester, buoyed by high birth rates. Another trend is for Jews to move farther out of "the crowded and congested" capital to the "greener, more spacious surroundings" of Greater London.

Partially as a result, some previously dominant areas such as Redbridge in northeast London are showing considerable decline, leaving some schools and shuls struggling to fill places.

The full set of census data will continue to be released in stages throughout 2013 and 2014 and will be used to inform planning in the community.

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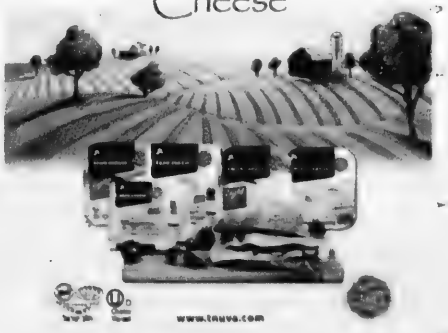

Non-Orthodox rabbis still fighting for equal pay

Ben Sales
JTA

TEL AVIV — In a precedent setting decision, Israel's Supreme Court ruled last May that a Reform Rabbi, Miri Gold, should be paid a state salary, just like her Orthodox colleagues.

The Reform and Conservative movements hailed the decision as a step closer to full equality for non-Orthodox religious denominations.

But Rabbi Gold, who works as a rabbi at Kibbutz Gezer in central Israel, still has yet to see her first government paycheck.

The government says Rabbi Gold has not fulfilled the criteria set by the state for non-Orthodox rabbis. Rabbi Gold and her allies say the criteria are onerous and unfairly set different conditions for Orthodox and non-Orthodox rabbis.

In a bid to challenge the rules, Rabbi Gold, another non-Orthodox Israeli rabbi, and the Conservative and Reform movements filed a new court petition last week.

"I can't tell you how aggravating it is," Anat Hoffman, executive director of the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Center, told *JTA*. "We thought this was a victory, and then it started to be a rigmarole. It's a real insult."

Last year's Supreme Court ruling determined that Reform, Conservative and other non-Orthodox rabbis in rural communities could be recognized as "rabbis of non-Orthodox communities" and receive wages equal to those granted by the state to Orthodox rabbis.

Rabbi Miri Gold

Several caveats, however, set special conditions for non-Orthodox clergy. The decision applied only to Israel's regional councils – large districts of rural communities – but not Israeli cities. The rabbis would be paid by the Ministry of Culture and Sport rather than the Religious Affairs Ministry, which pays Orthodox rabbis. The non-Orthodox rabbis would not have religious legal authority over such matters as marriage, divorce and conversion.

Two months ago, the Ministry of Culture and Sport released its new criteria for non-Orthodox rabbis to collect state salaries. To be eligible, the rabbis must work full time and be present at their congregation for at least 40 Sabbaths per year. Only rabbis of congregations with at least 250 members can receive full-time pay. Those leading congregations of 50 to 250 members may receive half a salary even though they'd be required to work full time.

By contrast, Orthodox rabbis do not need to work a certain number of hours, and there is no minimum size requirement for their congregations to qualify for salaries.

Aside from the obvious inequalities, the new rules put Rabbi Gold in something of a catch-22 in 2012: Unable to raise a full-time salary on her own last year, she worked only half time. As a result, she won't be paid at all for her work in 2012.

"Part of the reason our rabbis are part time is that there isn't enough funding," Rabbi Gold told *JTA*. "The idea is to have more of an even playing field. The more we can be available to people, the richer Jewish life will be in this country."

A spokeswoman for the Ministry of Culture and Sport, Or Doron, said non-Orthodox rabbis are paid according to "set criteria" and that the ministry uses the same pay scale as those for Orthodox rabbis. Just two non-Orthodox rabbis currently meet the criteria for state wages: rabbis Yoav Ende of Kibbutz Hannaton and Shai Zarchi of Nigun Halev, a congregation in the town of Nahalal, near Haifa.

Doron said that in light of complaints submitted by the Reform and Conservative movements, the ministry is considering changing its criteria for 2013 to allow for part-time salaries. Reform and Conservative advocates say the change is coming too slowly; last week's court petition is an attempt to push things along.

"It's hard to move these things without the courts," said Orly Erez-Likhovski, the lawyer who submitted the petition. Aside from Rabbi Gold, the other rabbi named in the petition is Rabbi Benjie Gruber, a Conservative rabbi from Kibbutz Yahel in southern Israel.

Rabbi Gold says she sees one potential glimmer of hope: the makeup of the new Knesset.

The Yesh Atid party, which controls 19 seats, includes advocates for religious pluralism such as the liberal Jewish scholar Ruth Calderon. In her inaugural Knesset speech, Calderon called for equal state support for secular and pluralistic institutions on par with Orthodox ones. Rabbi Gold hopes that means a wider push for the rights of non-Orthodox rabbis.

"Meaningful change can happen in the Knesset," Rabbi Gold said. "It would be healthier if some of these decisions were coming out of the government and we wouldn't have to run to the court."

Senior rabbi accused of sexual abuse

Miriam Shaviv
The Times of Israel

LONDON — A man believed to be Chaim Halpern, a London rabbi, was arrested Feb. 20 in connection with investigations into sexual assault and perverting the course of justice.

The London Metropolitan Police will not name him, but the man appears to be Rabbi Halpern, a former religious judge for the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, who has been at the centre of a sexual abuse scandal that has roiled London's haredi community since October.

Three more men were also arrested Feb. 20 on suspicion of perverting the course of justice in the case. They are all in custody at a north London police station and may be held for up to 48 hours without charge.

One is believed to be a brother of Rabbi Halpern.

According to the London Metropolitan Police, all the arrests were made at addresses in the borough of Barnet, which includes the Orthodox suburb of Golders Green, where Rabbi Halpern is a resident. The main suspect is 54; the others are 64, 62 and 25.

Last month, a religious court convened by the UOHC began deliberating on the case of Rabbi Halpern, who has been accused of inappropriate sexual conduct with approximately 30 women who came to him for counselling and religious guidance. The judges were due to reconvene in early March.

Rabbi Halpern is a member of one of London's most prominent haredi families, and attempts to force him out of his public positions have deeply divided the community. Although he resigned as a religious judge and rabbinic adviser to several London institutions in November, he continued to serve as rabbi of his own synagogue. In December, five senior London rabbis issued a public statement declaring him "not fit and proper to act in any rabbinic capacity."

After months of public silence, Rabbi Halpern recently went on the offensive, earlier this month securing a high court order for Google to identify the IP address of the owner of Ifyoutickleus, a blog that has covered the case closely, as well as the IP addresses of more than 20 commentators on the site. His lawyers claimed the comments were defamatory.

The London Metropolitan Police's Barnet Borough Commander, Adrian Usher, said: "In Barnet, we are currently working with members of all our communities to ensure the voices of victims of abuse are heard. My message to those victims is simple: Come forward and we will listen to, support and believe you."

TimesofIsrael.com

Sharansky to head JAFI again

Members of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) board of governors have re-elected Natan Sharansky for another term as JAFI's chairman of the executive, *Israel Hayom* reported. The board meets three times a year, with participants from Jewish communities and organizations from Israel and around the world. Sharansky, perhaps the best-known Soviet "refusenik," spent nine years in the Soviet Gulag. He established the Yisrael B'Aliyah party in Israel and served as deputy prime minister, and since 2009 has overseen JAFI's shift in attention from aliyah to building global Jewish identity.

JAFI seeks Pollard's release

The Jewish Agency passed a resolution urging U.S. President Barack Obama to grant clemency to spy-for-Israel Jonathan Pollard. The agency's board of governors passed the resolution unanimously on Feb. 19 during its annual meeting in Jerusalem. It calls for Pollard's release on humanitarian grounds, noting that he's completing his 28th year of a life sentence in a U.S. federal prison and claiming the sentence is "overly harsh." The resolution also refers to Pollard's "various illnesses and deteriorating health." The resolution was passed one month before Obama is scheduled to make his first visit to Israel as president.

Conversion recognition sought

An Israeli advocacy group filed a lawsuit seeking the recognition of all Orthodox conversions performed in Israel. The Jewish Advocacy Center for ITIM: the Jewish Life Information Center petitioned the Supreme Court calling on the Interior Ministry to recognize the conversions, specifically those performed in private Orthodox rabbinical courts. The petition urges the government to create a conversion process that is fair and accessible. The petition was filed on behalf of converts to Judaism who completed the conversion process headed by two Orthodox rabbis, Nissim Karelitz and Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz. Though the conversions were certified by the rabbinical court, the Interior Ministry didn't recognize them.

Obama to get medal

U.S. President Barack Obama will receive the Presidential Medal of Distinction from Israeli President Shimon Peres. The award will be presented to Obama at a state dinner hosted by Peres in Jerusalem during Obama's visit next month to Israel. It's the first time that a serving U.S. president will receive an award of this kind from the president of Israel, according to Peres' office. "Barack Obama is a true friend of the State of Israel, and has been since the beginning of his public life," read the recommendation of the advisory committee for the Presidential Medal of Distinction that was released by Peres' office Feb. 18.

Files from JTA and JNS.org

Brock business school named for investor

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Ned Goodman with business students at a celebration for the Goodman School of Business. (*Brock News* photo)

Brock University officially launched its business school earlier this month under a new name: the Goodman School of Business.

The moniker honours Ned Goodman, a businessman, geologist and investment expert who has served as university chancellor for the past five years. This is the first time that the university has renamed a faculty for a donor.

The change comes after the Goodman Foundation gave the school a "transformational gift," which will go toward a new building for the business school, as well as student scholarships, research and programming for community development, said Don Cyr, dean of the Goodman School of Business.

Cyr said Goodman's donation came with the condition that the school would not disclose the amount.

The two-hour ceremony to officially open the renamed school took place Feb. 6, and was attended by more than 200 students, alumni, professors, university officials and members of the community.

Cyr said it was a positive formal start to the new school, which was met by a great sense of spirit and confidence.

Goodman is the CEO and founder of investment management firms Dundee Corporation and Dundee Wealth, though his career spans more than 40 years in the industry. Among his many philanthropic activities, Goodman is a former vice-president of the national executive committee for the Jewish sports organization Maccabi Canada.

Cyr said that since the announcement of the new name, the business program has seen a 22 per cent increase in applications compared to the same time last year.

"I think of it akin to the market seeing his contribution to the school as the move of a wise investor," he said.

The announcement first came in October, the same week Laurentian University announced that it, too, would honour the Goodman family by renaming its mining faculty after the Goodman Foundation gave the school a significant gift.

"We want to be associated with Laurentian University because it's undoubtedly the go-to university for mineral exploration and mining in Canada," Goodman said in a statement at the time.

Goodman was also inducted into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame last year for his contributions to the industry, including helping to build several mining companies and investing in others.

In order for a new business school building to be constructed at Brock, the school must first apply to the provincial Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for additional support, Cyr said, adding that the university has a very strong case.

"We have been one of the fastest-growing business schools in Canada in the past 10 years," he said, adding that it's now in the top 10 in terms of size in the country, with 2,800 undergraduate students, 400 graduate students, and 90 faculty members.

With Goodman's name attached the school, Cyr said the university should see a very positive impact.

"He's an extremely strong businessman with an entrepreneurial spirit and that's certainly representative of the nature of our degree programs," Cyr said.

"We're very proud to be the recipient of the support and obviously the confidence in us."

Samsung promotion combines marketing, Purim baskets

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Israel is a small market for a company like Samsung, but the Jewish state has a special place in the heart of the Korean electronics giant.

Israel is the home of two important Samsung R&D facilities, where engineers developed, among other things, key components of the Galaxy S3 smart camera and cellphone.

In the past, Samsung has set up an Internet television system for Israelis and sponsored the Israeli Olympic team. This year, Samsung helped disadvantaged Israeli kids celebrate Purim.

In a combination marketing campaign and charity project, Samsung sent 10,000 Purim baskets to anyone in Israel lucky enough to have a friend that signs them up for one on the Samsung Mobile Israel Facebook page. Each basket is full of Purim goodies (candies and the like), and was to be delivered by the end of Shushan Purim to any address in Israel. Samsung is paying for the candy, and is paying two Israeli organizations, Variety Israel and the Enosh Fund, to assemble them.

The baskets are sent out via a Facebook app on the Samsung Mobile Israel page. The app requires loading up a virtual phone with all of the virtues of the Galaxy S3 Mini smartphone (1.0 ghz processor, voice recognition, the latest Android operating system, etc.) Once the phone's loaded up, you're presented with a form where you can add a greeting, and attach the recipient's address. And there's an extra bonus: If your greeting is good enough, you can win one of five Galaxy S3 Mini smartphones Samsung is giving away as part of the promotion.

Variety Israel provides medical treatment, equipment, and other assistance to tens of thousands of disabled kids, while Enosh works on behalf of families that have members with mental disabilities. The Facebook app has been active for the past few days, but there have been a few glitches – with the site not responding, or the greeting not being recorded by the server.

In response, Samsung Israel said that the glitches were due to overloading of the server by users, who mobbed the app when it first went up, and that the company was heartened to see how many people were sending Purim gifts to friends and loved ones, and how Variety Israel and Enosh would benefit.

TimesofIsrael.com

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The war in letters, libraries and hidden notebooks

Reviewed by

Norman Ravvin

Vilnius, the contemporary capital of Lithuania, is far north of Warsaw and inland from the Baltic Sea. Known among Jews as Vilna before the Second World War, the life and death of its wartime ghetto is a story less well known than that of the Polish ghettos in Warsaw and Lodz. Julija Šukys' *Epistolophilia: Writing the Life of Ona Šimaitė*, provides an unusual avenue to recovering Vilna's particular fate under German occupation.

Ona Šimaitė, likely unknown to most readers, was living not far from Vilna's ghetto in the fall of 1941. Until her arrest by the Gestapo in April, 1944, she undertook complicated clandestine activities, including the smuggling of necessities into the ghetto, sneaking those incarcerated inside into hiding in the occupied city, as well as substantial efforts to hide documentation of the ghetto outside its environs, in the hope that this material would survive the war if its authors did not. In this, she shared goals with the secret ghetto archivists of Lodz and Warsaw, who buried their work inside milk containers and tin boxes.

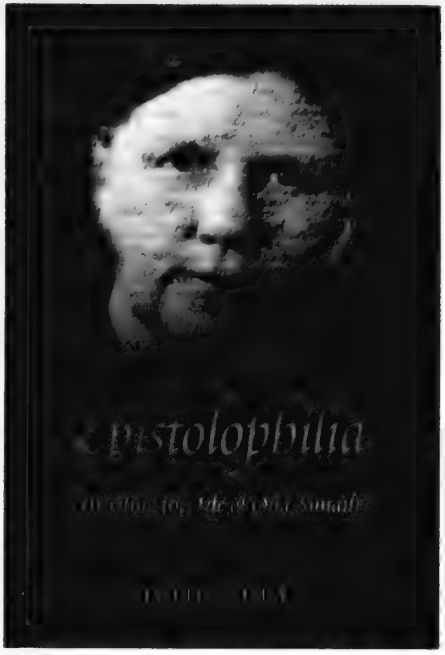
Šimaitė's arrest led first to torture, then to a short term at Dachau, and transport to a work camp in German-occupied France. The population of the Vilna Ghetto was decimated by a series of transports of thousands of Jews to the forested suburbs of Vilna known as Ponary, where they were murdered in pits.

Clandestine activity took many forms during the existence of the Vilna Ghetto. It included efforts by the poet Avrom Sutzkever to preserve the archive and library belonging to YIVO, the Vilna-based institute for the study of Yiddish language and contemporary Jewish culture. And under the poet Abba Kovner the ghetto harboured a resistance movement that later joined with Soviet-led partisans in the surrounding forests.

Šukys' portrait of Ona Šimaitė depicts a patchwork of periods and locales, which include postwar life in France and Israel, her letter writing to Lithuanians she would never see again, and her mission, based upon wartime promises, to inform "friends and family of Vilna dead" about the ghetto experience of their loved ones. Epistolophilia, the unusual word that characterizes this latter commitment, refers to Šimaitė's seeming compulsion to write letters, at all costs, sometimes as many as fourteen a day. One must, she informed a niece by post, "write a letter as if saying a prayer: concentrated, and with bells ringing."

The most remarkable of Šimaitė's recollections of the Vilna Ghetto appear in letters she wrote immediately after the war to Hirsz Abramowicz, who was traveling in America at the war's outbreak, leaving him safely stranded while his wife and daughter were trapped in the ghetto. Having attained permission to enter the ghetto under the made-up project of recovering unreturned university library books, Šimaitė encountered Dina and Anna Abramowicz "in a single tiny room together with the entire Schreiber family and with the Zhazdik girls, who were much loved by the family (in all, 9 people). The furniture consisted of 1 bed, 1 table, 2 chairs. During the day all the bedding and belongings were piled into one corner." Šimaitė informs Abramowicz that his wife "dedicated every free moment to reading." Her "favorite book in the ghetto was a volume of Bialik's poetry. She also read a great deal about black Americans . . . ."

> *'During the Ponary massacres, when the killings were at their height, there was a notable upsurge in borrowings from the ghetto's lending libraries'*



Such reports on what her acquaintances in the ghetto read reflect Šimaitė's reverence for books, for the libraries that protected them and the librarians who dedicated themselves to such work.

Šukys tells us that during the Ponary massacres, when the killings were at their height, there was a notable upsurge in borrowings from the ghetto's lending libraries. Demand was high for "semi-trashy" books; while from serious literature, those in the shadow of the mass killings chose to read *War and Peace*, Eric Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Emile Zola's *War* and Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, about the Armenian genocide. This latter choice reflects readers' deep appreciation of the historical events that were unfolding around them.

Šimaitė devoted herself to the ghetto's record keepers. Among these was Herman Kruk, who was ordered by the Nazis to choose rare books from Jewish libraries, which would be sent back to collections in Germany. He and Šimaitė chose texts to hide from the Germans, while he filled 39 notebooks with depictions of life in the ghetto. Secreting these out of the ghetto, Šimaitė stashed them "in a metal box under two floorboards in the university library's attic." Kruk was murdered, but after the war, with Šimaitė's directions, the notebooks were found.

Epistolophilia is informed by Šukys' interest in Šimaitė's troubled family life, her seeming celibacy, her inability or unwillingness to compose a memoir of the war years, her troubled postwar life in France, and, her short stay in the 1950s in Israel. Throughout the postwar years she refused awards and honours for her activities in Vilna. Notably though, in 1966, Yad Vashem designated her among its Righteous Among the Gentiles.

Norman Ravvin's recent books include the novel, The Joyful Child *(Gaspereau) and* Failure's Opposite: Listening to A.M. Klein, *co-edited with Sherry Simon (McGill-Queen's).*

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Email your information to "contest@thecjn.ca" Re: **"WHIPPING MAN" Contest**, or mail to: The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to: 416-391-0949.

Employees and family members of The CJN and Tostron Toronto Jewish Theatre Festival are not eligible to enter.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE LODZ GHETTO ON EXHIBIT AT YORK U

The Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies and the Osgoode Hall Law School at York University are co-hosts of a major new exhibition, *The Face of the Ghetto: Pictures by Jewish Photographers from the Lodz Ghetto, 1940 to 1944.*

The exhibition features some 50 large-scale photographs taken by photographers in the Lodz (or Litzmannstadt) Ghetto between 1940 and 1944. While the Jews in the ghetto were prohibited from possessing cameras, a few were given cameras and commissioned to document the efficiency of the ghetto factories and other sites of slave labour. At their own initiative and risk, they also took thousands of photographs of Jewish life in the ghetto.

Unlike photographs taken by Nazis, the photographs in this exhibition were taken by photographers who shared the fate of the people they photographed. The photos reflect a deep empathy with the ghetto inhabitants and reflect their struggle to maintain their dignity and culture in the face of their unspeakably harsh and increasingly helpless situation.

Assembled by the Topography of Terror Foundation in Berlin, the exhibition draws upon nearly 12,000 contact prints held in the Lodz State Archive and includes excerpts from the Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto and statements by former ghetto residents. It was shown at the United Nations in New York in 2012. In conjunction with the exhibition, York has scheduled a series of lectures, films and panels on issues related to Lodz, the Holocaust, and the use of photography and art as a vehicle for testimony and resistance.

Jan T. Gross

The Face of the Ghetto is on display through Sunday, March 17, in the Library of Osgoode Hall Law School. Princeton historian **Jan T. Gross** gives a talk at the official opening, Sunday, March 3, 4 p.m. Free admission. www.yorku.ca/cjs, 416-736-5823.

• • •

Holocaust Survival Story: The Human Rights Watch Toronto Film Festival and the Toronto Jewish Film Festival present a screening of *No Place on Earth*. **Janet Tobias**' documentary tells the extraordinary story of 38 Ukrainian Jews who survived the World War II by living in caves for 18 months. With guest speakers Tobias and professor **Michael Marrus**. TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St. W. Sunday, March 3, 3 p.m. tiff.net, 416-599-8433.

• • •

Recently in Print: The Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto has published *The Book of Life – A Decade of Stories*, edited by **Bonnie Goldstein** and **Jackie Shulman**. The large attractive volume offers a collection of narratives from some 250 people, deemed "legacy holders," who tell their life stories or philosophies and share their reflections. As part of its philanthropical endeavours the foundation collects about 10 such stories with photographs each year. A wide cross-section of the city's Jewish community is represented. 416-631-5703.

• • •

Film & Theatre Notes

• Teatron Theatre presents *Jacob and Jack*, a comedy by **James Sherman** about an actor and his grandfather who was a legendary actor in the Yiddish theatre. "A dizzying display of life in the theatre in this time-travelling farce." Toronto Centre for the Arts until March 10. www.teatrontheatre.com

• Film directors **Joel and Ethan Coen** are the focus of critic **Adam Nayman**'s series of Monday evening talks titled The Coen Brothers in Nayman's Terms. The topic is "Noir: *Miller's Crossing* and *The Man Who Wasn't There*" on Monday, March 4, 7 to 9 p.m. at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. $90 for the series, $12 drop-in per class (students $6). 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Steppin' Out Theatrical Productions presents *Gypsy*, a **Stephen Sondheim** and **Julie Styne** musical based on the memoirs of legendary **Gypsy Rose Lee**. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St. March 21 to 24. $27 to $32. www.rhcentre.ca, 905-787-8811.

• **Arthur Schnitzler**'s *La Ronde*, first published at the turn of the last century, was sensationally banned for its frank sexual content. A new stage production adapted by **Jason Sherman** opens at Soulpepper on March 26. soulpepper.ca

• • •

Musical Notes

• Composer **John Weinzweig** would have turned 100 on March 11, 2013, and a year of centenary celebrations begins March 8 to 11 with a weekend of free events at the University of Toronto's faculty of music. www.johnweinzweig.com

• Ashkenaz and the Music Gallery present clarinettist **Joel Rubin** and pianist **Uri Caine** in a concert described as "klezmer meets jazz." Music Gallery (St. George the Martyr Church), 197 John St. (south end of Grange Park). Saturday, March 2, 8 p.m. $25 in advance, $30 at the door. www.musicgallery.org

• The **Koffler Chamber Orchestra** with conductor and soloist **Jacques Israelievitch** perform a program of **Bach**, **Mozart** and **Beethoven**. Gladstone Hotel, Sunday, March 10, 3:30 p.m. www.kofflerarts.org

• **Nikki Yanofsky** is one of the headliners of this year's TD Toronto Jazz Festival, with a concert at Koerner Hall on Tuesday, June 25. 416-408-0208.

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Klezmer jazz duo takes its 'maiden voyage' in T.O.

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Clarinettist Joel Rubin, left, and pianist Uri Caine *(John Zorn photo)*

Joel Rubin has performed his music all over the world over several decades, but March 2 will mark his first-ever Toronto gig – and his first concert in Canada since the 1980s.

The show also marks another first: it will be the first joint performance between the klezmer musician and jazz artist Uri Caine since the release of their album *Azoy Tsu Tsveyt* in 2011.

The album bridges each artist's sounds, creating a musical blend that Rubin hopes will resonate with the audience when they perform at St. George the Martyr Church in Toronto at a concert presented by the Music Gallery and the Ashkenaz Festival.

"This [will be] our maiden voyage in a live context," Rubin said. "Toronto gets the scoop."

Caine, a pianist from Philadelphia, has 22 albums to his name. On this album, he joined Rubin, on clarinet, playing klezmer tunes in a non-traditional manner. Rubin, wrote two original songs for the album and chose the rest of the repertoire, which consists of arrangements of traditional tunes, as well as songs based on his friends' music.

Rubin, who is originally from Los Angeles, grew up listening to Yiddish music, but said he was never interested in it as a child.

"I found out long after my grandfather died that he probably came from some kind of a klezmer background," he said, explaining that he was probably a wedding musician in Ukraine – though not necessarily a very good one, he joked.

Rubin studied classical clarinet and spent a year playing freelance in New York City. He followed that with a move to Boston, where he was introduced to klezmer musicians, which inspired him to form his own klezmer band.

Once he got started, he never looked back, he said.

Initially, it was the virtuosity of the clarinet players that drew him to the music style.

"It had a whole kind of world of expression that was familiar yet not that familiar," he said. "Once I started playing it, I found I could do it well pretty rapidly, and it just seemed a pretty natural way of expressing on the clarinet."

Learning to play klezmer was a bit like learning a new language – just like learning jazz, blues or any other style, he said. "I just had to learn the vocabulary."

The trick was figuring out how to learn to play it like the skilled older players he had seen perform. Once he matched their sound, it became a question of finding his own voice. That became something of a crisis for him in the late 1980s, he said, adding that it took it until the late '90s that he felt he found it.

During that time, he left the United States and moved to Berlin, where he stayed for 14 years. The decision to move was a mix of discovering there was more interest for his music in Europe than in North America and getting fed up with American politics.

While in Europe, he wrote his PhD in musicology, and then in 2003, he moved back to the States to teach. These days, he runs the music performance program and teaches musicology at the University of Virginia.

Teaching klezmer means he had to approach the style from an academic eye, rather than acquiring the techniques "like a baby," copying what he heard from other people.

However, he doesn't think teaching has changed the way he writes music, since he approaches writing, teaching and playing from different standpoints. For example, when he's performing, he still considers the structure of the music, but he focuses on being in the moment with the music and his fellow performers.

"Playing live music, when it's really good, you lose your sense of self and join a larger unit – even if it's a duo," he said. "That doesn't happen very often."

He hopes it'll happen when he plays with Caine in Toronto, and they plan to use the performance to figure out where to take this duo in the future.

"We can sit back and decide if we should pursue it and make another album," Rubin said.

For tickets to the concert, visit the website, ashkenazfestival.com.

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Film featuring Shin Bet directors doesn't mince words

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

In Dror Moreh's penetrating and important Israeli film, *The Gatekeepers*, which opens in Toronto and Montreal on March 1, six former directors of the Shin Bet, Israel's domestic secret service, candidly discuss their jobs, the war on terrorism and Israel's occupation of the West Bank.

The directors in question in Moreh's 97-minute film, which was a contender for an Academy Award in the documentary category, are Avraham Shalom, Yaakov Peri, Carmi Gillon, Ami Ayalon, Avi Dichter and Yuval Diskin. They respectively served from 1980 until 2011.

Shalom, the oldest of the lot, was forced to resign after an Israeli newspaper exposed his role in the summary execution of two Palestinian terrorists who had been captured alive after hijacking a bus.

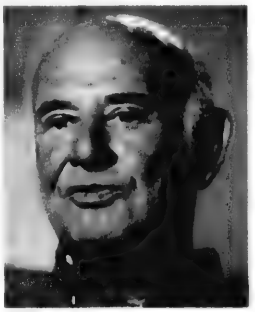
Peri is credited with setting up a network of Palestinian informers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip upon which Israel relies to nip terrorism in the bud. Gillon, who focused on Jewish terrorism, stepped down after his boss, Yitzhak Rabin, was assassinated by a Jewish zealot.

Ami Ayalon tried to rehabilitate the Shin Bet in the wake of Rabin's death and attempted to stamp out the first embers of the second Palestinian uprising. Dichter, left to deal with the violent repercussions of the intifadah, initiated Israel's policy of targeted assassinations of Palestinian terrorist leaders. Diskin carried on his work.

Although they performed their duties with a high degree of ruthlessness, they are not hawks, as one might assume, and support a two-state solution. As Peri suggests, "you become a bit of a leftist" after you've waded into the depths of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Gatekeepers, however, is hardly a polemical work. Its content and mood are solely determined by the interviewees, who have access to information normally way off the grid.

The Shin Bet is portrayed as a well-oiled organization that has been astonishingly successful in keeping terrorism at bay. Shalom alludes to this, but adds that the Palestinian problem was left to fester and that the prime minister he worked for, Menachem Begin, did not take it into proper consideration.



Yaakov Peri

Gillon discusses interrogation techniques, mentioning in passing sleep deprivation and shaking, and says that tough measures were used to prevent suicide bombings. He observes that ideologically motivated Hamas terrorists are harder to break than secular Palestinian nationalists.

In discussing the war on terrorism, one notorious incident of which ignominiously ended his career, Shalom maintains that morality does not enter into the equation. Disagreeing with Shalom's harsh assessment, Diskin says that the Shin Bet cannot act outside the norms of the legal system.

Peri, who was recently elected to the Knesset as a Yesh Atid party representative, claims that the first Palestinian uprising was a spontaneous eruption and that the Shin Bet did not foresee it. He adds that Israel should have reached an accord with the Palestinians and withdrawn from the territories.

In related comments, Peri argues that Israeli governments have "coddled" Jewish settlers and "looked away" as they built a web of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

Gillon contends that Jewish extremists could have touched off a war with the Muslim world had they blown up the Dome of the Rock in eastern Jerusalem. He is bitter that members of a Jewish underground group were released from prison so soon after their arrest.

Gillon advised Rabin to wear body armour and increase his security detail, but the prime minister refused, a mistake that cost him his life. In his view, Yigal Amir, the assassin, changed the course of Israel's history "big time."

In a claim that has surely raised the hackles of politicians across the board, Peri says that a succession of Israeli governments had no "real desire" to reach an accommodation with the Palestinians following Rabin's murder.

Ayalon dispassionately describes Hamas' suicide bombing campaign, from the mid-1990s onward, as an attempt to equalize the balance of power with Israel. Dichter fills in some of the blanks concerning Israel's response.

For his part, Shalom decries a retaliatory policy dependent on what he calls "overkill." In a similar vein, Ayalon warns that targeted assassinations may lead to a greater upsurge of terrorism and further radicalize the Palestinians leadership.

Dichter reveals that Israel had an opportunity in 2003 to kill Hamas' entire leadership, but cancelled the operation out of fear that innocent bystanders would be killed.

Without exception, the former directors call for negotiations with the Palestinians, the sooner the better, warning that the status quo is unsustainable. "We've made life miserable for the Palestinians," says Gillon. Shalom, in a reference to Israel's "brutal occupation," claims that the future is "bleak and dark."

Clearly, whether or not you agree with their assessments, *The Gatekeepers* does not mince words.

Behind-the-scenes history of New York landmark

Compiled by CJN Staff

The story behind the construction of New York's Seagram Building, considered an architectural masterpiece, will be published this spring by Phyllis Lambert, who was its young director of planning.

Lambert, daughter of Seagram's distilling magnate Samuel Bronfman, has written *Building Seagram*, which will be released by Yale University Press in April.

Lambert was a 27-year-old artist living in Paris in the 1950s when her father asked her to take over the search for an architect to design his company's headquarters in New York.

Lambert, today founder and chair of the board of trustees of Montreal's Canadian Centre for Architecture, aimed high, choosing one of the pioneering masters of modern architecture, German-born Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

Lambert worked closely with him and his collaborator, the influential American architect Philip Johnson.

The Seagram Building

The elegant 38-storey bronze and glass building, set back from Park Avenue, was completed in 1958, and remains an icon of 20th-century architecture.

Lambert, who later became an architect herself, established herself as a leading architectural patron, credited with changing the face of the American skyline.

"*Building Seagram* represents what has always been the focus of my practice: architecture as a major socio-economic manifestation in society," Lambert said.

The book is the culmination of more than a decade of research. Lambert makes use of previously unpublished personal archives, company correspondence and photographs to give an insider's view of the debates, resolutions and behind-the-scenes dramas surrounding the project.

She has set this history within the context of the culture of post-World War II design, including the significant part corporate patronage played in the era's real estate development.

Lambert offers a scholarly assessment of the design and construction process, and the building's cultural legacy. The project played a substantial role in shaping landmark zoning laws and other legislation in New York.

She also provides a personal account of her experience managing the project, as well as insight into the working relationship between Mies and Johnson, including the latter's underrecognized contributions.

The 320-page book is illustrated with almost 200 pictures. The foreword is by Barry Bergdoll, a professor of architectural history at Columbia University and the Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art.

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Jacob and Jack
by James Sherman
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Players take different routes to NCAA Division 1 teams

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Two young hockey players are taking substantially different paths to Division 1 hockey careers in NCAA schools

Daniel Leavens will be the first to lace up his skates for a top NCAA school; next season the 18-year-old forward will make the jump from the Newmarket Hurricanes of the Ontario Junior Hockey League (OJHL) to Robert Morris University (RMU) in Pittsburgh.

Jesse Schwartz is taking a different route; he'll play with the University of Connecticut, but that won't happen until the 2014 season. And instead of making the jump to the NCAA from junior, as many talented Canadians do, right now he's studying and playing hockey at the South Kent Prep School in Connecticut. And after that, he'd like to get another year of seasoning under his belt in the USHL or the BC Hockey League before he makes the move to Division 1.

Schwartz, 18, is already living away from home, residing in a dorm, hanging out with the guys, getting used to life on his own. For someone who's only been away at overnight camp, it's an adjustment.

"Here it's different. I'm away from my family and friends. You have to adapt to it quick, because you're here for the whole year."

Jesse Schwartz

Daniel Leavens

"I worked my butt off to get the scholarship" to UConn, Schwartz added.

Schwartz had some options before choosing the prep school/NCAA route. He was drafted by the Erie Otters of the Ontario Hockey League, but "if I'd step foot in an OHL game, I'd have lost my NCAA eligibility," he said.

But patience is a virtue and he chose to join UConn, which will be moving to Hockey East, considered the best division in U.S. college hockey, from the Atlantic Hockey Conference.

In the meantime, Schwartz is working on his game; like other guys of junior age (16-19), he's focusing on his "explosiveness," the first three steps a player takes from a stop. Getting to maximum speed as quickly as possible is pretty much the holy grail when skating skills are considered.

As to the rest of his game, Schwartz describes himself as "an all-round player; a two-way forward. I focus on the defensive end as much as the offensive end," he said.

In around 50 games with South Kent – the calibre of hockey is comparable to major midget back home – he's racked up 21 goals and added 52 assists. He's around 50 per cent in the faceoff circle and he's been told by UConn coaches he has "good vision" and is "good positionally."

Schwartz, who attended CHAT for a couple of years after spending six years at USDS Bathurst, was selected to the Canadian Maccabiah hockey team as an alternate. Hockey will return to the Games, which are scheduled for July.

For Schwartz, it will be his second time playing at the Canada Centre in Metulla. He competed in the World Jewish Cup there a few years ago.

Leavens, meanwhile, is playing in Ontario, leading the Hurricanes in points; after 51 games, he's scored 23 goals and added 43 assists for 66 points.

The combination of Leavens, Brandon Francisco and Chris Chiste is Newmarket's top line. "We're very offensive," said Leavens. "All three are good at putting the puck in the net, making good plays…We like to skate with the puck and keep possession of it."

Leavens, 19, enjoys his role as playmaker. "I take pride in making the good pass, setting up a nice goal," he said.

"At six-foot-two, Daniel will add size to our forwards as well as a much coveted right hand shot, which we are in short supply of," said RMU Colonials assistant coach Matt Nicholson.

"Daniel was a member of Team Canada East at the 2011 World Junior 'A' Challenge and this speaks to his ability to play at a high level with other elite players. Arguably the best quality that Daniel possesses is his versatility. Positionally, he can play on the wing or up the middle at the centre position, he skates well, has soft hands to make plays and a quick release that adds to his hard, accurate shot."

Team Canada East won the silver medal at the Challenge; Leavens was also a member of Team OJHL North at the Central Canada Cup All-Star Challenge, again winning silver. However, as a member of Mississauga Rattlers, he won a gold medal at the Ontario Junior A Inline League, two years in a row, and as a member of the Israeli Stars of David, a collection of Jewish players competing in the Canadian Multicultural Hockey Championships, he won the title twice.

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Drew Brees to headline dinner

Compiled by CJN Staff

WINNIPEG — New Orleans Saints' pro-bowl quarterback Drew Brees is coming to Winnipeg – as the keynote speaker for the 41st "Y" Sports Dinner on June 13.

Brees led the New Orleans Saints to the 2009 Super Bowl championship, being named MVP in the game. A former Heisman trophy finalist while playing for the Purdue Boilermakers, he has also been named to seven Pro Bowls.

"We are excited to have Drew Brees as our keynote speaker," Blair Worb, the "Y" Sports Dinner chairman, said in a news release. "Not only is he an exciting football player, but as much pride he takes in his on-field performance, he takes even more pride in his community service and philanthropic efforts. That is why he is such a perfect fit as keynote speaker at the "Y" Sports Dinner this year."

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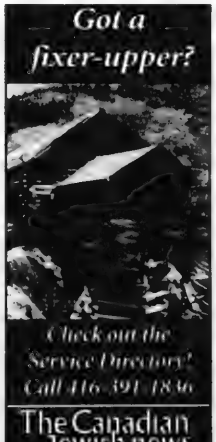

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Quality of life issue

Continued from page 3

For Jewish practitioners in palliative care, the obligation means returning patients to a life that was not full of suffering.

Indeed, Gordon said the relief of suffering using pain management is the hallmark of this area of medicine.

"Palliative care is not part of the acute health-care system. It is away from the hub of active treatment."

A more recent change in the philosophy behind palliative care, Gordon said, is that it's now more widely believed that it should be started before the terminal phase of a disease has set in, so people can begin thinking about what they want to do when the end approaches.

"They need to [begin thinking] about the balance between medical intervention and comfort."

Dr. Harvey Chochinov

Most people think of cancer when they think of palliative care, but "the next big step is to consider non-malignant conditions [such as dementia] within the realm of palliative care," he said.

"Chronic disease management offers comfort and care, so patients don't die in an acute situation. When we can see the end of a trajectory, we can probably [help] avoid suffering."

Dr. Harvey Chochinov, director of the Manitoba palliative care research unit at CancerCare Manitoba, said that he became involved in palliative care because he has always been interested in helping people through difficult times.

"Appreciating vulnerability as part of being human is key to understanding the needs of people facing the uncertainties of illness and declining health. This is especially true near the end of life," Chochinov said.

"Doing research in palliative care gives me an opportunity to study these issues. The more we understand the connections between the physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions of approaching death, the better we are able to care for patients and their families."

He said he's been asked innumerable times if his work is depressing. His response is that "not being able to right a wrong is depressing… hopelessness and futility is depressing. Palliative care is none of those things. It is about trying to improve the quality of life for patients and their families for whatever time they have remaining.

"There is a vast difference between dying well and dying poorly. Good care can decrease pain and suffering, and [can] change the memories that will be carried by bereaved families for the rest of their lives. No doubt, the experience of working with extremely ill patients and their families can be challenging, but people working in palliative care do so because they like to make a difference at a time when that difference can be profound."

The philosophy of palliative care upholds certain core Jewish values, he said, "like menschlichkeit and respect for the rights, feelings, wishes and abilities of others. Perhaps that's why studying dignity at the end of life has had such deep, personal resonance."

Chochinov noted that Immanuel Kant, the 18th-century German philosopher, argued that everything either has a price or a dignity.

"Anything that has a price is replaceable by something of equivalent value. On the other hand, whatever is above a price and [has] no equivalent has a dignity. The message for health-care providers is that every patient is unique and irreplaceable."

This idea is consistent with Jewish values, he said, but it's "by no means exclusively Jewish. Death and dying are issues that transcend religion and race, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation. These issues touch everyone – patients and health-care providers alike. The realization that very little separates us from our patients, I think, underpins the ability to provide empathetic care."

He said that many people think being admitted to palliative care is a death sentence, "but without trying to sound morose, being human carries a final prognosis. That said, if life must end, why not strive to live the best quality of life possible until life runs out? People are often admitted to our program and discharged home once their symptoms are under better control."

Chochinov said that most medical schools across Canada offer students some minimal exposure to palliative care, and both the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the College of Family Physicians of Canada have established an accredited training program.

"However, there is still a long way to go. People should expect more, which means that health-care providers, including doctors, need to learn more about how to deliver quality, comfort-enhancing palliative care."

Families have to start thinking about discussing end-of-life care with their loved ones, he said.

"Discussions about end of life can be reframed and broadened into conversations about relationships and how we feel about the people who matter to us. 'I care about you in sickness and in health, and in good times and bad times. What you want matters to me, today, tomorrow, and even when the time comes that you might not be able to speak for yourself, so let's talk now.' That strikes me as a gentle way to get started."

Next week: Who are the palliative care doctors?

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Young filmmaker has an old soul

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

When Michelle Kahn was five years old, she had a crush on Elvis. She can also remember watching The Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and falling in love with them. She thinks about growing old, but says she doesn't want to retire from directing films, her passion since high school.

Kahn is only 23.

The Toronto-born filmmaker has old-fashioned sensibilities but keeps herself compulsively busy, jumping from gig to gig. When she is not making short films, Kahn teaches drama and produces and directs plays for Jewish day schools and community centres around Toronto. She says she could not see her life moving at any other speed.

"I'll get on a project like a play. I'll have just started producing it, and then my dad will turn around and say, 'I think you can also do this. Why don't you try that?'" she says. "So I'll have five or six things going at once, and I'll just do them. I'm like an Energizer bunny."

Kahn was not drawn to filmmaking by venturing out to the local cinema, which she seldom does, but by planning her life around the schedule of the cable channel, Turner Classic Movies. TCM first exposed her to silent films, which she quickly fell in love with – especially the films of Charlie Chaplin.

"I thought [silent film] was the coolest thing in the world," Kahn says. "I couldn't understand how they filmed it. I didn't understand how you got the words on the screen. So, I researched all about it."

Filmmaker Michelle Kahn *(Ruth Shach photo)*

She shuffled biography after biography of pioneering early Hollywood figures to her classes at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel campus. Many of the books focused on how the entertainers she revered never went to high school but started working on their passion in their teens.

"I was afraid I was going to be late in the game if I waited until after CHAT," she says.

Kahn wrote her first short film – a silent, Chaplin-inspired slapstick comedy called *Sunset and Camden* – in an hour, during a French class. She spent the next two years preparing the 10-minute film about two men vying for a young woman's affection at a bus stop.

Sunset and Camden was a family affair: Kahn played the female protagonist, her father, Trevor, held the camera, sister Orly did the makeup, brother Joseph starred as a paperboy, and mother Gracy provided the craft services – including pies that were thrown at the actors' faces.

When she entered the film in the Tanenbaum CHAT film festival, Kahn says she was the underdog. "Everyone told me I was going to lose because it was a silent movie and it was in black-and-white and it was a period piece. Nobody votes for that."

However, the presence of many parents and grandparents in the audience shifted support in Kahn's favour. She won with 70 per cent of the vote.

Inspired, she began submitting *Sunset and Camden* to different film festivals across North America. That film and a sophomore short, *In the Army*, were screened at Sprockets, a family-oriented film festival in Toronto. Kahn's shorts have also been screened at festivals in Idaho, Nova Scotia and California.

She says her early short films were silent because she didn't want to tackle sound mixing. Kahn produced her first "talkie" at her father's behest when she attended York University for film studies.

"[My family] wants me to be in movies. That's weird for a Jewish family," she says, noting that her parents would encourage her to skip class to follow up with festival organizers. "My parents were the ones who always said, 'Send them an email, send them a phone call… It's a business call. It's more important.'"

When she is not shouting orders behind the camera, Kahn is doing the same thing behind the curtain. She directs and produces musicals at several Jewish day schools, including the Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School, where she is currently working on a version of *Mamma Mia*, cheekily titled *Ima Oy!* As the head of Oy-Oy Productions, she is also working on a production of *A Chorus Line* featuring adult performers. Both shows will be staged in March.

She also teaches drama at J Roots Supplementary Jewish School, which she says is her way to give back to the Jewish community by helping kids express themselves through acting, especially kids who are being bullied or who have low self-esteem. Even though she doesn't want to work as a teacher full time, Kahn hopes that putting on plays can help lift the children's spirits.

"I want to inspire them because when I was little, I was bullied really badly," she says. "I was the class loser." She says that other kids picked on her for being quiet and different, with her interest in classic movies and television, more attuned to The Beatles than The Backstreet Boys.

To distract herself from her peers' scorn, Kahn resorted to watching movies. "I'd like to think that if I wasn't bullied as bad as I was, I wouldn't be in movies right now," she says.

Kahn has plans to shoot another silent short film this spring and hopes to write a feature-length film. Later this year, she says she plans to shop around to festivals in North America a feature documentary she made about her grandfather, *Wanted: The Joseph Esses Story*. It chronicles her grandfather's difficult life growing up in Aleppo, Syria, where the Jewish community was often the target of harsh criticism and violence.

When Kahn screened the film in Toronto in January, she was thrilled to see her grandfather's glowing reaction. She says that watching his face was one of the proudest moments of her young career. That response, however, did not compare to her watching *Sunset and Camden* with an audience at Sprockets in Toronto, an experience that she says changed her life.

"There was this three-second or less shot of my face as I wait for a bus. I saw my face on the big screen and said, 'I want to make movies.'"

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

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Trouble coping after loss

Dear Ella,

I've had a rough couple of weeks. I came home after work and when I opened the front door, Coco saw another dog across the street, ran out past me and was hit by a car. I rushed her to the emergency clinic, where they took her immediately, but I had to sign in advance for payment. I was so distraught at the time, I would have signed anything. Coco didn't survive, and all I was left with was her collar and a huge bill. On top of losing my best friend, my baby, I now have additional debt.

I miss Coco with all my heart, and I'm finding it hard to breathe, let alone function at work. I take frequent breaks and cry in the bathroom stall. I haven't told anyone what happened, because I know I will burst into tears.

One of my co-workers started to criticize the way I was doing something, and I blurted out, "Leave me alone, my dog just died!" As soon as I said it, I felt horrible. That's not how I wanted to let people know.

Ask Ella

By Ella Burakowski

I am finding it difficult to cope. My colleagues and even some of my friends don't understand. One of them said, "It was just a dog, you can get another one." I can't face anyone right now. I am angry, mostly at myself for being so careless. When will I feel normal again?

Not Coping

Dear Not Coping

I am very sorry for your loss. Coco was your family member in every sense. Unfortunately, you can't make someone who has never loved a pet understand your pain. Until you have had the good fortune of experiencing the warmth and happiness you feel when your excited dog greets you at the door like you've been gone for days, or nuzzles its nose under your hand, you can't identify.

You have lost a family member, and the grief is very real. It is not an indulgence, it is a necessity, and it's normal.

Grieving for a pet is a process. You will go through all the emotions associated with grieving, and you can't rush that.

When you get back to your job, don't expect sympathy and support. It's not because your co-workers are insensitive, it's just that they can't relate to what you're going through. Not everyone is as fortunate as you to be able to know the emotional bond and love you and Coco shared.

Get through the day and lose yourself in your work. Each day will become easier as you eventually fall back into your routine.

As for the debt, pay it off as best you can. Make a payment schedule and stick to it. Put a little away from each paycheque, and think of it as the last tribute you were able to give your sweet Coco. This was not your fault. It was an accident. You have to accept that to move on.

We can all take a lesson from our furry friends. They don't judge us, they never hold a grudge, they just love us unconditionally. People who have never loved a pet can't understand this bond. Keep the memories Coco left you close in your heart. They will always comfort you and make you smile when you need them.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail ellacjn@gmail.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

LACY POTATO KUGEL

6 lg Yukon Gold potatoes peeled
2 lg onions, 1 diced , 1 quartered
4 lg eggs, lightly beaten
5 tbls oil
2 -3 tsp salt
fresh ground pepper
1/4 c potato starch
1 c boiling water

Preheat oven to 500°. Saute diced onion until nicely caramelized and golden. While onion is caramelizing, grate potatoes using fine disc in the food processor. Squeeze out liquid; place in a large mixing bowl. Process onions with same blade; pour onion pulp and juices into bowl with potatoes. Stir in eggs, 5 tbsp. oil, salt, pepper, caramelized onions. Sprinkle starch on top. Pour boiling water over starch and stir thoroughly. Pour 1/4 c oil into a 9x13 baking pan; heat in oven about a min. Do not allow oil to burn. Carefully pour mixture into pan; bake 20 mins. After 20 min., reduce heat to 400°. Bake 40 min. or until the top is deep golden brown. *Source:* Kosher Palette Cookbook

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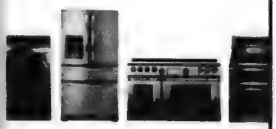
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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Federico Pasin, secretary general of the École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Montréal, left, who talks about the student exchange program being established with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's School of Business.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa writes about the need for Israelis to become involved in the life of the community here.

An unprecedented publicly funded collaboration between the federal government and kashrut authorities in Canada has identified overlaps in the work of mashgichim and inspectors from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in their surveillance of kosher-certified companies. Montreal's Vaad Ha'ir will recommend better co-ordination between the two groups.

On March 5 in Berlin, Concordia University will reclaim a painting that belonged to the late German Jewish art dealer Max Stern before the Nazis forced him to sell off the holdings of his Dusseldorf gallery in 1937.

How vivid are your memories?

I have noticed in my medical practice and my own life experience that some memories, even those very distant, when recalled are almost as vivid as when they first occurred.

When I wrote some of my life stories, which ultimately became my memoir, *Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey*, many of the experiences I recounted were so vivid that I could almost hear the voices, smell the smells and taste the flavours that accompanied the experience.

Senior Side of Life

Michael Gordon

In my geriatric medical practice, which focuses heavily on patients with some degree of cognitive impairment and dementia, memories that do get recounted from the distant past sometimes appear to the person to be almost occurring in the here and now. Family members often remark that the person cannot recall what they had for breakfast but recall in vivid detail the Atlantic crossing from Europe in 1905.

Many of my patients are Holocaust survivors. They are often plagued with distant horrific memories that are so vivid when recounted or when they intrude into consciousness that they become agitated, fearful and panicked, as they believe they are reliving the painful associations with that previous part of their life, which they may have spent many years trying to forget.

The husband of one of my patients once explained the pale faded number on his left forearm to one of my medical residents. The student was from Eastern Canada and had never met a Holocaust survivor. The man described the process of being tattooed with the number and then explained how he survived the "selection" at the concentration camp after having been transported in the cattle car from his Polish town.

He explained that the "selection" by an SS guard was the way, "it was determined who would live and who would go directly to the gas chambers." Two parallel lines were moving toward the SS officer, and the man realized that his was the gas-chamber line. When the officer turned his head, the man leaped from his line to the one next to him. As he explained, he stood up and leaped halfway across the examining room, demonstrating what he did with the fervour of his action so real that you could see that he was experiencing the act with such vividness that for the moment he was again there, making the leap that saved his life.

With this awareness of how some people, including myself, seem to have the propensity to relive some experiences with great vividness, I was excited to see a report in the *Journal of Cognitive Neurosciences* describing a study using complex imaging techniques that explains the neurophysiology of vivid memory recall. From this study, undertaken at the Rotman Research Centre of Baycrest with Dr. Bradley Buchsbaum as the primary investigator, it appears that the brain keeps in its memory the pathways of different experiences. These, when accessed, can repeat the circuitry of the original experience so that the memory is as if that sequence of events is taking place as vividly as in "real time."

If this is shown on further studies to be the mechanism for vivid memories, it potentially opens up new ways to treat or prevent vivid memories of terrifying experiences and perhaps even play a role in addressing the mental experience of post-traumatic stress disorder. I will follow this research story with great interest.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest. His latest book is Late-Stage Dementia, Promoting Comfort, Compassion and Care. His previous book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his memoir, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

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The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

LIVE & LEARN

Montessori Jewish Day School students Kalanit, Dylan, Adam, Matthew are all smiles.

Can chess make you smarter?

Viva Sarah Press
Israel21c.org

Boris Gelfand made all the right moves to become Israel's highest-ranking chess player. Now, he's partnering with an Israeli university to launch the country's first scientific research project focused on chess.

Research suggests that playing chess will improve reading performance and school grades in children.
[Shutterstock.com photo]

The Grandmaster Chess Research Project is a one-of-a-kind initiative to develop a novel academic approach to the skills and culture of chess-playing that can, in turn, contribute to social and scientific development.

Those involved in the project will research the correlation between chess and cognitive enhancement; develop the first Hebrew-language educational software program for teaching chess in preschools and elementary schools, and establish an international program for training chess instructors and coaches.

"The program will provide an opportunity to achieve breakthrough research and social outreach in a field that has not yet been fully explored," said University of Haifa vice-president and dean of research Prof. Michal Yerushalmy. The researchers will examine the impact of chess on students' abilities in math, language acquisition and other areas.

Following a stunning performance at the 2012 World Chess Championship in Russia last April, Gelfand called on the Israeli government to increase its funding of the mind sport: "It's important that we continue to develop this field and initiate international competitions that will see Israeli chess players recognized."

And while the government did promise to do its part, the University of Haifa has taken it one step further.

"I am sure this will make our society better," Gelfand said during a toast to launch the new research initiative. "I know leading intellectual professionals who succeeded thanks to their playing chess in school and continued playing alongside their professional development."

Gelfand's ranking as vice-world champion is what triggered the Grandmaster Chess Research Project, researcher Shay Bushinsky said. He and the university's vice-president for external relations Amos Gaver teamed up to initiate the project.

Advanced studies in the department of computer sciences and other facilities at the university, together with the ongoing guidance of Gelfand, will ensure the prospect of achieving sophisticated research, noted Gaver.

There have been countless studies on the benefits of chess conducted throughout the world.

A study by IBM showed that learning chess improves reading performance. An Education Ministry of Moldova report found that grades increased in all subjects for young students taking part in a chess project.

"In just one year, chess [instruction] will improve a student's learning abilities, concentration, application, sense of logic, self-discipline, respect, behaviour and the ability to take responsibility for his/her own actions," said World Chess Champion Garry Kasparov, who runs a foundation that offers a chess curriculum to American schools.

"This is empirical knowledge," said Bushinsky. "We're trying to prove [it] scientifically."

Chess champion Boris Gelfand

While chess clubs are offered in many schools in Israel, the University of Haifa project could put it on the curriculum.

"It's the first time an Israeli academic institution is taking upon itself a scientific research project focused on chess," said Bushinsky, who will draw a blueprint for teaching chess in schools. "It's a joint educational and professional effort. It will be backed up with Internet and computer capabilities because this is a way to transfer the game to the public," he added.

On the international stage, Israelis were succeeding in chess even before the founding of the state.

"Israel is blessed with many elite chess players, and there's an awareness that these skills are going to vanish. We want to help facilitate and preserve these skills in the realm of an academic tribute and build a framework for professional chess training," Bushinsky said.

Chess, he adds, is an excellent vehicle for promoting linguistic and mathematical skills in children, while it helps preserve cognitive skills in older people.

In Israel, interest grew dramatically as a result of Gelfand's second-place finish at the world championship.

"The public [took note] that Israel was achieving international victories," Bushinsky said. "We want to help facilitate and preserve these skills in the realm of academia and build a framework for professional chess training."

The software for the project is for Hebrew-speakers, but Bushinsky expects it will be translated eventually into other languages. "There's a growing interest in chess as a vehicle for improving studies and disciplines of research in many fields. It's only natural that this will draw interest outside of Israel as well," he predicted.

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DANI, Yeshiva U team up on lunch 'n learn

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There is certainly more than one way to get an education: there's the book-learning way, which emphasizes the three "Rs." And there's a kind you get from seeing and doing something for the first time – something akin to hands-on learning.

A new program that's a partnership of DANI (Developing and Nurturing Independence) and Yeshiva University (YU), an Orthodox institution in New York City, is a little bit of both. DANI and YU are collaborating on a lunch 'n learn series in which Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner visits board rooms and professional offices to discuss topics that interest his guests, but from a distinctly Jewish perspective.

The "lunch" part is where things get interesting. The meals are prepared by DANI clients, young adults with special needs who work at DANI Dairy Delights, a catering business set up to expose DANI's young people to a real-life job.

Still in its early stages, the catering business has provided meals at a handful of Rabbi Torczyner's lectures.

"We teach our clients to be self sufficient," explained DANI co-founder Susie Sokol. Working in a catering business – "We're an actual business. We charge HST." – DANI clients pick up the kind of skills taken for granted by others, she said.

That includes everything from preparing food, baking, sweeping up and collecting on bills to giving change and depositing funds. "Their skills are really enhanced. My daughter can make cinnamon buns in five minutes flat," she said.

DANI's "kids," who are really young adults in their 20s and 30s, have sold their baked goods at Mount Sinai Hospital, where they put these skills to work, said Sokol. Afterwards, "they felt very proud."

"They don't want to be on the receiving end," she continued. "They want to give back to the community."

In referencing the DANI catering business, Sokol quotes an old talmudic saying: "*Ein kemach, ein Torah.*" Translated literally, it means "Where there's no flour (bread), there's no Torah."

No doubt that lends itself to multiple interpretations, but at the lunch 'n learn series, Rabbi Torczyner provides the Torah component. As rosh kollel of the Yeshiva University-Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov in Toronto, his job is to "spread Torah and Yeshiva U," he said. The lunchtime lectures provide another venue for that. When he addressed an accounting firm, he spoke about business ethics from a Jewish perspective. When a women's group invited him, he discussed the Passover festival.

Rabbi Torczyner said he models his address on the audience. For a group of lawyers, he'd bring in Jewish elements to the law.

"People are attracted to that which is most relevant to their lives," he said.

"I also try to bring in an awareness of a broader worldview as well," comparing "the Jewish component to the secular component," he added.

For Sokol, it's a win-win-win situation. The kids develop their life skills, DANI earns badly needed funds and Rabbi Torczyner gets his message out.

And the public, those who enjoy a lunchtime lecture and a good meal, learn about an otherwise "hidden" segment of our society.

"We're trying to change attitudes to get the community to meet and know our kids and build relationships. They used to be hidden. They're hidden no more. Our kids are out there and they're doing everything," Sokol said.

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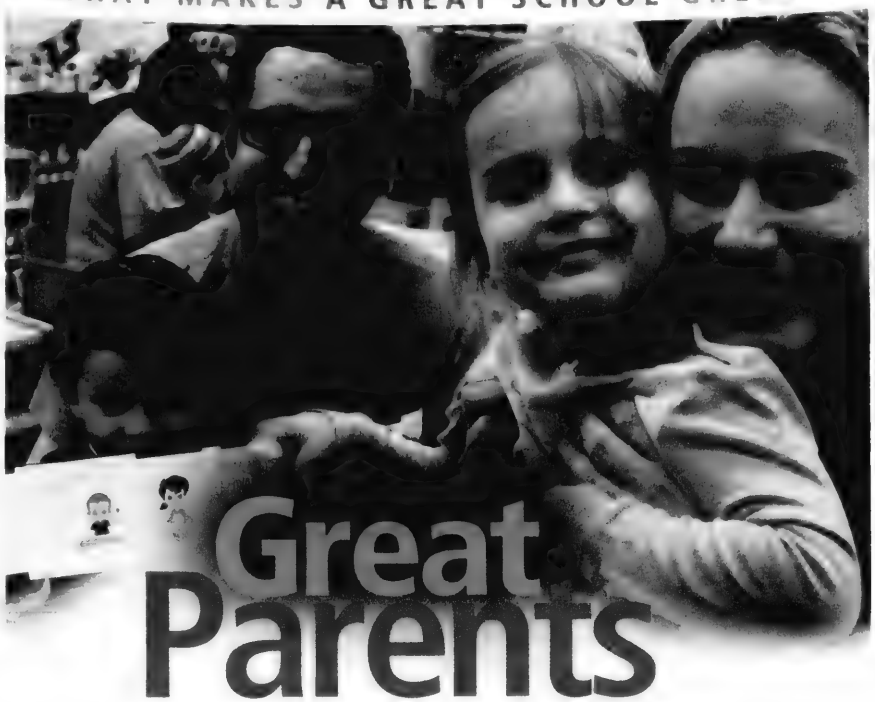

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Kids' screen time: how much is too much?

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

We've all done it as parents: dumped our kids in front of the television, or the computer, or the Nintendo DS, or the iPod, or the iPad, in order to get some downtime ourselves.

We've justified it with excuses such as "It's good for them" and "It gives them a chance to relax," but deep down, many of us worry that we're choosing to tune the kids out with digital devices purely for our own convenience.

And what, if anything, do the kids get from it?

Well, if they're younger than two or three, absolutely nothing, say the experts.

"We know young kids are better when they're actively rather than passively engaged, and TV is passive," explains Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, director of the infant language laboratory at Temple University's department of psychology in Philadelphia.

"My research on language indicates that when pre-three-year-olds watch television, it's not useful in terms of their learning – even if it's Baby Einstein. But there are kids this age in the [United States] who are watching two to three hours of TV a day, and it's prompted some companies to even come up with new remote controls that smaller kids can use."

When you stick your kids in front of technological devices, ask yourself why you're doing it first, suggests Hirsh-Pasek.

"Are you doing it because you think they're becoming a genius there, or because you need a break?"

If it's the latter, you'll be comforted to know that not all TV is bad. Research from *Sesame Street* and *Blues Clues* suggests that kids do learn from such programs, especially as they move into their preschool years.

"A half-hour show is reasonably good, but three to five hours a week is not," she says. "So what they watch has to be managed, because if they watch the wrong sorts of shows, it's bad for them. Parents also have to manage how much time their kids spend in front of the TV."

It's the sheer quantity of screen time kids get today that can be disconcerting.

"An average Canadian kid spends two hours a day in front of the TV," says Maria Rogers, an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Ottawa.

"What we don't have statistics on is how much time they're spending on all screens, and while we know there are some benefits to certain kinds of programming or applications, we know there are some negative effects of too much screen time."

Those negative effects include lack of physical activity, young kids' inability to perceive a difference between what they see on screens and what's real, and links between TV and aggression, attention spans and body image.

Clearly, parents need to set limits in a technological world that's frequently overwhelming.

Some families find it helpful to have no TVs, computers or gaming consoles in their kids' bedrooms, and taking those things out of the bedroom tends to cut screen time in half, Rogers says.

She encourages parents to set limits to screen time after certain times in the evening, as well as to create structure around the use of screen time – movie night, for example, might become just one night per week – and to think of alternatives such as using local libraries and participating in extra curricular activities with kids.

"Some families are starting to have screen-free days as a family," she says.

But it's also important to manage and monitor kids' screen time, Rogers cautions.

"Parental involvement is the key to an effective and healthy use of screen time and technology. So they need to be literate about the technology their kids are using, communicate with them about that technology in a genuinely curious, caring and interested way, and participate when possible with their kids' screen time."

Screens can be a fun way to tune out the real world and escape the pressures of school. But it's crucial for parents to remember that the process of raising strong, healthy and happy kids won't happen if their eyes are always glued to a screen.

Prom left, Maya, Amy, Sarah Aginsky

Student art contest part of Jewish Music Week

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When it kicked off three years ago, Jewish Music Week's student art contest attracted only a handful of entries. You couldn't expect much more from an event that was the new kid on the block and still making inroads in the community.

The 2012 first-prize winner, Grade 4

Last year, things changed. The number of submissions grew to 60, as youngsters in Jewish schools in Toronto and Hamilton put marker and paint to paper to illustrate Jewish music and what it means to them.

The quality of the artwork was so good that one of last year's winning entries, by a Grade 4 Bialik student Samara Green, was made the cover art of *The Spirit of Children* CD, produced jointly by the Cantors Assembly and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

This year, expectations are for even more entries, as word gets out about the art contest linked to Jewish Music Week (JMW).

JMW artistic director Aliza Spiro said teachers in Jewish schools were given the heads up quite early, right after the High Holidays, that the contest is soliciting artwork from their students.

The subject of the artwork is limited only by the artist's imagination. Contestants are being asked "to draw Jewish music and that can mean anything," Spiro said.

Green's winning piece featured three people standing before a house, playing music. Sofie Kreidstein, who won the middle school category, featured a pair of violins. Her winning painting is being used in promotion for the Suzuki Violin Program at Toronto's Miles Nadal JCC.

One of Spiro's favourite pieces, a second-place finisher in the high school category by Mira Goldstein from Tiferes Bais Yaacov, resembled a medieval illuminated manuscript, with the text of a psalm celebrating God through music illustrated with representations of the instruments mentioned.

Contestants can submit their work in four age-related categories: high school, middle school, grades 1 to 3 and grades 4 and 5.

A select panel of judges, including professional artists and Art Gallery of Ontario employees, will determine the winners and runners-up. Entries will be put on display at the art gallery and the Miles Nadal JCC, and the winner will receive four tickets to JMW programs.

Deadline for entries is March 14.

Jewish Music Week was the brainchild of Spiro and her husband, Cantor Simon Spiro of Beth Tzedec Congregation, along with Cantor Steven Stoehr of Congregation Beth Shalom in Chicago. It debuted three years ago to coincide with the Cantors Assembly convention in Toronto. The Spiros thought a broader Jewish music festival could piggyback on the cantors' gathering and expose more people to Jewish music.

The festival proved to be such a success that it was repeated last year, with a wide variety of music on offer.

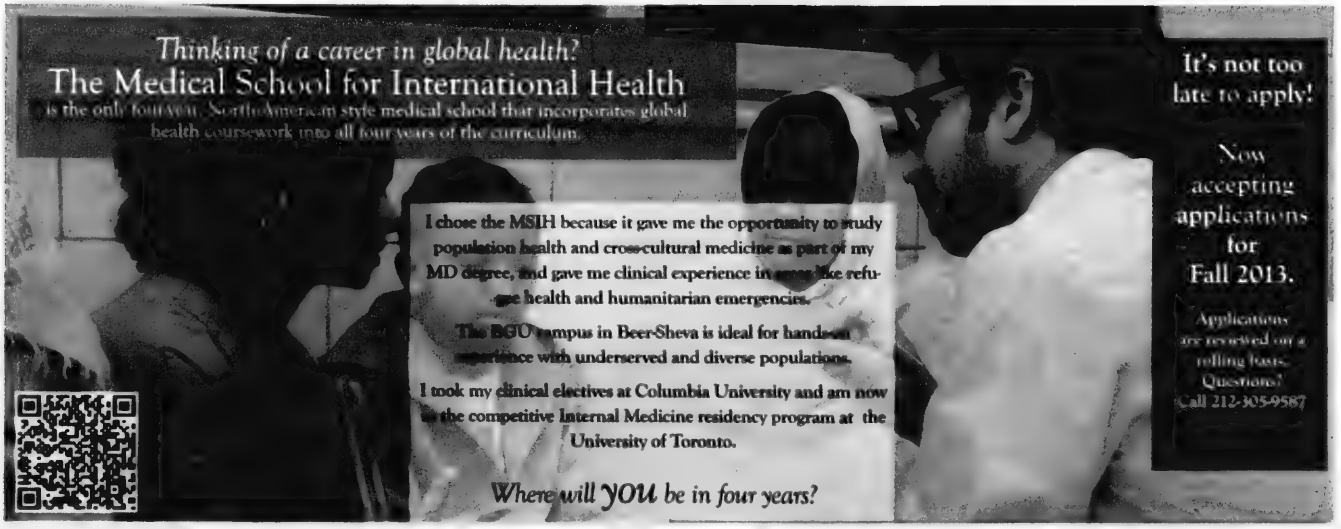
A program on 100 years of Jewish Hollywood proved popular, with a full orchestra accompanying vintage footage dating back to the silent era.

Another event featured the music of the late Srul Irving Glick, while other programs looked at Jewish big bands, Brazilian Jewish music and black-Jewish musical collaboration.

This year's program will include Rocky Mountain Jew-grass, with bluegrass music played with Jewish themes; the great American Jewish songbook, and a Sephardi all-girls rock band called Divahn.

Clearly when it comes to Jewish music, there's no shortage of themes. Pretty much the same holds true with artwork.

For more information, visit www.jewishmusicweek.com.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Young people recall teachers who inspired them

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Sometimes, a great teacher can change a student's life. Here are six young people whose teachers and mentors helped and inspired them to follow their dreams to some interesting career paths.

Jessica Gorlicky, a painter, says her Grade 7 homeroom teacher at Yorkhill Elementary School, in Thornhill, Ont., Kristy MacLean, taught her the importance of being understanding and aware of each person's unique perspective.

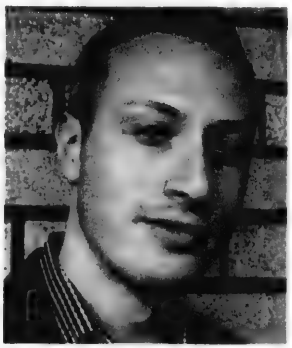
Jessica Gorlicky

The 32-year-old artist has performed her live art with Cirque du Soleil's *Totem* show, where she painted a four-by-five-foot backlit canvas in front of an audience. Her work often uses brightly coloured paints to depict women's bodies and faces.

Gorlicky describes MacLean as having an understanding outlook on life, instilling in her students the idea that in art, and in life, everyone looks at things in their own way.

"It was her creativity and drive in the class to show us we could do something different – that we each have a unique touch to our creative outlets," Gorlicky says. "Each individual's artwork was equal because we each had our own something special to give to the universe."

Jeff Bernstein is an entrepreneur whose business aims to provide an online platform for support networks for people with developmental and physical disabilities. The former human-rights adviser to Canadian senator Roméo Dallaire has a resume that includes working in countries such as Myanmar and South Sudan.



Jeff Bernstein

He credits Rabbi Rafi Lipner with demonstrating the power of sincerity of care in his work.

Rabbi Lipner, who taught Bernstein Tanach and rabbinics at the Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, now runs The House, which offers programming for young Jews in Toronto, and is spiritual leader of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation.

"You can go through high school and ignore a lot of what you learned, but every so often you come across that person who embodies something a little bit bigger than what you're doing in the classroom," Bernstein said of Rabbi Lipner.

"It's important when you're taking on a leadership position and being a person in the world, if you want to do everything, you have to connect with people. You're going to have a far easier time doing it if they can detect your sincerity."

Mark Masters says 10 years after working his first summer job, he is still in touch with his former boss, whom he describes as both a mentor and a teacher.

During the summer before Masters began studying journalism at Carleton University, he worked at Queen's Park, where he met Hal Vincent, who was then Queen's Park bureau chief for the Toronto radio station CFRB.

Mark Masters

"It can be really nerve-racking when you're about to go to university and you're finding your way," Masters says, explaining that Vincent gave him advice about being a journalist. "Always have your facts straight and make sure you've got the sources you need to pursue a story… and never get too upset if someone criticizes you."

Masters has carried that advice as he progressed from journalism student to professional journalist with the *National Post*, and now as a hockey reporter for the television station TSN.

Daniel Karasik remembers two high school teachers at Westmount Collegiate Institute in Thornhill, Ont., who supported him when he was taking his first steps toward his goal of becoming a professional playwright: his drama teacher, Andrew Dolha, and his English teacher, David Wagman.

Daniel Karasik

"They were both incredibly encouraging of my writing," says Karasik, who has seen his plays performed around the world, and last year won the grand prize in the CBC short-story competition.

In particular, Dolha's support was especially meaningful given that the teacher had been in the professional acting world shortly before teaching Karasik, so he knew what it would take to make a career in the theatre, Karasik says.

"If you want to achieve something, you've got to really want it," he says, quoting advice from Dolha. "You've got to really desire it with full intensity."

Continued on page B7

Tutor instilled 'a love of adventure'

Adam Hummel

Continued from page B6

Adam Hummel is a Toronto-based lawyer who won a leadership award last year for his work as founder of Youth Ambassadors for Peace, a project that helps communities in Kenya.

He says it was Jory Vernon, his Grade 10 history teacher at the Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, who inspired him to follow his passion – in this case, a passion for social justice.

Lahna Turner

"It was that idea which really stuck with me and with everything I've done," he says, whether it was volunteering in Kenya or helping people through his work as a lawyer.

Hummel says Vernon was an amazing teacher who was very personable and found ways to connect with students that made them feel as if they were the only person in the class.

"He put into my mind the idea of being passionate about something and being able to follow that passion," he says. "The pursuit of justice, the background reasons of why I wanted to be a lawyer come from that idea."

Lahna Turner, a comedian, says it was her elementary school tutor who inspired her in school and in life.

Turner says she had a learning disability and had to work extra hard to succeed in school. Although a number of people helped her overcome these obstacles, Wendy Sherman stood out.

"She made learning fun. She brought an excitement and she let me go off topic," Turner says, adding that she kept in touch with Sherman even into adulthood.

Sherman was in her early 20s when she headed to Africa to teach children, coming home with stories and presents for Turner, who was a child at the time, instilling in her a love of adventure. Turner followed her lead and spent time travelling after she graduated from college.

"I feel like she inspired me to dream," Turner says. "I don't think she just tutored me in school... but influenced me in life."

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Students and seniors learn from each other

Baycrest resident Sarah Wolle and Toronto Heschel School student Reena Parl work together to write their own poem as part of a year-long intergenerational project.

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The Grade 6 students at Toronto Heschel School have made some special new friends.

Earlier this school year, the students embarked on a year-long intergenerational learning project in partnership with Baycrest.

Heschel principal Gail Baker said the unique aspect of the project is that the students and the seniors are learning together. "It's not about our school entertaining the seniors, it's about bringing the experience and wisdom of the elders into the classroom."

The project began, she said, with a poetry unit in the greenhouse at the Terraces of Baycrest taught by Grade 6 teacher, Lesley Cohen.

"After the lesson, the students paired up with the seniors, and each pair developed their own poem, using the greenhouse as a metaphor," Baker said.

Following that session, the groups met at Heschel in order to share the poetry. "[The whole experience] was beyond our wildest expectations," she said. "The kids were engaged, and there was mutual admiration. The students loved their connection with the seniors, and I could feel the positive energy. I got goose bumps from watching them."

Student Jared Zacks said that working on his poetry with the residents of Baycrest, "really helped me with my ideas."

Another student, Max Abraham, said that he liked working with a partner, "and my partner taught me some new words."

For their next project, in March, the two groups plan to put on an eco-seder, Baker said. "The Grade 6 students are studying the Haggadah. They are looking for recurring examples in the story, and they are relating it to modern times.

"During a class at Baycrest, the students will present their research, and then, together with Baycrest residents, they'll make ceramic seder plates based on environmental issues."

For another topic, they will look at Jewish life through the eyes of Jewish artists, she said.

Bianca Stern, director of the department of culture, arts and innovation at Baycrest, said she joined the project "because we all believe in a creative arts approach to learning.

"As well, we believe that people can continue to learn and develop relationships throughout their lifespan. We are interested in developing cross-generational learning. Both groups benefit from the connection."

Stern, an occupational therapist by profession, said she has worked at schools, "so I have worked on both sides. This is a compelling project. There are a lot of integrated activities going on. It's special because of the arts-based focus, and because the seniors and the students are all eager to participate."

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Reading stimulates white matter in kids' brains

Abigail Klein Leichman
Israel21c.org

RAMAT GAN, Israel — Complex changes in brain connections as children learn how to read have been newly revealed in a study initiated by Israeli brain science researcher Michal Ben-Shachar.

Bar-Ilan's Michal Ben-Shachar

Published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, the study focuses on "white matter" – a network of pale, myelin-sheathed connections that allows information transfer between distant parts of the brain.

Ben-Shachar and a team from Stanford University – where Ben-Shachar, a professor at Bar-Ilan University, conducted her post-doctoral research — used an MRI-based non-invasive technique called diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) to track the development of reading skills and white matter connections in 55 children ages seven to 12 over a three-year period, and how they change over time.

"The nice thing about DTI is that it is really child friendly," said Ben-Shachar, who continues to collaborate with two Stanford labs in researching the development of reading in children born prematurely. "In a 12-minute scan, you can collect high-quality data from the whole brain while the child is lying still watching a movie."

The U.S. National Institutes of Health-funded study was conducted between 2004 and 2007, and collected so much data that it took years to organize and analyze it.

The results were somewhat surprising. Children who became good readers initially had lower levels of white matter in the areas of the brain associated with reading, but these levels grew rapidly during the three-year test period.

However, children who became below-average readers started out with more white matter in the areas associated with reading, and these levels declined over time — suggesting that these children were not creating and strengthening the neural pathways key to reading ability.

As they gain reading skills, children's brain connections change. ***[Image via Shutterstock.com]***

"When we looked at the first year of collected data, in an article published last year in the *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, it really struck us as so surprising to see a reverse correlation between white matter and reading ability," Ben-Shachar said. "This [new] paper helps us make sense of it, because we see the weaker readers start with stronger connections that decline over time."

She speculates that this may be because during the first three years of life, children grow many brain connections and then start "pruning" ones they don't use in order to strengthen the more relevant connections. "Perhaps there is not enough pruning in the brains of kids who become poor readers," she suggested.

Most developmental imaging studies compare brain measurements in groups of children and adults, while this one was unique in that it followed the same group of children over a long period of time.

"By doing so, we discovered that the changes in brain connections are more informative about reading skill than the measurement at a specific point in time," Ben-Shachar said.

"This is really important if we are ever going to use MRI as a diagnostic tool in education, in addition to standard behavioural tools. It means we will have to assess the child more than once in order to look at dynamic developmental changes, because change is more important than absolute measures at a particular time point."

At her Bar-Ilan lab, Ben-Shachar is working with Ethiopian immigrants for whom Hebrew is their first written language in the hope of identifying how the adult brain changes as literacy is acquired.

Along with Ofer Amir and Ruth Ezrati from Tel Aviv University, Ben-Shachar recently won a prestigious grant from the Israel Science Foundation to study white matter pathways in the brains of adults who stutter.

Meanwhile, she goes to California each summer to participate in the ongoing child imaging studies at Stanford.

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When good isn't good enough

Cathy Indig
Special to The CJN

Imagine yourself at work. It is 15 minutes before you are supposed to present a proposal to your boss for a large contract.

As of yet, you haven't given the project a moment's thought. At this point, you sit down and scribble an incomprehensible proposal.

You walk into your meeting with your boss, knowing full well that this may be your last day on the job.

Imagine your surprise when she congratulates you on all your hard work. She goes on and on about how amazing you are.

You know full well that the work you did was not good. You didn't get lucky and produce great work. It was trash that you proposed.

You question yourself and wonder if there was a chance that the work was any good. The answer is no. The work was substandard.

Is this all that is expected of you, because she doesn't think you can do any better, or does she not expect a lot from any work that is presented?

Fast-forward to the next time you have to complete an assignment. Do you think you will be inclined to work hard at it, or do you think that all the positive feedback you received when you slapped your work together will lead you to do the same thing again?

Chances are high that you won't work too hard on this new assignment. There is no incentive to do so.

Now consider a 10-year-old doing a month-long project for school or a four-year-old doing an arts and crafts project.

If each time a child does something, he or she is told how wonderful it is, no matter how quickly, sloppily or effortlessly it's out together, what would inspire him or her to try any harder?

Praising every piece of work that a child produces will never give the child incentive to try harder. When everything is a masterpiece, what's the point of having to work harder?

You wouldn't want to insult the effort, however, there is a difference between gushing over the work and using subtle language to encourage more effort.

It is important as an educator or a parent to know the level that the child is capable of producing.

Lev Vygotsky was a famous child theorist who developed the term "zone of proximal development" (ZPD). This refers to the range of skills an individual child has.

As educators and parents, it is crucial that we find the ZPD for each child.

Monitor the child's abilities at different times. He or she will probably try harder and work longer at a task if there are no distractions, or if it is something he wants to do.

Sit down with the child and work with him or her.

If you are trying to figure out a child's ability for drawing, ask him or her to draw a circle.

If this is successful, ask the child to draw a face in the circle, and then add a body.

Make sure to stop when the child is not able to do the task without getting frustrated.

The same would apply to discovering math or reading levels.

By pushing the child to the upper limits of his ZPD, we can ensure that we are helping children develop to the best of their abilities and helping to build their self-esteem, and not stifle it.

If a child is capable only of a scribble, then not complimenting the work could be damaging. But if the child is capable of drawing with intricate details and instead only scribbles, then complimenting the scribble can be damaging.

Cathy Indig

The reason for this is twofold. One, as I mentioned before, by going goo-goo over an underachieved effort, you will not give the child an incentive to work harder. Why would he or she want to spend more time on something if praise will be given no matter what the effort?

The second reason is that by telling the child that the scribble is fabulous, you are inadvertently telling him that you don't expect that he can do any better.

Children try very hard to live up to people's expectations of them. If not much is expected, then the child doesn't feel he is smart enough to do better.

The same goes for behaviour. If we give a child the impression that we think he is mischievous, then he will most likely prove us right.

If a child believes that an adult looks at him as a rule-follower, then the child will do his or her best to live up to this.

If a child is pushed just a little, then he will be more inspired to try a little harder.

If a child is not pushed at all, he may not advance as much or as quickly as possible. The child will continue to scribble artwork, move on to print very quickly and messily, and continue to produce work without any effort.

Young brains – and older ones, too – need to be stimulated to try harder and do more complex things. You don't want to offer activities that may be too frustrating, but encouraging a child to try harder is a gift, not a hindrance to growth.

We all want to be rewarded at times for our accomplishments, but efforts should be worthy of praise. It is crucial that we know the level the child is capable of and work within those limits.

Cathy Indig is the director of early childhood education at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

Educator says teaching Jewish texts connects us to our culture

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Public schools in Israel do a great job of teaching students about their Israeliness, but they have neglected to remind them about their Jewishness.

This according to Rani Jaeger, an educator with the Be'eri School at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, which is pioneering a pluralistic "nationwide model of Jewish education for Israeli high schools," according to the institute's website.

"By shifting Jewish studies from a marginal discipline into a cornerstone of secular high school education, Be'eri helps to return ownership of Jewish values, concepts and texts to Israeli youth from a range of socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds," the school said.

In Toronto last month to speak with Jewish educators about the program, Jaeger told *The CJN* his country's Jewish public education curriculum could learn a thing or two from North America's Jewish parochial school systems.

Historically, he said, Israel hadn't needed to reinforce Jewish identity among its student population, since the foundation of the state and its Zionist roots ensured that early generations of Israelis had Jewishness as part of the DNA of the populace.

Over time, however, with waves of new immigrants from the former Soviet Union, African nations and others, as well as the changing socio-political dynamics of a maturing country, Israel's public curricula took for granted that its student populations would always feel Jewish.

"I am a graduate of the public school system in Israel. And I graduated knowing Tanach and Jewish history… but I never actually read a page of the Talmud" while in school, he said.

"I had no notion of what was written in it. This great gap – in Israel we call it the gap between the Tanach and the Palmach [the elite fighting force of the Haganah] – between the Bible and modern times."

Jaeger said that much of the teachings in Jewish philosophy and thought, which he describes as "foundational" to Jewish identity, are missing in Israel's public school system.

"How can we expect people to be connected to Jewish culture and tradition, not necessarily religion," if these concepts from fundamental Jewish texts aren't taught to the nation's students? he asked.

This is the reason the Be'eri School was formed. It is the outgrowth of a government study done 20 years ago that concluded there was a looming "crisis" in Israel regarding Jewish identity, Jaeger said.

The Be'eri School initiative was founded in 2005.

Since then, it has managed to get its curriculum into 120 public schools in Israel – more than one-quarter of all public schools in the country – and is being taught to over 80,000 Israeli students by some 300 Be'eri-trained teachers, according to Jaeger.

The program is administrated in accordance with Israel's Ministry of Education, with which it partners and receives financial support.

"It's a national-scale program. We're not a boutique initiative. This is part of the [educational] revolution" of Israel, he said.

"What's more, is we are able to push a certain look of Judaism, one that is pluralistic, that can go hand in hand with the democratic aspects of Israel. We're trying to raise the next generation of committed, Jewish Israelis.

"There is a yearning for a new meaning for [Jewish Israeli] identity" in Israel, he said.

The Be'eri project has partners across the world. While in Toronto, Jaeger was hosted by the Lola Stein Institute as part of the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America Jewish Educators Study Forum.

North American Jewry "opened my eyes… and enabled Israelis to start something new" in education, Jaeger said.

Meeting with Canadian and American Jewish communities and "seeing the way you play your Judaism" as a minority in the country is "inspirational," he said.

Educator Rani Jaeger

Asked about how Be'eri's curriculum is perceived or received by the non-Jewish student populations in the public school system, Jaeger said it is a challenge in this regard.

He said Arab children in Israel have their own school system. However, the non-Jews in public schools in Israel, such as Druze, non-halachic Jews and migrant workers' children, generally don't mind the Be'eri curriculum, since they or their parents actively chose Jewish public school to learn more about Israel and its history.

"Still, we have to be very sensitive to the fact that these people have other traditions and may need to express these in class… it is a sensitive point," Jaeger said.

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Social workers help schools cope

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Tragedy, and especially death, can be very difficult for children, so it's important to be ready to talk to the students and help them understand the situation and work through their grief, said Diane Harvey, co-ordinator of Jewish Family & Child.

Many schools have regular social workers that come in perhaps on a weekly basis to offer their services to anybody who might need their help. However, when tragedy hits a school, JF&CS often is called in as part of a response team that helps the school community cope.

The Bialik Hebrew Day School community faced tragedy on Jan. 9, when former preschool vice-principal Rochelle Wise and her husband, David (Donny) Pichosky, were found dead in their Florida condominium. Right away, the school called in social workers, including Harvey, though she said Jewish Vocational Services took the lead on that response.

"In that case, one of the protocols we would do is speak to the staff as a group," she said, explaining they would help the staff first with the trauma, so that the teachers – who the students are presumably more comfortable with – could then explain it to the students.

There are differences in the ways social workers would explain the situation to kids of different ages, since it's important to consider how developed the children are and what kind of information they can comprehend. Younger children in particular respond best through relating to their own lives – perhaps if they've lost a relative or a pet, Harvey said.

"You acknowledge this horrible thing has happened and you try to understand the feelings," she said, adding that just talking about it is hugely important.

Diane Harvey

There were no details of what actually happened to Wise and her husband, so it became a matter of explaining to the students that there were no answers, despite the widespread speculation.

Given that this particular tragedy was so widely reported, Bialik sent out an email reminding parents and students to avoid speaking to the media out of respect for the families. The school also declined an interview with *The CJN* on how they explained the situation to the children.

Continued on page B13

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Raquel Sultan

When dealing with grief, questions must be answered

Continued from page B12

When Netivot HaTorah Day School's incoming principal, Robin Shiner, died of leukemia last August, the school called in a social worker and therapists, said Raquel Sultan, co-ordinator of Netivot's south campus. There were also a couple of assemblies in remembrance of Shiner to help the students grieve.

Sarah Burakowski

The fact that the children were still on summer vacation when Shiner passed away meant most students had already heard the news from their parents, Sultan explained, so that made it easier for the school to respond.

However, Shiner's death was also particularly difficult for the school since almost everybody there knew her, as well as recent graduates who had moved on to high schools such as Bnei Akiva Schools, and so it became a community loss affecting a huge number of children, said Harvey, who was called into the school.

"Whether or not you had her, you knew who she was," she said. "She was beloved in the school."

As at Bialik, Harvey described the process as starting at the top and working her way down to the children. First, she debriefed the staff, including board members and especially the administration, who would have worked directly with Shiner.

"They all came in, I gave them a little psychoeducation on grief and bereavement to normalize what they're feeling, giving them very specific symptoms they might be feeling and making sure they took care of themselves," she said.

She called that part of the process a "collective debriefing." She then taught them the best way to respond to children in the classroom.

The biggest challenge in helping kids through their grief is actually explaining the concept of death, Sultan said. "It's just an idea that they're not here any more, they're not on Earth any more." She said it often helps to use stories and children's literature to answer their questions.

When a school tragedy happens outside of the school, representatives from both Jewish and public schools said they typically respond through making teachers and social workers available to speak to students, but they would not intentionally start a discussion.

This was the case after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting on Dec. 14 in Newtown, Conn., in which 27 people were killed. Sarah Burakowski, a special-education resource teacher for the York Region District School Board, said teachers received instructions on how to respond to questions, but there was no direction to bring up the news to students.

"They leave it up to individual teachers, since not every teacher would be comfortable dealing with it," she said.

Roderick Conte, head of guidance at Westmount Collegiate Institute, said that's the case for the high schools as well. With the Sandy Hook shooting, the board released a memo to the schools very quickly, asking the staff members to be aware that students might feel worried, however, Conte said no students approached him.

"Kids weren't that concerned, which for me is good because I get a sense that if kids in the school feel safe in the school, they're not going to get freaked out or concerned when they hear something happening in another school," he said.

Although there are social workers available to help students, the school doesn't tend to remind students about it when something tragic has happened because they don't want to create hysteria, Conte said. "If you make an announcement, essentially... you're giving kids permission to be freaked out."

However, he added that if a tragedy directly involves the school, they like to acknowledge it in hopes they will suppress the inevitable rumours.

Associated Hebrew Schools responded to the Sandy Hook shooting through an email that reminded families that teachers and the administration would address any concerns that the children may have had.

The school also reiterated the importance of school safety, and reassured the community that the school would reexamine its own safety procedures to "redouble our efforts to protect our children and community."

Ultimately, when dealing with grief, whether outside of school or directly involving the school, the most important thing is to answer the kids' questions without judgment, and to remember that children can reach out to a variety of people, said Sultan.

"When you're talking about the Jewish community, it's important to mention it's a whole team of people that are involved in here. It's the parents, the friends, the family, the teachers [and] the extended family," Sultan said. "It's just a whole team effort in helping the children dealing with grief."

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Cont'd on B15

Moms publish creative activity book

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Jo-Anne Schneeweiss and Shelley Sefton are firm believers in creative play and its benefits for kids. The Thornhill moms, who met through their daughters, have written a book called *Creative IQ: Giving Young Learners the Creative Edge in a Competitive World.*

The book, which was published last summer, has 10 themed chapters, each with 10 activities supplemented by suggestions to further enrich the projects. Well-organized and illustrated with colourful photographs, the 160-page softcover book, approximately 8-1/2 by 11 inches, was written as a resource for both parents and teachers.

Creative IQ is geared for children from 4 to 12. "We wanted to create a book that would grow with your child, that your child could keep going back to," Schneeweiss said.

A 41-year-old criminal lawyer and parenting blogger (kidsaroundcanada.com), Schneeweiss also has a background in arts, and trained as a speech and drama teacher. She became friends with Sefton, who used to teach kids' cooking classes, after their daughters met at a Jewish day school.

"We must have half-a-dozen connections," said Schneeweiss, who immigrated from Cape Town at age 6.

Sefton, 39, whose family is also from Cape Town, settled in Kingston, Ont., with her family when she was 16. "Our grandmothers were friends years back," she said. Schneeweiss and Sefton are also both alumnae of the University of Western Ontario.

Shortly after they met, Schneeweiss asked Sefton if she'd be interested in writing for her parenting blog. Sefton, who hadn't done that type of writing before, thought the idea was "awesome."

The book reflects the women's similar parenting styles, Schneeweiss said.

Creative IQ was meant as "a springboard for helping children think out of the box," she added.

Feedback thus far has been positive, the authors said. "A lot of kids like it for playdates," Sefton added.

Schneeweiss said that kids today are "so focused on technology that they don't have as many opportunities to play or develop their creativity."

Both moms limit their kids' screen time, but their children aren't bored despite the limitations, Sefton said. "I find a lot of kids turn to technology because they're bored."

Schneeweiss added, "Because we've always engaged our children in creative play, they create their own activities, and they inspire us every day. They've taken what they've learned to the next level. "Every child has the potential to be creative."

She added that the time parents spend with children doing creative activities is "not only important for creative development, it's fun and it creates memorable time together."

The book teaches children how to use technology in positive ways, Sefton said. Some of the "challenges" proposed in the book involve online research.

Other activities include arts and crafts, and there is often a food element. The "winter" chapter – *Creating in a Winter Wonderland* – has instructions for making an igloo from sugar cubes.

Sefton, who arrived in Canada from South Africa during a snowstorm, said she loves the winter chapter. "I embrace winter. It's beautiful… There's so much to do, so much that winter has to offer."

The book's first chapter, *Chocolatta… Hard to Resist*, has a recipe for chocolate baklava, inspired by a family outing to Taste of the Danforth, in Toronto's Greektown.

As well, there is a recipe for chocolate playdough. "It tastes terrible," Sefton said, "but you won't die if you eat it."

Games, discussion topics, and a themed party help round out the chapter, and the authors highlight the skills enhanced by each activity.

Sefton, who taught cooking at Camp Shalom as a student and then wrote a children's cookbook using her camp recipes, said that when she taught cooking classes, she tried to combine fun with an educational aspect.

"Cooking was always my passion," said Sefton, who went to chef school at George Brown College and has a background in recipe development.

"If you have the confidence to bake a cake, you can change the world," Schneeweiss said. "The whole idea is to give the children confidence in all different areas, so they'll be able to meet the challenges they have in life."

Jo-Anne Schneeweiss, left, and Shelley Sefton say creative activities are important for kids.

It has to do with taking small steps, Sefton explained.

Schneeweiss also noted that many of the ideas in the book are inexpensive. "The book is there as a resource, so when they do have that quality time, they can easily access it."

Writing the book over an 18-month period was fun, Sefton said. "It wasn't a job… It was stimulating time with another adult."

The book is available through Creative IQ Media (creativeiq.ca), amazon.ca, and in select bookstores. Shipping is free through March.

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How to get good at something? Practice!

Erica Brown
JNS.org

Legend has it that famed violinist Isaac Stern (1920-2001) was once confronted after a concert by an admirer who said the following to him: "Oh, Mr. Stern, I would give anything to be able to play the violin as magnificently as you do." Stern's answer: "Would you give 12 hours a day?"

He probably wasn't exaggerating.

Stern was born in Poland but moved to the United States with his family before he was two years old. By 15, he had his debut as a violinist and spent decades travelling the world with his music. In his lifetime, he discovered and nurtured talent, bringing to the public eye the famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma and others.

He first played in Israel one year after the founding of the Jewish state and maintained a close relationship with Israel, visiting and playing during wartime.

An obituary in the *Los Angeles Times* records the moment when Stern's performance was interrupted during an air raid siren in Israel. To calm the audience, he played a piece of Bach. The audience put on their gas masks and watched the rest of the performance.

Carnegie Hall's main auditorium is named after Stern, and it's not hard to understand why. The talent Stern exhibited in his youth was honed and developed over a lifetime of playing and discovering the talents of others. Maimonides, citing the Talmud writes, "According to the effort is the gain." And it reminds me of a talmudic debate that also involves 12 hours. The sages believed that study demands rigour: hours, discipline and self-sacrifice. They believed the life of scholarship was earned without luxury. To acquire wisdom meant sleeping on the floor and eating bread dipped in salt. This wasn't a prescription for knowledge. It was a warning against those who believed that study would bring them material success and status.

Study alone would not support a family, so one of the debates around Jewish scholarship was how much time should be given to learning Torah in contrast to earning a living. One formula favoured in the Talmud is a three to nine ratio: three hours of work (often manual labour) and nine hours of learning. We wonder how this worked in reality, but then again this is the talmudic equivalent of Isaac Stern in the scholarship department. You can't create great scholars unless there is real investment

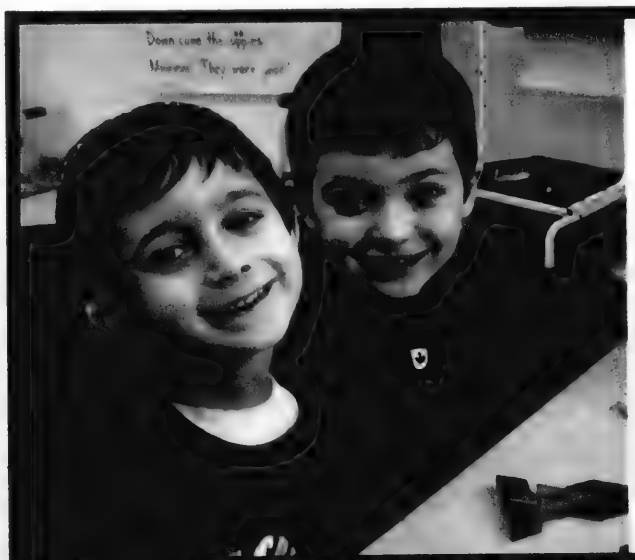
Erica Brown

in both the process of study, the skills and competencies that are necessary and the commitment to mastery. Being a lifelong learner is all about sequentially preparing ourselves to make study more nuanced, textured and challenging across the lifespan.

The 10,000 hours rule was popularized by Malcolm Gladwell in his best-selling book *Outliers*. Gladwell used research that suggested that mastery in any field depends on spending at least 10,000 hours perfecting one's skills and competencies. Others, like Geoffrey Colvin in *Talent is Overrated*, write about the importance of deliberative practice. It's not only about how many hours you put in but about customized practice that helps you improve on your specific areas of weakness. One of the great tests of talent is one's willingness to practise what one is not good at and willingness to practice alone.

Sometimes we want outcomes without effort, but current research suggests what our sages knew 2,000 years ago. It takes 12 hours a day, 10,000 hours a life and mental and physical drive to achieve excellence. What would you like to be great at, and are you willing to put in the hours?

Erica Brown is a writer and educator who works as the scholar-in-residence for the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and consults for the Jewish Agency and other Jewish non-profits. Subscribe to her "Weekly Jewish Wisdom" list at http://leadingwithmeaning.com.



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This Week

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CJN Profile

Hannah Moscovitch is one of Canada's most accomplished playwrights. *Page 42*

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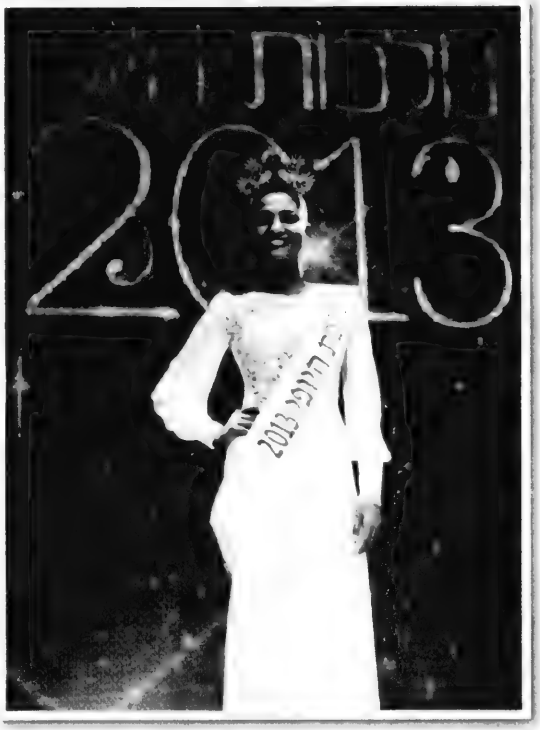

Meet the new Miss Israel

Yityish Aynaw, a former Israeli army officer, became the first Ethiopian-Israeli to win the Miss Israel pageant. The 21-year-old model came to Israel with her family when she was 12. During the competition, Aynaw cited the slain American civil rights activist Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. as one of her heroes. "He fought for justice and equality, and that's one of the reasons I'm here. It's important that a member of the Ethiopian community wins the competition for the first time," Aynaw told the judges. "There are many different communities of many different colours in Israel, and it's important to show that to the world." *[Flash90 photo]*

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Turkish PM vilifies Israel

Brands Zionism 'crime against humanity'

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Canada and the United States denounced remarks made last week at a UN conference by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who described Zionism as a "crime against humanity" on par with antisemitism and fascism.

Rick Roth, spokesperson for Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, told *The CJN* that Canada "categorically rejects" Erdogan's "unacceptable" comments and that his "inflammatory statements do nothing to advance the cause of peace or effective cross-cultural dialogue."

"Such misguided sentiments only give expression to a dangerous, insidious form of new antisemitism," he said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called Erdogan's comments "objectionable." The White House issued a separate statement labelling the remarks "offensive and wrong."

Recep Tayyip Erdogan *[C. Devorah photo]*

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also condemned Erdogan's statement, calling it a "dark and slanderous remark, the likes of which we thought had passed from the world."

Speaking on Feb. 27 in Vienna at the fifth UN Alliance of Civilizations Global Forum, a conference devoted to dialogue between the West and Islam, Erdogan decried rising racism in Europe and the fact that many Muslims "who live in countries other than their own" often face harsh discrimination.

"We should be striving to better understand the culture and beliefs of others, but instead we see that people act based on prejudice and exclude others and despise them," Erdogan said, according to a simultaneous translation provided by the United Nations. "And that is why it is necessary that we must consider — just like Zionism or antisemitism or fascism — Islamophobia as a crime against humanity."

Continued on page 40

Hamas not pleased with possible Obama visit to Temple Mount – see page 40

CANADA

Lawyer Dying

VICTORIA — The lawyer who has defended every major Holocaust denier, neo-Nazi and accused war criminal in Canada over the past 30 years is dying of liver cancer. Doug Christie, 66, was in hospital last week in Victoria and confirmed that doctors say he has six months to live. Among his clients have been former teachers Jim Keegstra and Malcolm Ross, Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel, white supremacists John Ross Taylor and Wolfgang Droege, disgraced native leader David Ahenakew, and accused war criminals Imre Finta and Michael Seifert. Christie was first diagnosed in November 2011 with prostate cancer, which has apparently spread, the *Victoria Times-Colonist* reported last week.

Drabinsky Appeals

TORONTO — Former film and live-theatre mogul Garth Drabinsky is challenging the ruling to strip him of his Order of Canada. Drabinsky is asking the Federal Court to review the decision by the council that awards and revokes the honour, saying he was in jail and thus unable to argue his case to the panel. Gov.-Gen. David Johnston signed the order against Drabinsky last fall. It was to be formally announced March 2. Drabinsky was jailed in 2009 for fraud for cooking the books of his Livent live-theatre company, which later went bankrupt. He was paroled last month after 17 months in jail. The advisory panel has never reconsidered a case like this before, the *Toronto Star* reported.

Downtown Shul Sold

OTTAWA — Congregation Beth Shalom in downtown Ottawa has sold its land, the Conservative shul's president told the *Ottawa Citizen*. Ian Sherman said Trinity Property Investments has agreed to buy the property for $15 million, plus $9 million more if the city allows greater density on the site. Those are the same terms offered by Claridge Homes, which walked away from a similar deal late last year. The 350-member shul, the last in downtown Ottawa, can't afford to maintain the 60-year-old complex, which used to house a JCC and community offices. The closing date for the deal is Dec. 31. Trinity refused to confirm the price it's paying for the property. A 90-day conditional period on the sale expires May 8.

Observant Jew To Head U.S. Treasury Dep't

WASHINGTON — With a strong bipartisan majority, the U.S. Senate confirmed Jack Lew, President Barack Obama's nominee to be Treasury secretary.

Lew, formerly Obama's chief of staff, was confirmed Feb. 27 in a 71-26 vote, with 20 Republicans voting for him. Lew, from New York, becomes the first-ever Orthodox Jew to hold a federal U.S. cabinet position.

Jack Lew

He also has served twice – under presidents Clinton and Obama – as chief of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and, under Obama, as a deputy secretary of state.

Lew faced questions over a $685,000 severance payment he got when he resigned as executive vice-president of New York University. He also met resistance from Republicans who said Lew, as OMB chief, was too closely identified with the current budget impasse.

Nonetheless, his solid majority was in contrast to Chuck Hagel, Obama's defence secretary nominee, who garnered the support of just four Republicans and was approved earlier the same week by a majority of 58.

WORLD

Boycott Motion Fails

LONDON — A Feb. 27 motion calling for blanket sanctions against Israel was rejected by the Oxford University Students' Union. According to the website of Britain's Union of Jewish Students, the measure calling for the student union to boycott Israeli institutions, goods and produce lost by a vote of 69-10, with 15 abstentions.

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Supreme Court upholds Sask. human rights law

Jewish groups welcome decision

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Supreme Court of Canada struck down a part of Saskatchewan's hate legislation, but left intact the section that makes it an offence to promote hatred against identifiable groups.

In a unanimous 6-0 decision released last week, the court ruled that a section of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code that prohibited expression that "ridicules, belittles or otherwise affronts the dignity" of protected groups is invalid. It "does not rise to the level of ardent and extreme feeling constituting hatred required to uphold the constitutionality of a prohibition of expression in human rights legislation," wrote Justice Marshall Rothstein for the court.

The judges ruled, however, that once those words were struck, the remaining section of the code remained valid, even though it infringed the Charter's Section 2 right to freedom of expression. Restricting that right was demonstrably justifiable in a free society as a means of preventing hate speech and protecting minority groups, the Supreme Court ruled.

Shimon Fogel

The decision arose out of a case involving William Whatcott, who was brought before the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) after four complaints alleged he distributed flyers in 2001 and 2002 that promoted hatred against homosexuals.

The SHRC was appealing a 2010 ruling by the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal that overturned a human rights tribunal finding against Whatcott.

The Supreme Court threw out complaints based on two of the flyers, while upholding the other two. He was ordered to pay penalties amounting to $7,500, down from $17,500 ordered by a provincial human rights tribunal.

The court's decision was applauded by Jewish organizations that have long advocated retention of provincial anti-hate laws. (The ruling did not affect the Criminal Code's anti-hate provisions.)

B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights, which was an intervener in the case, said the court "struck the right balance between freedom of speech and hateful speech – the first is to be respected, the latter is to be condemned when it crosses the line."

Canadian Jewish Congress, which also intervened in the case, is now defunct, but its successor organization, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), also supported the decision.

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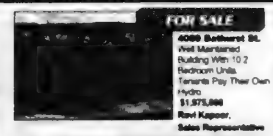
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Jerusalem, the PA, the Jews

From the editor's desk...

Nothing more clearly illustrates how the Palestinian leadership has transformed the conflict with Israel from a territorial one into a religious one than their views on the Jews and Jerusalem.

It is now widely known that then-U.S. president Bill Clinton could not believe his ears when Yasser Arafat denied any historical Jewish connection to Jerusalem. There was no evidence that a Jewish temple had ever stood in Jerusalem, Arafat, who was Palestinian Authority president, casually offered at Camp David in discussion with Clinton and Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak.

Arafat's remarks were not political postures. They were deeply believed doctrine, a distorted outcropping from the perverse political theology that informs Palestinian policy and politics toward the Jews.

Last week, once again, Palestinian religious leaders made their Jews-and-Jerusalem policies quite clear.

In anticipation of a possible visit later this month to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem by U.S. President Barack Obama, Hamas warned the American leader to stay away. It would be "a diplomatic disaster" the terror group said.

Preferring to present a kinder face to America (and to the Christian world) than his Hamas co-religionists, Ekrima Sabri, head of the High Islamic Council in Jerusalem, softened the "no-visit" policy by imposing three conditions upon the president for such a visit: access to the Mount could not be from the Mughrabi Gate (i.e., from the side of the Western Wall); there must be no Israeli official with the president; and the visit must be for tourist purposes, not political ones (not to discuss peace negotiations with Israel).

Sabri specifically said he would complain to the president about Israel's attempts to "Judaize Jerusalem."

The affront by the Palestinian leaders was a double one: first to the office of the presidency as well as to the individual who holds it; and second, of course, to history, to truth and to the possibility of religious coexistence with the Jews.

Other than as perennial wanderers who may have passed through the ancient walled city over the millennia, the Jews have no historic connection to Jerusalem, the PA believes.

But there was also a broadside against Jewish patrimony in the Old City fired by a non-Palestinian organization. This one came from the "friendly" corridors of the European Union.

Some weeks ago, the EU diplomats in eastern Jerusalem wrote a report to their foreign ministries and to the complete roster of the 27-member EU states. In it, they recommended economic sanctions against Jewish settlements in the West Bank and eastern Jerusalem. The report was delivered in camera to the European governments in January and leaked last week to *Ha'aretz*.

Its language is unambiguously harsh and uncompromisingly severe. The message that the European diplomats conveyed in various iterations and restatements of their report was a call for a boycott of the Jews in the West Bank.

For example, one of the recommendations urges EU countries to "prevent, discourage and raise awareness about problematic implications of financial transactions including foreign direct investments, from within the EU in support of settlement activities, infrastructure and services."

Some recommendations call for direct or indirect sanctions on companies and organizations involved in settlement construction and divestment from Israeli firms.

These recommendations are obnoxiously, grossly unfair and based upon bad readings of history and worse application of international law. But they are the jagged blade of an unkind polemics that knowledgeable individuals and ignoramuses alike thrust constantly into Israel's standing in the world. Though we cavil and complain, we are, alas, used to it.

However there was more, and I might add, much worse in the report. According to *JTA*, a large part of the report accuses Israel of restricting Muslim and Christian religious practice in Jerusalem. It accuses Israel of attempting to change the religious character of Jerusalem. The report also calls the construction of Jewish neighbourhoods in eastern Jerusalem "systematic, deliberate and provocative."

This part of the EU report is far more egregious than bad history or bad law.

It is blatant distortion and falsification. It makes the EU complicit in the Islamic effort to deny a Jewish heritage in the Old City. It makes the EU confederates in the Islamic attempt to once again expel the Jews from Jerusalem.

The anti-Israel prejudice rots even deeper when one recalls that the EU pointedly refuses to regard Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. **–*MBD***

SeeJN

WOMEN CONTRIBUTE TO THE WAR EFFORT AT HOME

During World War II, many women contributed to the war effort at home by volunteering. Various organizations helped to co-ordinate these initiatives. In 1940, a service flight training school was established in Brantford, Ont., and airmen from all over the British Commonwealth began training there. In this photograph taken between 1939 and 1945, a group of Jewish women volunteers are being shown how to fold a parachute by two military servicewomen. Identified in this photo, from left, are the school officer, Anne Tulchinsky; Kay Solomon; Rose Bloom and Mrs. Furman of New York. *[Ontario Jewish Archives photo]*

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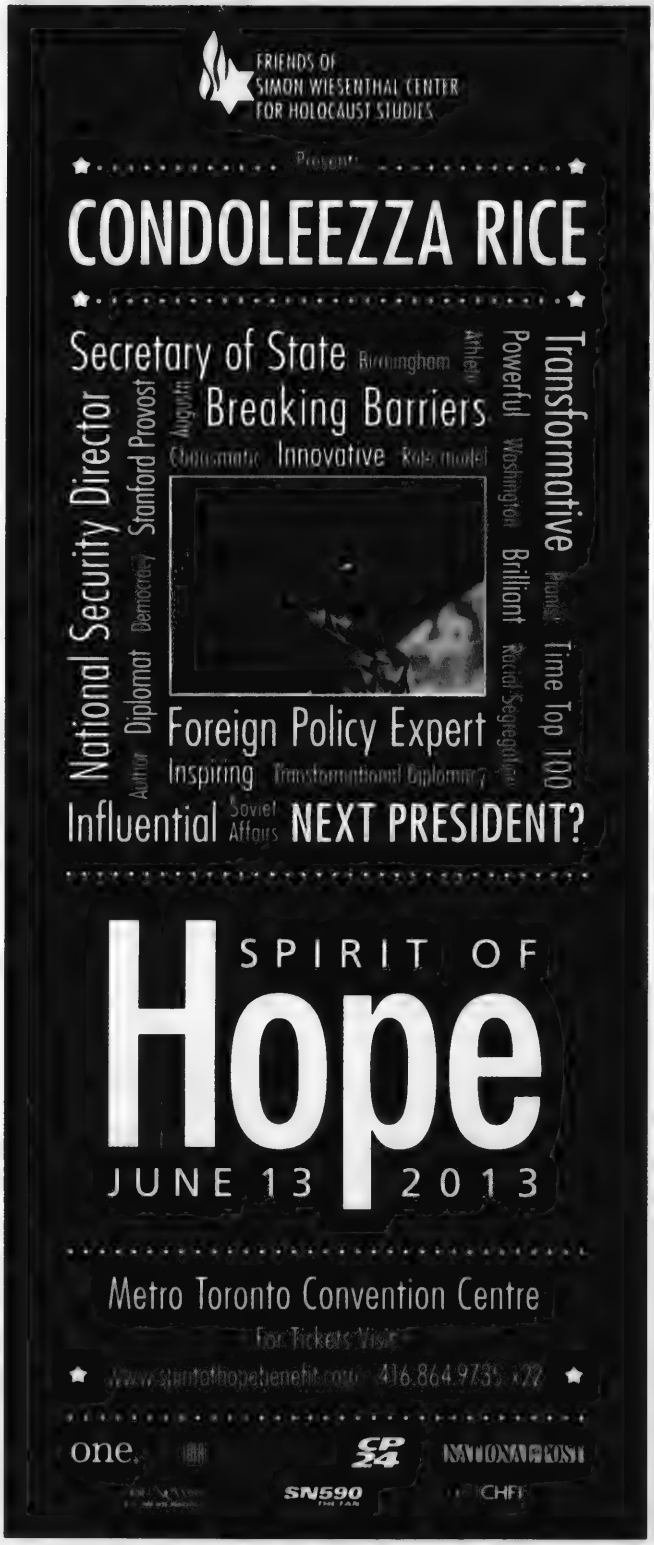

Pictures taken by Jews in Lodz Ghetto on exhibit

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

An exhibit of rare photographs from the doomed Lodz Ghetto in Nazi-occupied Poland is now on display at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School library.

The mostly black-and-white photographs, commissioned by the German-controlled Jewish Council, were taken between 1940 and 1944 and document everyday life in the ghetto, the last one in Poland to be liquidated.

The exhibit, *The Face of the Ghetto: Pictures by Jewish Photographers from the Lodz Ghetto 1940-1944*, is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office and runs until March 17.

Curated by the Topography of Terror Foundation in Berlin in co-operation with the Polish State Archive in Lodz, it has been brought here by York University's Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Anti-Racism Education, the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York University, the Azrieli Foundation and the consulates general of Germany and Poland in Toronto.

First exhibited in Germany three years ago, the photographs were previously displayed in the visitors lobby of the United Nations and Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va.

When the exhibit opened at UN headquarters in New York City last year, Germany's ambassador to the United Nations, Peter Wittig, said the photographs conveyed "the pretense of a normal, functioning life."

As he put it, "While we see some pictures with children still smiling and ghetto inhabitants leading a seemingly regular working life, we know that already at that point of time, when these pictures were taken, the killing of exactly these persons was already being planned."

Lodz, an industrial centre with a population of 672,000, of whom 230,000 were Jewish, was occupied by the German army in September 1939. It was renamed Litzmannstadt, after a World War I German general, in April of the following year.

The ghetto, measuring 4.1 square miles, was established in Baluty, the poorest district in the city, and 160,000 Jews were crammed into it.

From the autumn of 1941 onward, an additional 25,000 Jews from western European cities, including Frankfurt, Vienna and Prague, were deported to the ghetto. At least 5,000 Sinti and Roma from Austria were also transported there.

Ghetto workers produced goods for Germany and particularly the German army. Chaim Rumkowski, head of the ghetto council, believed that "honest and useful work" would ensure the ghetto's survival. "Work is our only chance," he declared.

But the Nazis, acting on a plan approved in 1942 to exterminate the Jews of Europe on a systematic basis, never intended to let its inhabitants survive and by the end of the Holocaust, only five per cent of the Jews of Lodz survived the Holocaust.

Incredibly enough, a substantial number of photographs from the ghetto exist, thanks in large part to a Jewish Council decision in August 1940 to create a photographic office within the ghetto's statistics department.

Photographs of the ghetto were also snapped by Walter Genewein, head of the finance department of the Nazi ghetto administration, and by an ethnic German policeman named Steiner. Their portrayals of ghetto Jews were generally tinged with antisemitism.

The more than 50 photographs at York University are but a tiny fraction of the 12,000 small-format prints commissioned by the Jewish Council and held today in the Lodz State Archives. The stark photographs, as one inscription reads, portray "short-lived moments of harmony and joy, even happiness, and "a remarkable will to preserve humanity despite the inhuman reality."

One of 12,000 photos from the Lodz Ghetto commissioned by the Jewish Council.

From left, Bonnie Dale, Janice Landy, Karen Fenwick. *(Carolyn Blackman photo)*

Passover food drive needs donations, volunteers

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

For 30 years, National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section's Passover Food Drive has made the holiday easier for Jews in need.

That need has increased since 1983, when the drive started with the delivery of 25 boxes of food, and now volunteers pack and deliver more than 2,500 boxes across the GTA.

Recipients include people living in poverty, recent immigrants in need and people with disabilities. They're referred from agencies, synagogues, schools, service groups and chaplaincy services.

Each box contains such items as matzah, gefilte fish, tuna, canned fruit, matzah ball mix with soup, Passover wine, a Haggadah, candles and sweets, and they're packed by volunteers from schools, groups and organizations.

Janice Landy, a member of the food drive committee, which is chaired by Karen Fenwick and Bonnie Dale, said there are 40 volunteer groups this year.

"Before they begin packing, the groups are given a 10-minute talk on poverty. We also tell them that the boxes are a gift to the recipients and ask them to include a signed card in the box."

Landy said the drive desperately needs money.

"We usually put away a little money from the previous year's drive to help start up the current year, but the drive had financial problems last year, so we weren't able to put aside much money."

The committee has made cutbacks and has saved money in a number of areas, Fenwick said, but neither the client list nor the contents of the boxes has been affected.

Drive organizers have set up bins in supermarkets and other places across the city for people to donate non-perishable food items marked "Kosher for Passover 2013," she said, but "we really need money. We are able to buy food wholesale and can buy twice as much food. The money can go a long way."

The committee is also in need of volunteers to deliver the boxes on March 17, Dale said. "We need drivers who have a car and a helper. Delivery day comes out on March Break this year, so we're a little concerned about getting enough volunteers."

She said that people who have delivered boxes have come back and told her what an eye-opener it was.

"They had never realized that there was so much poverty in the Jewish community. There are people who are unemployed and underemployed, and there are a disproportionate number of elderly women and those who are disabled or have a mental illness."

Landy said she has never forgotten one nine-year-old boy who volunteered to pack the boxes. "He said that when his family arrived in Canada, they received a box, and they were very grateful. Now, he gets to pack the boxes, which go to others in need."

Volunteers can show up on delivery day at 4700 Bathurst St. between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m.

"It is important to donate money, but volunteering time is also important. People need to be hands-on, and see what is happening out there," Landy said.

Visit the Passover Food drive on Facebook, and to make a donation visit www.ncjwc-ts.org or call 416-633-5100.

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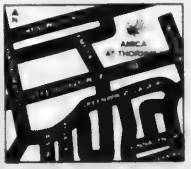

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Erdogan's poison

The murky musings and outrageous outbursts by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan about Israel no longer surprise. They spring from a mind that is a wellspring of poison against the Jewish state.

Irrespective of the podium or the place – whether in Davos, Switzerland, at a forum of international business, in Cairo with the leaders of the most populous Arab country in the world, in New York at the United Nations, or as last week in Vienna at an international conference dedicated to dialogue between the West and Islam – Erdogan is unrestrained in his anti-Israel fulminations. Neither decency, nor truth, nor reason, nor rational thought, for that matter, holds him back.

In Vienna, the Turkish leader declared Zionism to be a crime against humanity. This latest disparagement of Israel was of a piece with his many previous calumnies, only baser, lower and even more ignorant. And for that reason, it was no doubt a balm to the ears of the leaders of Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, Al Qaeda and all the rest of their ilk. For whatever defames Israel commends their own causes, which we can usually identify by the dripping trail of blood they leave in their wake.

With words that could have been spoken by the late, revered Rev. Martin Luther King, Erdogan attempted to make the case for tolerance and mutual respect among peoples. "We should be striving to better understand the culture and beliefs of others, but instead we see that people act based on prejudice and exclude others and despise them," Erdogan said.

In the very next breath however, he fumed prejudice at Israelis, very explicitly excluded Zionism from the realm of humankind and very vividly despised the national movement of the Jewish people.

His earnest plea for understanding was nothing more than public relations piffle. Indeed, what would the Kurds or the Armenians say about Erdogan's efforts to better understand their culture and beliefs?

It was heartening to see the strong reactions of disapproval to Erdogan's statement by many leaders and politicians. But the condemnations of Erdogan in the West will not stanch the flow of the hate-inducing poison into the uninformed minds and vulnerable hearts of the Middle East and beyond.

Even as Erdogan raged against Zionism, the Turkish media, according to Tazpit News Agency, reported that a senior member of the Turkish government, former finance minister Kemal Unakitan, had recently spent some 2-1/2 months in Israel (or the Zionist entity, as Israel's enemies like to call the country) for advanced medical treatment to try to avoid the need for a kidney transplant and end his dialysis treatments. Unakitan is slated to return to Israel to continue with his medical care.

Someone should tell Erdogan.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

For the first time since the start of unrest in Gaza and the West Bank in late 1987, Palestinians used explosives and firearms against Israeli security personnel. The incident involved a bomb placed on a bypass highway near Gaza City that was detonated as two vehicles passed. Gunmen then opened fire with small arms on the vehicles. No injuries were reported.

Dry Bones

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Elephant in the room

Your editorial calling for a searching discussion about "the elephant in the room," the unsustainable cost of Jewish education, deserves attention and action ("Summit on education," Feb. 14). Since 2007, when Ontario voters decisively rejected public funding for religious day schools, Toronto's Jewish leadership has dropped the ball. There has been no public process and no serious search for ways to relieve the intolerable burden of day-school tuition on middle-income families. Since 2001, day-school tuition increases have been more than double the rise in the cost of living. Cost is a huge barrier and the situation is getting worse.

Research shows that attendance at Jewish day schools exerts the most powerful influence over subsequent life choices. After-school classes, Israel trips and summer camps also have measurable positive effects. We need to involve the whole community in a thoughtful review of the issues. We need to ask hard questions, including:

- What principles should guide the community's approach to funding Jewish education?
- What goals should the community adopt in Jewish education? For example, as a target, how many Jewish students should we aim to see enrolled in the day schools? In supplementary schools? In Jewish camps? In heritage-language programs in the public schools?
- What exactly is the affordability problem? How will it change, given the demographic outlook?
- What could market research tell us about the preferences and decision-making of parents?
- What share of community funding should be allocated to education and subsidizing tuition?
- Can day-school costs be constrained or reduced?
- What is the appropriate level of community support for all the forms of Jewish education?
- How can we raise the funds needed to provide meaningful relief and achieve better outcomes?

I support the call for a summit to come together and examine Jewish education in all its future possibilities. But this should be a process and not a one-shot event. It will take preparation to put facts and not just opinions on the table. I call on UJA Federation of Greater Toronto to take up the challenge and create the serious, inclusive and fact-based process we need to answer the hard questions.

Jeffrey Stutz
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

Israel treated wounded Syrians

One has to be proud of the Israel Defence Forces soldiers who brought the seven wounded Syrians into Safed's Ziv Medical Center for treatment on Feb. 16. Perhaps, when they sufficiently recover from their wounds, might I suggest they be taken to the school in Ma'alot, some 35 kilometres away, where in 1972, 22 Israeli Jewish schoolchildren on a school trip from Safed were massacred by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. I am sure this experience for them will be, one hopes, a fitting conclusion to their brief visit to Israel.

Alan L. Simons
Toronto

Doctor-assisted suicide

I was dismayed by Norma Baumel Joseph's column, "Death with dignity," (Feb. 7), against doctor-assisted suicide. I am a social worker who initiated Jewish Family & Child's Jewish Hospice Program in Toronto in 1993 and co-ordinated it for 13 years. The hospice program consists of a multi-disciplinary team of social workers, doctors, trained volunteers and a rabbi. Our mandate was at the beginning – and still is in its continuation today – to help people die in the comfort of home with family and friends. During my tenure as the hospice's co-ordinator, I worked with 1,300 dying people and their families. My experience taught me that most people value life to the last minute and do not ask for assisted suicide. On the other hand, there is a minority of people whose suffering is so great that they beg for help to die. I do not call doctor-assisted suicide "dying with dignity." I call it relief from unbearable suffering.

Sheila May Walker
Toronto

Israel's water worries

Please refrain from printing headlines such as "Israel's water worries are over" (Feb. 7). That's irresponsible and damaging reporting, and pure nonsense. Our water issues are at the forefront of our national agenda.

Joe Halpert
Bet Shemesh, Israel

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We need a nuanced view of antisemitism in Germany

Mark Webber

Antisemitism in Germany is a subject that never loses its currency. In 2012, the topic gave rise to some welcome light – including a major parliamentary report on antisemitism and a provocative analysis of intolerance, prejudice, and discrimination in Europe, by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation – but also considerable heat.

The discussions, like the phenomenon itself, are stubborn and ongoing. But the events that attracted the most attention in the past year were, in addition to the physical attack on a rabbi in Berlin last August, literary and legal. Last April, Nobel Prize winner Günter Grass published the poem *What Must Be Said*, singling out Israel as a "danger to world peace." In May, a lower court in Cologne held that religiously mandated circumcision of boys, even with their parents' consent, was a criminal offence (the equivalent of assault causing bodily harm). In November, as the German version of Tuvia Tenenbom's *I Sleep in Hitler's Room* was about to appear, a hue and cry, including the usual slurs, arose about the author's putative prejudice against Germans. And just at year's end, the Simon Wiesenthal Center named German journalist and publisher Jakob Augstein one of the 10 worst antisemites of the year worldwide. All of these incidents provoked attention and ongoing debate inside and outside the country.

Last month, these public flashpoints, but also the less visible, underlying issues and problems of anti-Jewish attitudes and actions, in Germany and Europe, were the subject of a two-day conference on "Antisemitism Today" organized by the Office for Civic Education of Ontario's partner state in Germany, Baden-Württemberg. The conference was attended by some 90 scholars, teachers, teacher-trainers, memorial site educators, antiracism interveners, police officers and experts on political extremism of all stripes.

As the only non-European at the conference, and as someone professionally active in the field of registering, analyzing and countering antisemitism, I am both encouraged and disturbed by what my latest visit to Germany brought to light.

First the good news: there is no shortage of well-informed and alert Germans of all ages who are informed about the history and present state of antisemitism in their country, and who are determined to (1) prevent it to the extent possible, and (2) respond resolutely whenever it does manifest itself.

Now the bad news: there is also no shortage of occasions that demand precisely this special combination of knowledge, skill, and commitment.

Not that antisemitism is any more widespread in Germany than elsewhere in Europe. In fact, statistics presented at the conference indicate that Germany is not a European "leader" in antisemitic attitudes. But there is no doubt that it exists there and has pernicious effects for society in general and Jews in particular.

The public episodes, disturbing as they are, are less important than the "everyday antisemitism" that lurks beneath the surface, occasionally rising to visibility. On the other hand, these very public "scandals" provide ample and necessary opportunities to reflect on the shape and extent, as well as the causes of and possible responses to, antisemitism in Germany and elsewhere.

In Canada, we sometimes assume that antisemitism in Germany is primarily a continuation of National Socialist policies and practices. This assumption and Tenenbom's book notwithstanding, the threat of a "Fourth Reich" is, given Germany's vibrant democracy, not even a remote possibility.

Two women in Berlin stroll through the memorial for the Holocaust. The author states that "secondary" antisemitism arises in Germany today from the desire to keep feelings of guilt for the Holocaust at bay. ***[RNS photo]***

Far more prevalent today is a distinctive kind of "reactive" antipathy to Jews that is captured in the oft-quoted quip: "We can never forgive the Jews for what we did to them." This "secondary" antisemitism arises, in other words, from the desire to keep feelings of guilt for the Holocaust at bay. There are important demographic differences – by age group and background (including whether one grew up in the former "East" or "West" Germany) – in the prevalence of this kind of antisemitism. Nevertheless, secondary antisemitism seems to be a greater problem in Germany today than "primary" antisemitism (which nonetheless remains an issue).

The debates on the putatively antisemitic content of the writings of Augstein and Grass illustrate another main facet of current German antisemitism: its connection to Israel and the Middle East conflict. In Germany as elsewhere, the debate is often (mis-)framed as an issue of "censorship versus free speech," as in: "It must be legitimate to criticize injustice etc. wherever it occurs." Of course, nobody knows this better than Israelis, who are not reticent about expressing their conflicting opinions on their country's policies and practices.

But as one of the experts at the conference, Prof. Andreas Zick of the University of Bielefeld, argued, Israel-critical attitudes in Germany are often associated with aspects of "primary" and/or "secondary" antisemitism as well as with one or more of the following sentiments he categorizes as antisemitic: (1) denying Israel's right to exist and defend itself; (2) applying a double standard to Israel and/or obsessing on the country's perceived failings; (3) attributing responsibility for Israel's policies and actions to all Jews collectively; (4) applying antisemitic stereotypes to Israel, especially comparisons with Nazi Germany (or, I would add, apartheid South Africa).

And here is the main point: the analyses of Zick and his colleagues indicate that while just under 20 per cent of Germans who criticize Israel are free of antisemitic motives, the large majority of those whose responses are critical of Israel also hold attitudes considered indicative of antisemitism.

Of course, Zick is talking about responses to questionnaires, not actual instances of editorials, poems, or political speeches, or utterances or actions in public or private. In these cases, it is essential to think about and analyze the particular incident, content, statement, speaker, audience, and intention before deciding whether antisemitism is present. This applies also to the writings of Grass and Augstein. For example, a number of prominent members of the German Jewish community have criticized the Wiesenthal Center's branding Augstein as one of the world's worst antisemites, arguing that the U.S.-based Wiesenthal Center is not sufficiently informed about how public debate is conducted in German and in Germany and is too ready to "play the antisemitism card."

The cases of Augstein and Grass, and the circumcision debate, point to the need to understand the specific context as well as to the prominence of "left-wing" or "enlightened" prejudices against Israel and/or Jewish tradition and practice.

Although the circumcision verdict arose in the context of Muslim practice, the debate quickly switched to a primarily Jewish issue when it became apparent that prohibiting brit milah would make it impossible for many Jews to continue to live Jewish lives in Germany. The German government wasted no time in signalling its intention to introduce a bill expressly allowing circumcision for religious reasons, and in December 2012, the Parliament passed such a law with the support of 75 per cent of its members.

Yet according to surveys, the new law is very unpopular. Part of the opposition comes from those who don't like Muslims or Jews or both, or from those who, for whatever reasons, resent granting these minority groups "special accommodations." But a not inconsiderable part of the opposition, in Parliament and in the general public, originates from certain segments of the political left, including some intellectuals who consider all forms of religious belief and practice (including both the brit milah and shchitah) to be outdated and repugnant superstition, anathema to logic and reason, and, by extension, undemocratic.

Antisemitism in Germany, as elsewhere, is a complex phenomenon stemming from a multiplicity of factors and expressing itself in a variety of forms. It comes from the right and the left, from the uneducated and educated, from Christians, Muslims, atheists and occasionally Jews. And the prevention and remedies are correspondingly varied and complicated.

The fact that antisemitism is so often in the German news, that it can always be counted on to create headlines and controversy, should not be taken to mean that it is more widespread, or more dangerous, in Germany than elsewhere. In fact, it is encouraging that this is not only is the case, but also that antisemitism is rejected, challenged and actively opposed by so many.

But as the conference also made clear, it is necessary to do still more to prevent, expose, and actively oppose antisemitism in all its manifestations. This can only happen on the basis of expertise and commitment. And ensuring that these tools are available requires continuing support of all kinds from government and civil society. This was one of the main appeals emanating from the conference.

Antisemitism is a persistent and worrisome fact of life in Germany and the rest of Europe. Germany's history of National Socialism means that antisemitic attitudes and actions there will always be subject to special scrutiny. But we in North America should resist rushing to level generalized and ill-informed accusations against "the Germans" today. That would be neither accurate nor fair. And it could distract us from our own considerable problems with homegrown antisemitism in Canada.

Mark Webber is an emeritus professor of German studies at York University, where he was the founding director of the Canadian Centre for Germans and European Studies and co-initiator of the Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education. For his contributions to mutual understanding between Canadians and Germans, and between Jews and non-Jews, he was awarded the German equivalent of the Order of Canada.

Let's give Canadian Forces veterans more respect

In parshat Ki Tisa, Moses is instructed to take a census of the males aged 20 and older. In days gone by, a census was taken for two purposes: to levy taxes and to register an army. In Moses' day, an army came together for a current war, then returned to civilian life, until the next time.

Today, the Canadian Forces consists of volunteers who serve fixed tours of duty. We demand that they risk their lives in our defence and, at other times, the defence of people far, far away, hence their presence in Afghanistan. What does that mean for our soldiers? Why volunteer to do it? What happens to them there? And what becomes of those soldiers when they return home?

Jean M. Gerber

in Vancouver

I asked those questions of a young man, Vancouver's Avi Barzelai, who recently returned from two tours in Afghanistan.

First, why did he enlist? "A personal decision," he explained. "I wanted to serve my country and do something different!"

Both tours had a very positive effect on his life today. Barzelai served the first term as a "grunt" with the infantry. The combat zone was rife with the threat of small-arms fire and more sinister and hidden daily encounters with IEDs, hidden explosives buried in roads, hidden in vehicles and strapped to the bodies of suicide bombers. All in all, it's a tense work environment, to say the least.

"Afghanistan is one big minefield," Barzelai says. "Leftovers from the Russians, the Taliban, just everybody. Also the enemy knows when we're coming."

On his second tour, Barzelai served as a helicopter door-gunner – that is, inside an open door behind a machine gun. It gave him a better view of the enemy and a whole different perspective on the conflict.

Helicopters escort other aircraft and can spot the enemy planting IEDs or planning ambushes. "We could look into the compounds where families live, see women doing the washing. You can't see that on the ground."

But the closest connections troops made with Afghans came on foot patrols. While the Canadians travelled with interpreters, it was "more about presence, assessing body language," Barzelai says.

"Afghans are very practical. They are watching to see who wins."

"Our best connections were with the kids," he says. "They are amazing, very resilient. It was no problem to establish connections. They liked the uniforms and the guns. They were hilarious, lots of fun, running in little wolf packs, boys and girls together, until the girls are 12 or 13 – then they cover up."

That's the why, where, how. But now soldiers are returning from Afghanistan. What happens next?

Barzelai has an answer.

"Returning soldiers are essentially on their own. Canada is completely unprepared for them. The skills they learned in the Forces are not recognized – for example, medics have training in trauma care, but have to start from scratch when they come home. For a combat soldier, the return is even harder."

They can't even readily qualify for security work.

In short, they often can't find a decent job, and there's little government help (unlike in the United States) in job retraining, education or skills recognition.

Post-traumatic stress "is a big problem," Barzelai says.

So he's started a construction company, Veteran's Contracting Canada, that will employ former soldiers.

"They've learned leadership, discipline and teamwork, and they'll show up, do a good job on a reno and work together. Returning soldiers have great potential to show positive results for Canada."

It's a soldiering family. Barzelai's brother has made aliyah to Israel and served in the Israel Defence Forces. Our community feels great pride and ownership in the IDF and those who serve in it, yet we're usually surprised when we hear of Jewish recruits in the Canadian Forces. Let's correct our attitudes and embrace both ways of service.

Talking with Barzelai, I realized that in both countries, the military isn't just about winning spectacular battles – which can be followed by a lot of disappointment – but in serving a country with pride. It's also about coming back to a country that values the service and wants to continue to support its soldiers. In Canada, we may have a long way to go in this regard. Here is one young man determined to make that happen.

We need to show how it's awesome

I hear the word "awesome" a lot these days, especially from my students. Yet I wonder if they truly mean it or use it in its full significance. What makes something full of awe for us? It can either be awe-full or awful, something worthy of wonderment or dread. Diametrically opposite meanings from the same word – it all depends on how we deploy it. Language is so expressive, yet often so misused.

I sound like an old fogey in this rant, yet it worries me this frequent overuse of awesome. I fear it signals the opposite of the plain meaning of the word. Rather than being awed, it betrays our inability to be impressed, or, more importantly, reverential. Overuse depreciates the events referred to. Calling everything awesome yields a world in which nothing is truly worthy of our amazement.

How can we educate a generation that watches so much TV and plays so many video games with sharp wizardry icons and impossibly glitzy technical interchanges to see the complex natural world around them, to be awed by it and to revel in its magnificence?

How can we show students the incredibly multifaceted story of history and expect them to get excited by revealing their own origins within these narratives?

How can we delve into social and cultural diversities and expose them to the wonder of human growth and their own potential?

These are the awesome wonders of life. But they find us all so boring. Students, children and even adults are too easily and often bored. They do not see the awe-inspiring events that surround us.

Life is often challenging, but is it boring? It shouldn't be. We shouldn't allow our children to think that way. That word should be banned.

In the group of prayers called *Hallel*, there is a section that speaks in part to these concerns. It frames the perspective of the awesome. "This is from God; it is wondrous in our eyes. This is the day God has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." For the believer, the notion that the wondrous comes from the Divine Power enhances one's sense of appreciation and endows the moment with greater gratitude, creating a need to celebrate, to express joy. In other words, a full sense of astonishment will involve joy. So if we develop appropriate use of the word awesome, if we frame it within contexts of applied great phenomenon, then there will emerge a sense of delight rather than this ennui that pervades our culture.

We are now in that time span between Purim and Passover, when Jewish history is full of remembrance and celebration. Challenging us to remember and forget, it's anything but boring. Confusing maybe, overloaded for sure. Stimulating and perplexing, there's so much here that we're tempted to just let it go. But we do that at our own risk. There is a treasure trove of Jewish awesome data. The difficult part is to look it up and learn about it.

Norma Baumel Joseph

in Montreal

Yet how do we retell the story over and over again without being boring? How do we repeat the rituals again and again without tedium? That challenge is ours. The very nature of ritual is in the repetition of an act, and through that recurrence, we allow something new to occur. The familiar isn't boring. It's in this repetitious moment that we're able to delve deeper into new meanings and find the truly awesome. Each telling unmasks new interpretations and applications.

But we need to study and prepare in order to be able to reveal and demonstrate the inspiring messages. Adults can't avoid their role in this chapter of our history. In order to meet the demands of awesomeness, we all, parents and teachers, must investigate the potential of our heritage. There are wondrous things in this world. It's up to us to constantly walk on that that path, renewing the narrative of awe to its most challenging pillar. At that point, we'll be using our words carefully and correctly, remembering, celebrating and being inspired by and awed by the wondrous.

This world we live in is easily spoiled. With difficulty, it can be protected and enhanced. By our efforts, it can be made more awesome!

Civil war in Syria reaches a stalemate

When the historic Arab Spring revolts erupted in December 2010, Syria seemed immune to the internal rebellions rocking and destabilizing the Arab world.

As uprisings protesting the status quo toppled authoritarian regimes in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and sent tremors through such countries as Yemen, Jordan and Bahrain, Syria appeared safely removed from the escalating turmoil.

Syrian President Bashar Assad was brashly confident he could weather the storm, telling an American journalist in a *Wall Street Journal* interview in January 2011 that the conditions that gave rise to the unrest – despotism, corruption and economic stagnation – were not present in Syrian society.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Famous last words.

By March of 2011, a swelling tide of revolutionary fervour had swept into Syria, washing away self-deluding assumptions that long-suffering Syrians, weary of the heavy hand of dictatorship, were not psychologically prepared to challenge the legitimacy of Syria's deeply entrenched Baathist regime.

Two years on, borne along by a surge of dissatisfaction and anger with a government haughtily intolerant of dissent and barely responsive to the call for reform, the people of Syria have spoken in unison and risen up in mass revolt.

The uprising began peacefully enough, with Syrians demanding changes that, if sincerely implemented, might have transformed Syria into something of a functioning democracy.

In demonstrations that unfolded initially in towns and cities outside the capital, Damascus, Syrians urged Assad to enact measures to eliminate appalling abuses of power, promote human rights, uproot an endemic culture of cronyism and provide jobs for a growing army of unemployed and underemployed youth.

Assad, a member of the Alawite minority, responded ambivalently.

Backed by the army, security services, the Sunni merchant class and Christians, the pillars of his support system, he introduced cosmetic reforms. He replaced cabinet ministers, tweaked the repressive one-party state he had inherited from his father, Hafez, who died in 2000, and promised to unveil a new constitution.

But in what proved to be an egregious error, he ordered the police force to fire on protesters, killing scores of them in ugly confrontations that revealed the true face of the regime and now exposes it to charges of war crimes.

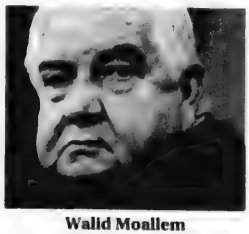
With the casualties piling up, Assad and his advisers confidently assumed that a strong show of firepower would act as a deterrent and defuse the demonstrations.

But on the second anniversary of the Syrian revolt, Assad's strategy has been a resounding failure. Fighting has greatly intensified and Syria has been plunged headlong into a destructive civil war.

By last week, more than 70,000 Syrians had been killed, two million had been internally displaced and 800,000 had fled into neighbouring countries, particularly Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, creating a catastrophic refugee crisis.

The increasingly sectarian struggle, which already has affected adjacent nations in material ways, pits a desperate regime intent on survival against a politically diverse and fragmented alliance embodied in the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, which was formed several months ago at the urging of pro-rebel western powers like the United States, Britain, Germany and France.

Bashar Assad



Walid Moallem

In an attempt to crush the uprising, which has spread into major cities such as Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Damascus, Assad has deployed heavy military equipment from tanks and artillery to missiles and airpower.

As he clings to office, denouncing his opponents as terrorists and foreign agents, Assad acts as if the Syrian people are the enemy to be vanquished.

The rebels, supported by regional countries ranging from Turkey and Qatar to Saudi Arabia and Egypt, have made impressive gains.

They have bombed Baathist citadels, assassinated important government figures and even lobbed mortars at Assad's presidential palace. They have also captured urban neighbourhoods, swaths of rural territory, border posts, military bases, dams and the site of Syria's nuclear reactor, obliterated by Israel in an air raid in September 2007.

Backed by Russia, China, Iran and Hezbollah, Assad has ferociously fought back with all the means at his disposal, even as some key loyalists have defected in an embarrassing blaze of publicity.

Defectors include the former prime minister, Riad Hijab, who has compared Assad to Nazis, and Manaf Tlass, a brigadier-general and adviser whose father, Mustafa, was defence minister for 30 years.

The fighting has left many towns in ruins and ground into a bitter stalemate. No less a person than Syria's vice-president, Farouk al-Sharaa, has acknowledged the impasse, having admitted that the army cannot defeat the rebels.

By the same token, the rebels will not be able to overthrow the regime unless they receive military assistance from western powers.

A procession of Arab League and United Nations mediators have tried in vain to stop the bloodshed.

The most ambitious effort was mounted in 2012 by Kofi Annan, the UN's former secretary-general, who presented a six-point plan under which hostilities would immediately cease within the framework of a ceasefire.

Assad accepted the truce, as did the rebels, but it collapsed in a welter of bad faith and recriminations, prompting Annan to resign and pin the blame on both the regime and the rebels.

Annan's successor, Lakhdar Brahimi, the former minister of Algeria, has been sidelined into irrelevance, too. Having declared that Assad must relinquish power and cannot be part of a solution, Brahimi has been denounced by the regime as being "flagrantly biased."

Two months ago, after saying he would never leave Syria, Assad categorically rejected the idea of negotiating with the rebels. But last week, for the first time, Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem said his government is ready to conduct talks with the armed opposition. The rebels are apparently willing to join the discussions, but only if Assad is not a party to a final settlement.

In the meantime, with the fighting raging on, Brahimi has warned that Syria is being destroyed "bit by bit."

If the violence does not subside, Syria, as France's foreign minister recently suggested, could fall to militant Islamic groups, thereby creating an immense problem for neighbours such as Israel, Lebanon and Jordan.

Should the civil war continue for considerably much longer, Syria could well disintegrate into warring sectarian fiefdoms, with incalculable consequences for every country in the Middle East.

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2006	10.3%	2011	8.2%

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ROMSPEN

Rabbis to pay tribute to David Hartman

A taste of late scholar's teachings on March 11

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Eight Toronto rabbis will offer a taste of what they learned from Rabbi David Hartman at a March 11 event at Beth Tzedec Congregation to commemorate Rabbi Hartman's shloshim.

The founder of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, Rabbi Hartman died Feb. 10 after a long illness. He was 81.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Rabbi Hartman led Montreal's Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem from 1960 until he made aliyah in 1971. In addition to his work at the institute, which he named in memory of his father, Rabbi Hartman was a professor of Jewish thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for more than 20 years.

In a sermon following Rabbi Hartman's death, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, organizer of the evening and Beth Tzedec's senior rabbi, spoke of Rabbi Hartman's "personal passion and intellectual vigour."

He also said that, in recent years, Rabbi Hartman – who was ordained at Yeshiva University, which is modern Orthodox – became "more pointed in his criticism of the exclusionary Orthodox and an articulate advocate for moderate religious innovation, particularly in relationship to women in Judaism… In seminars and lectures one could feel David's pain that his ideas had not gained a sufficient foothold in Orthodoxy."

Rabbi Hartman was involved in "serious and sustained dialogue" with Diaspora Jewish leaders, Israeli politicians and army commanders seeking ethical guidance, as well as high school students, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl added in his sermon.

Rabbi Hartman's former students who are taking part in the event at Beth Tzedec include rabbis Frydman-Kohl, Martin Berman, Edward Elkin, Elyse Goldstein, Howard Morrison, John Moscowitz, Yossi Sapirman, and Shalom Schachter.

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl told *The CJN* that all the presenters either studied at the Hartman Institute or had a longstanding relationship with Rabbi Hartman. Their presentations will be limited to between 4 and 5 minutes each.

The event, which starts at 8 p.m., is called Rabbi David Hartman: Torah in Tribute and Memory. Topics include "Can Halachah be immoral?" (Rabbi Berman), "Pushing the Halachic envelope for women" (Rabbi Goldstein), and "Klal Yisrael: Religious pluralism and conversion" (Rabbi Morrison).

Rabbi David Hartman

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said the evening will reflect "the many different facets" of Rabbi Hartman's thoughts, and offer insight into a scholar who "had such an influence on Jewish life in the Diaspora and Israel."

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"I felt really special reading from the Torah in front of everyone. I had been practicing for so long and felt confident to be up there. I was proud when I looked up from the Torah and saw everyone looking at me with a smile."

- Shelev, 13, a student at CHW Hadassim School and Youth Village who participated in the Bar Mitzvah Program, which is offered to at-risk youth.

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A MOTHER'S DREAM
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"I have struggled to support my children and provide them with the best education possible. My dream has been to teach them about their Jewish roots. I never thought that I would see my child travel to Poland and witness our Jewish history first-hand. Thank you CHW!"

- Mirit, mother of a grade 11 Netanya High School student participating in the March of the Living

Israel and Golda Koschitzky
Centre for Jewish Studies
at York University
המרכז ללימודי היהדות

The Face of the Ghetto: Pictures by Jewish Photographers from the Lodz Ghetto, 1940 — 1944

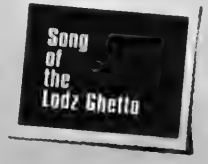
February 24-March 17, 2013

The Law Library, Osgoode Hall Law School of York University
Hours: Monday—Thursday 8am-10pm
Friday 8am-5pm
Saturday—Sunday 10am-6pm

Although the Nazis forbade Jews in the Lodz Ghetto to possess cameras, a few Jewish photographers were commissioned to document the efficiency of Ghetto labour. At their own initiative and at personal risk, they took thousands of photographs that reflect the efforts of ghetto inhabitants to maintain their dignity and culture in unspeakably harsh circumstances.

Assembled by the Topography of Terror Foundation in Berlin and mounted at the United Nations in New York, the exhibition will be complemented by a series of lectures, films and panels.

Voices and Images from the Lodz Ghetto
Film and Discussion Program
Sunday, March 10, 2013



2pm – Film: **"Photographer"**
Discussion led by Professor Mark Webber, York University

4:00pm – **Intermission and Reception**
Sponsored by the Consulates General of Poland and Germany

4:30pm – Film: **"Song of the Lodz Ghetto"**
Comments and Discussion with David Kaufman, Film Director

The exhibition, reception, films and discussions are free of charge and open to the public.

Parking passes provided for Nelson Road Parking Lot.

The exhibition and lecture are cosponsored by Osgoode Hall Law School; the Azrieli Foundation; and the Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education – Learning from the Past, Teaching for the Future. The reception is sponsored by the Consulates General of Poland and Germany.

For further information and directions:
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Moshe Joseph at his store, Aleph Bet Judaica *[Carolyn Blackman photo]*

Judaica store celebrates 25 years

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

On the 25th anniversary of his business, the owner of Aleph Bet Judaica says he feels like he doesn't work.

Originally from Israel, Moshe Joseph, a husband and father of three, moved from Montreal after buying the store in 1987.

"I've come to the store every day since, but I'm not working, I'm enjoying every minute," he said.

Joseph, 57, met his wife, who is from Montreal, while she was on an ulpan in Israel. He worked at Rodals Judaica in Montreal, and when the opportunity arose to buy this store, located on Bathurst Street south of Wilson Avenue and formerly known as Zucker's, the family moved.

"The 25 years have flown by. I love the customers, the products and the atmosphere," he said.

His day starts early. "I come to the store, eat breakfast, look at the news in Israel, call my parents in Israel [his father works in the store when he visits] and then open up. It is a routine I don't change."

There's no secret to the success of his business, he said. "We're friendly here, so people like coming in. There is always Israeli music playing, there is a lot of choice in books and Judaica, and the prices are good."

A member of the Iraqi Jewish Association, which holds services in the Sephardic Kehila Centre, Joseph said he carries books for every denomination.

If a customer is looking for a product that's not in the store, he's happy to order it, he said.

Looking back on his 25 years in business, Joseph said Judaica stores are not what they used to be.

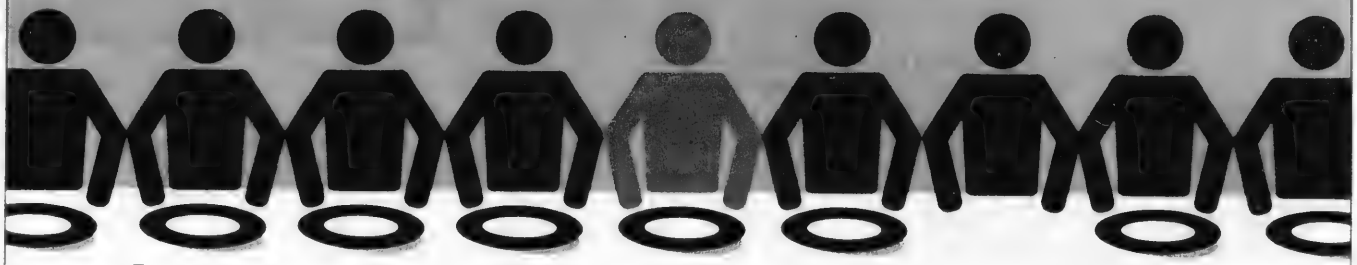
"These stores used to be the only place to buy Judaica and Jewish books. Now, [the items] are available online or even in supermarkets," he said.

"When customers come in here, though, they get the personal touch. They can ask questions, get advice, and shop in an Israeli atmosphere. It's a different feeling.

"Mine is a life-cycle store. Many customers have grown up with me. They've bought wedding, bar mitzvah, housewarming and baby presents, and these are items that are rooted in Judaism."

THE GLOBAL SEDER TO FIGHT HUNGER

United Jewish Appeal



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Volunteer nominated for international award

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Daniel Freiman's love of sports and social media has contributed to the 26-year-old's nomination, along with nine other international volunteers, for an International Volunteer of the Year Award.

Daniel Freiman volunteered as a physical education teacher in a Kenyan school.

The selection committee chose the 10 candidates from 20,758 volunteers from around the world.

Freiman received the nomination from the International Volunteer Head Quarters (IVHQ) for his volunteer work as a physical education teacher in a school in Kenya, where his students were orphans and children from the slums of Nairobi.

He said sports are the gateway to opportunities. "Without sports, I would be a different person. You learn perseverance and teamwork," he added. "It is especially important for kids who don't have parents in their background, to learn the skills of life."

To create enthusiasm for sports at the Kenyan school, Freiman made a sports video of the children re-enacting Game 6 of the 1986 World Series, with the original voice of the sportscaster.

He originally intended just to give the children a CD of the video, and he planned to send the video to his family and a few friends.

But "it went viral on YouTube," he said. "In a short time, thousands of viewers around the world had viewed the video."

He then decided to capitalize on the video's overwhelming success. "I decided to raise funds for the Grace Care Centre [home to more than 200 orphans] in Kenya," he said, "as I knew [that having] a sports field would make a difference for the 215 or more disadvantaged students who go to the school."

Recently, Freiman, with the help of his brother, David, created a second re-enactment video – one of a basketball game featuring Larry Bird's famous game-winning steal from the 1987 NBA playoffs.

The videos are on the *Deadspin*, *Grantland*, the *Huffington Post* and the *Toronto Star* websites, and they have been picked up by *ESPN*.

He said that in order to complete the playing field in Kenya, he has partnered with a Canadian organization, Lift the Children.

To date, they have raised $24,000. They require $56,000 to purchase the field and cover construction costs.

Freiman attended Bialik Hebrew Day School and the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, and he received his undergraduate degree, in business, at the University of Western Ontario. He's working toward an MBA at the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University in Toronto.

He said that for generations his family has been supporters of Jewish and Israeli causes.

"I love Israel and have been there many times," he said. "I chose Kenya because I wanted to have a different experience. Recently, I was volunteering in Costa Rica."

Freiman said that the baseball and basketball videos have been viewed more than 400,000 times in over 60 countries.

To watch the videos, visit YouTube and search for "1986 World Series Game 6… in Kenya" and "1987 NBA Playoff… in Kenya."

Voting for the Volunteer of the Year is open until March 15. To vote, visit www.volunteerhq.org.

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Navigating the causes of divorce

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 31 years

The day is not so young yet but, we,

Brief sparkles in His eye,

So ignore the Wonder from whence we came

And the Dust to where we'll Wander,

Oh dear Raven, where have you gone?

Go find My Children among the cell phone chips

Tell them: We left you in the Flood.

What causes divorce? People ask me this all the time. After 31 years of practising family law, you think I might have some idea. Oh, there are many wise people who think they know, especially those who have gone through it or know someone who has.

Both women and men can go astray and many cannot forgive. Spouses change and grow apart. Many become mentally or physically ill and certain partners cannot deal with such changes easily. Empty nesters who separate often well into their retirement years are becoming increasingly numerous, especially when the only tie that kept the bond together was the kids. Even newlyweds suddenly discover an undisclosed illness or addiction, and poof, it's over.

We didn't always live in an age of disposable marriages. Divorce used to be an embarrassment: it was understood that couples "worked things out" for the good of their children or the family's honour, if for no other reason. Now children often grow up with parents who practise serial monogamy, with a new partner every few years or even a few months. For those of under 40, it may be hard to believe that there used to be more of a moral stigma about divorce that just doesn't quite sting as much anymore.

Now that relationships are as disposable as socks, what's the big deal? How many people do you know who darn their socks anymore? Most simply say, "Just move on and get a life."

Aside from religious inhibitions, part of that stigma was that one or the other spouse simply didn't try hard enough to make the relationship work. (I'm not referring here to clearly abusive relationships.) Society used to frown on breakups. Now we've become so accustomed to them that after a few whispers and temporary shock, the gossip ends after a few minutes, no matter who did what to whom (or didn't) and why.

This change of attitude is reflected in the change in Canada's divorce laws a few decades ago. Most people don't realize that when spouses separate and go before a Family Law judge, the law of Canada that he or she applies has become morally blind. It's normally indifferent to the causes or reasons a marriage runs into trouble.

Law of Canada indifferent to causes of divorce

The exceptions often have to do with how a parent relates towards his or her child, especially when both spouses are fighting over custody and access. As well, if a spouse is intentionally acting improperly with his or her funds to deprive the other of a fair share of the assets or income, the court may then intervene with "restorative" orders such as freezing assets, reapportioning their values in favour of the injured spouse, or even redirecting someone's pay cheque or other sources of income.

Moreover, all that a proven allegation of adultery gains an injured spouse is a much shorter waiting period to obtain a divorce order, but nothing else — no greater rights to property, children or support. So if a spouse wants a moral anchor, don' t look so much for it in Canada's Family Laws. Look elsewhere. Think about darning those socks.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzdlegal.com***
Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Iran is further ahead on nuclear bomb

The question about Iran's nuclear weapons program, which Iran denies it's pursuing, remains urgent despite an undeniable tedium to the seemingly endless and repetitive discussions in the media about what can be done to stop it.

Attention was refocused on this subject recently when talks between Iran and the "P5+1" – the five permanent UN Security Council members: the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China, plus Germany – ended after two days in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Feb. 27.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Iran came away from the negotiations pleased that the P5+1 members softened their previous demands, requiring that Iran only suspend, not shut down, operations at its deeply buried Fordo nuclear fuel enrichment site. In addition, Iran would be allowed to keep some stockpiles of 20 per cent enriched uranium – enough, that is, to be used to produce "medical isotopes."

Iran's Shahab-3 missile

Apparently, the idea behind the P5+1 concessions is to give Iran some face-saving measures that will allow it to compromise in turn, though no deadline was set, only a schedule for further talks over the next two months.

It would be a mild understatement to say that Israel remains skeptical about Iran's willingness to compromise in any meaningful way. Israel is convinced that Iran is simply stalling as it races ahead to develop capacity to build nuclear weapons. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said "there are no measures that will make Iran heed the demands of the international community aside from military sanctions against it."

Even that might be insufficient.

Netanyahu's skepticism is well founded. While Kazakhstan talks were underway, Britain's *Telegraph* disclosed "details of activity at a heavily guarded Iranian facility [at Arak] from which international inspectors have been barred for 18 months. [Satellite] images, taken earlier this month, show that Iran has activated the Arak heavy-water production plant." Heavy water is needed to operate a nuclear reactor that can produce enough plutonium for a bomb.

Having two options for making a bomb (uranium and plutonium) is critical, as Mitch Ginsburg explained in a fascinating story last summer in the *Times of Israel*. Ginsburg interviewed Uzi Even, a founder of Israel's nuclear reactor in Dimona. Currently a chemistry professor at Tel Aviv University, Even "has a history of being correct about foreign countries' nuclear capacities" according to Ginsburg.

Although a political dove, Even has no doubt whatsoever about Iran's determination to acquire a nuclear arsenal. He does not, however, favour an Israeli attack on Iran's facilities at this time. Still, his assessment of what Iran has already achieved is sobering. As Ginsburg reported: "Even believes that [Iran] has already, covertly, created the 20 to 25 kilograms of highly enriched uranium necessary to conduct a successful underground test. In other words, he believes Iran is already a nuclear power."

Even explained that moving from 20 per cent enriched nuclear to weapons-grade fuel "can be done underground [as at Fordo], in something the size of a storage room, and no one would know." This is what Iran has already accomplished, Even believes.

Nonetheless, it's one thing to have sufficient enriched fuel for a nuclear test and quite another to be able to deploy it as a weapon. That could take several more years.

The problem is one of weight. Ginsburg summarized Even thus: "A uranium warhead is at least five times heavier than a plutonium one. Creating a nuclear warhead and winnowing down the complex infrastructure necessary to detonate it effectively — to, say, the one-ton maximum payload of Iran's best ballistic missile, the Shahab-3" is currently beyond Iran's capability.

It's because of this problem that Iran is pursuing the plutonium option. Even explained that producing the plutonium needed for a single bomb would take one year from the time the plutonium-based reactor (in Arak) was operational. Last year, the IAEA knew that Iran planned to begin operating a plutonium-based reactor at Arak in the third quarter of 2013.

But if the information disclosed by the *Telegraph* is accurate, Iran has greatly accelerated its timetable.

While this should send alarm signals to the West, it appears that the West instead is playing into Iran's hands.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

An important development, says CIJA

Supreme Court: 'Not all truthful statements must be free from restriction'

Continued from page 3

The Supreme Court "narrowed the definition of actionable speech," said CIJA CEO Shimon Fogel.

"They confirmed that there's speech that leads to vilification and hatred of particular groups, which have to be protected, but they narrowed the definition of what constitutes that speech," Fogel said.

"I think it's an important development. We support the proposition that there are limits to free speech and there is a connection between physical harm directed against a particular community and language used to vilify them," he said.

A very different perspective was offered by *Sun News* broadcaster Ezra Levant.

"The Supreme Court of Canada has weakened freedom of religion and freedom of speech in favour of the counterfeit human right not to be offended," Levant told *The CJN*.

"This Supreme Court case is a dangerous step backwards for personal freedom, and it opens the door wider to the political abuse of Canada's erratic human rights commissions. The fact that three of the six judges in the case were Jewish is an extra disappointment for the Jewish and pro-Israel community that has recently been victimized by these censorship laws," Levant said.

"This ruling is like a starter pistol for a dozen more nuisance suits attacking writers like Mark Steyn and me for criticizing radical Islam – a view that could have pro-Israel activists hauled before courts for the crime of 'hate.'"

Levant, former publisher of the defunct *Western Standard* magazine, was brought before the Alberta Human Rights Commission in 2008 after he published pictures of the Islamic prophet Mohammed. He has been a fierce critic of human rights commissions and the legislation that establishes them.

Referring to the Whatcott case, he said, "This ruling is especially frightening, given that it confirms that traditional legal defences – like truth, fair comment, religious belief and public interest – do not apply to hate speech cases."

In the judgment, the Supreme Court addressed the argument that speech was being restricted, even though no actual harm or discrimination was demonstrable. "Such an approach ignores the particularly insidious nature of hate speech," the court ruled. "The end goal of hate speech is to shift the environment from one where harm against vulnerable groups is not tolerated to one where hate speech has created a place where this is either accepted or a blind eye is turned."

"A court is entitled to use common sense and experience in recognizing that certain activities, hate speech among them, inflict societal harms."

And in rejecting the defence of truthful expression, the court stated, "Not all truthful statements must be free from restriction. Truthful statements can be interlaced with harmful ones or otherwise presented in a manner that would meet the definition of hate speech."

Editorialists at Canada's influential newspapers were critical of the decision, with the *National Post* calling it "censorship by any other name." The *Toronto Star* stated that society should impose the fewest restrictions on free speech and that only courts, and not human rights tribunals, should sanction speech issues.

The *Globe and Mail* said the court had set dangerously vague standards by which to regulate speech and "the marketplace of ideas, not human-rights commissions, should be where bad ideas, even hateful ones (short of those advocating or inciting violence), are beaten back."

Despite supporting the decision, CIJA continued to call for changes to provincial human rights legislation. They should be amended to permit the awarding of costs to successful parties, to deter frivolous actions; the punitive aspect of the legislation should be removed and its educational aspect stressed; evidentiary rules need to change, and provincial attorneys general should consult and create a consistent approach to human rights in Canada, Fogel said.

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רפֿואה שלמה– שמכה סימכאָוויטשט

Best wishes for a speedy recovery
Simkhe Simkhovitch

איבער די לעצטע עטלעכע וואָכן איז שמכה סימכאָוויטשט, דער באַוווסטער פּאָעט, דזשערנאַליסט אַ פּערזאָן פֿון קרעדיט. ער איז שוין אין דער היים און מיר וויסן אים אַ רפֿואה שלמה.

פֿאַר מיר איז שמהה אַ וועג וויידער אין אַ פֿרייַנד. זיין קאָמענטאַר אויף די קאָלומס וואָס מיר שרייבן פֿאַרבינדט מיר מיט אַ מענטש פֿאַר וועמען יידיש איז די קרינשפּראַך פֿון זיין לעבן. זיין ליבע פֿאַר יידיש מאַכט עס גרינגער פֿאַר מיר אָנצוהאַלטן מאָמע לשון אין אָנטצוגיין מיט אונדער יידיש חינקל.

With this column I honour Simkhe Simkhovitch, a friend and mentor, for whom Yiddish and its poetry is the crown and glory of his life

יידיש

יידיש, קרוינשפּראַך פֿון מײַן לעבן,
לופֿט אין לשון פֿון מײַן אָטעם,
וואָס מער איך טובל זיך אין דײַנע קוואַלן,
אַלץ ריינער ווערט איך אין נשמהדיקער,
חי די שאָטנס מײַנע נאָענטע, הײַליקע
אין טרעבלינקער פֿלאַמפּײַער פֿאַרצוקט.
זייער שמייכל איז אין דיר, זייערע זיפֿצן,
זייערע טרימען אָפּגענאַרטע, זייערע טרערן
שײַנען וועלן אייביק ווי די שטערן
אויף דײַן לויטער־כּמאָטעם הימל, יידיש.
הימליש דײַן געזאַנג, וווּ אין די ספֿערעס
די סימפֿאָניע פֿון באַשאַף אין לעבן –
אַ געשאַנק נאָר איין מאָל דיר נעגעבן.
איך האָב פֿאַר דיר פֿאַרקנסט עס, נישט צו שיידן,
ס׳זאָל מײַן האַרץ אַ היים זײַן פֿאַר דײַן עלנט,
דײַן טרויער און שוויגקײט – אין מײַנע אינגעוויידן.

Yiddish – Crown and Glory

Yiddish, crown and glory of my life,
the very air of my breathing,
the more I immerse myself in your wellsprings
the more I am cleansed and purified,
closer to my dear holy shadows
in Treblinka's hellfire devoured.
Their smiles and sighs are in you,
their thwarted dreams, their tears
shine eternally like stars
in your cloud drenched firmament.
Exalted is your music –
a symphony of creation.
My life – a one time gift –
to you have I betrothed,
that my heart be a nest for your solitude,
with your sad beauty saturated.

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Holy mascara!

Rabbi David Rosenthal

Some things just don't seem to go together. Cream cheese and peanut butter; ice cream and codfish; bananas and tomato sauce. So in this week's parashah, I was a little taken aback when I read about the materials used to build the Holy Tabernacle.

When I think "cosmetics," I don't usually think "great gift for a shul."

Yet this is the image that greets us in the parashah this week. The women of the Jewish nation gathered together and donated their makeup mirrors for the construction of the Tabernacle. At first, Moses was reluctant to accept such seemingly mundane, and even materialistic, items. How could such objects of desire be used for such a holy enterprise?

Yet HaShem reprimanded Moses. "These are holy mirrors."

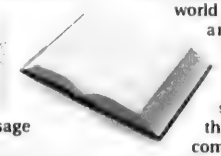
Why were they holy, you may ask?

At the time of the Egyptian enslavement of the Jewish people, one of the key strategies employed by the Egyptian task masters was to work the men so strenuously that at the end of the day, when they came home to their wives, the men would simply not have the energy or desire for procreation, leaving the Jewish people with no future offspring.

Seeing what was going on, the Jewish women gathered together to combat the situation. They proceeded to put on makeup and the like in order to pique the interest of their husbands. It was due to their efforts that at the end of their time in Egypt, the Jewish People still had significant numbers to their population.

Aside from taking a makeup course, what's the message for us today?

Rabbinic Reflections



At first glance, there seems to be things that are inherently good and things that are inherently bad. A Torah scroll is good. Marijuana is bad.

However, upon reflection, one realizes that the value of an object is determined solely by how we use it. In Judaism, unlike other religions, there is no such thing as categorically good or evil. Everything has the ability to either be uplifted or debased. Food can be used for the service of HaShem, or it can be used for the degradation of our lesser halves. Money can be used to help the needy or to gamble on a horse race. In fact, the greater the potential for corruption, the greater the ability for growth. That is why Judaism views the bedroom as the Holy of Holies, the area with the highest possible potential, for it there lies the greatest room for deprivation and misdirection.

Our mission as Jews is to take the world and all its components and use them in the highest possible way by directing them in meaningful pursuits. There's no such thing as neutral when it comes to this world. Either something is being used as a means to grow and better ourselves and the world, or it's not.

To bring it down to a more practical level, start paying attention to your own motivations. Ask yourself why you do what you do. The Jewish women in Egypt put on makeup in order to build the Jewish nation. What's *our* agenda? Where are *we* headed?

Rabbi David Rosenthal is director of outreach and development for Thornhill Woods Shul in Thornhill, Ont.

Investing in our children

Once again, the issue of day school tuition is in the news. Leo Baeck Day School in Toronto has announced plans for grants of up to $5,000 per child who commit to at least three years at Leo Baeck. Most appropriately, they have defined a middle class income for parents with three children at $350,000, which recognizes the fact that one must be very rich to afford a Jewish day school education.

When one considers that Statistics Canada recently announced that at $201,000, one joins the top one per cent of earners, we begin to realize the scope of the challenge we face if we want to be able to provide affordable day school education. So while the $5,000 is nice – and the anonymous donor who is funding this grant for Leo Baeck has set a wonderful example for others to emulate – considering that a Jewish education from preschool to Grade 12 costs more than $225,000 a child (in Toronto – it may be lower elsewhere), it's really a drop in the bucket.

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

I'd like to float another idea in the hope that others will take up the challenge to literally shape the future, in a most positive way, of the Jewish community. Imagine that as a "reward" for sending a child through Grade 8 to a Jewish day school, the community would give that child a free high school education. The advantages of such an approach include the facts that the biggest drop in day school enrolment occurs between grades 8 and 9, high school costs about 60 per cent more than elementary school, and research shows that the impact of four years of Jewish education during the adolescent years is much greater than even the 10 pre-high school years.

Funding such an initiative would cost approximately $40 million a year in Toronto. That sounds like a lot, but it's a fraction of the money raised for charity in the Jewish community in the city every year. Between federation support and fundraising initiatives already being undertaken by the schools, about $35 million is being raised annually. Doubling the amount raised would take some work, but with effort and some vision, it's definitely doable.

I call on those who either personally or through charitable foundations have net assets in excess of $25 million (and there are many more of these people than most of us realize) to allocate five per cent of their capital as a one-time investment in our children.

Parents would be asked to help by purchasing $750,000 in life insurance, the proceeds of which would fund the Jewish education of the grandchildren of today's students. With a high school education costing $100,000 or so, and life insurance premiums for a couple in their 40s costing approximately $70,000, with even only one child in high school, a family would save $30,000. Each additional child would bring about a full $100,000 in savings, so that a family with four children would save $330,000. While substantial, this should be the first step in a plan to eventually give Jewish children (and parents) what children around the world are entitled to: a free education.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Essays reflect values central to Rabbi Sacks' teaching

Views & Reviews

Martin Lockshin

It is a pleasure to note the publication in January of *Radical Responsibility: Celebrating the Thought of Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks*, edited by Michael J. Harris, Daniel Rynhold and Tamra Wright. The book consists of an introduction and afterword by the editors, and 13 impressive essays written by intellectuals, most of them modern Orthodox Jews. Every essay is worth reading, and I apologize in advance for the fact that I will not be able to mention all of them in this short review.

The book honours Rabbi Sacks who is celebrating his 65th birthday this week and will soon complete his term as chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth. He has discharged his duties as chief rabbi admirably, teaching a version of Orthodox Judaism that engages with modernity in a meaningful manner.

On a recent trip to Canada, Rabbi Sacks attracted large crowds who found his words eloquent and uplifting. His appearance here with the great Canadian public intellectual Prof. Charles Taylor, retired from McGill University, showed his commitment to pluralism, even to the point of engaging with sincere Christian intellectuals. Both Taylor and another Catholic thinker, Alasdair MacIntyre, have contributed essays to this volume.

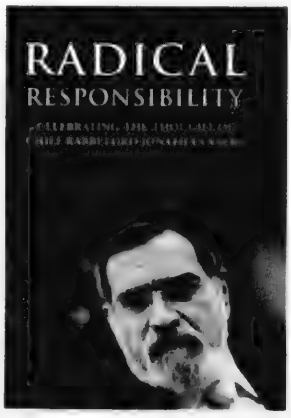
This new book honours Rabbi Sacks by reflecting many of the values that have been central to his teaching, and it does not shy away from honestly addressing some of the thornier tensions between western and Jewish values.

Prof. Michael Broyde's contribution raises the morally troubling distinction that Halachah (traditional Jewish law) makes between returning a lost item to a Jew or to a gentile, offering moral arguments for the distinction.

Prof. Joshua Berman addresses one of the more disturbing chapters of the Bible, Joshua Chapter 7, the story of Achan. Berman's essay begins by quoting a British Bible critic who wrote: "The story [of Achan] projects a portrait of a deity who is cruel, petty and vengeful... It is difficult to find within the story of Achan's sin any residual merit or moral lesson... [it exhibits] painful savagery." Berman's close reading of the chapter rises to the moral challenge, showing that the chapter promotes values with which modern people can identify.

A number of the essays in the book deal with human autonomy. Prof. Jacob J. Schachter's essay sets up the issue: we in the West live in a world that values human autonomy above almost every other value. We like to feel that the choices that we make on moral issues are "autonomous," i.e., that they come from within us. On the other hand, Halachah is often described as being based on "heteronomy," the belief that the way that I behave ought to be based on obedience to a source outside of me, specifically God who is commanding me to behave as He legislates, not the way that I feel to be correct. Schachter argues that the oft-discussed problem is really a false dichotomy as Halachah leaves room for and encourages autonomy in many ways.

Prof. David Shatz addresses the issue of the appropriate motivation for moral actions from a different angle. He builds his essay around a



question posed by Plato in *The Republic* about whether people who behave in what appears to be an altruistic manner are really motivated by a desire to help someone else or by the desire to make themselves look magnanimous. Shatz then shifts the argument about altruism to the field of Jewish thought: does Judaism have room for the idea of altruism when the concept of mitzvah, of doing something because God commanded it, is at Halachah's centre?

Two thoughtful but very different essays address the issue of tolerance and pluralism in religious thought. Both of them try to make sense of a line from the revised second edition of Rabbi Sack's controversial book, *The Dignity of Difference*: "Those who are confident in their faith are not threatened but enlarged by the different faith of others."

Prof. Menachem Kellner shows that, broadly speaking, classical Judaism had two schools of thought about the place of Jews and gentiles in the world. One school of thought, led by such thinkers as Judah Halevi (c. 1075-1141) and then further developed by Jewish mystics, saw Jews as being intrinsically superior to all other human beings and as being the ultimate purpose of God's plan on Earth. He contrasts Halevi's position with that of Moses Maimonides (1138-1204) who saw no intrinsic difference between Jews and non-Jews and who even saw Christianity and Islam as serving some positive purpose in the world (uncensored version of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah, Melachim* 11:4). Kellner admits that he goes beyond Maimonides' position in his own approach to pluralism. He points out that today science has advanced our comprehension of the world. We know that it consists of billions of people, of whom only a tiny number are Jews, and many of the gentiles "are no less moral and no less sophisticated than we are."

Accordingly, it becomes harder for Kellner to take seriously the claims of the Jewish camp led by Halevi that argued that "all that exists was created only so that God could reveal the Torah to Moses, in order that the Jewish People could live according to it in a small patch of real estate on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea."

Taylor explains what it means to have a positive attitude to the religious traditions of other faiths. He says that he learned from Rabbi Sacks that "one doesn't unite the different faiths by flattening out their doctrinal story into some core elements... This is what Jonathan Sacks has been telling us all along. This can come as news to us Christians, but as he argues, it doesn't to Jews."

Readers who want to see the best of modern Orthodox thought or who admire Rabbi Sacks and his kindred spirits will find *Radical Responsibility* a worthwhile and pleasurable read.

Dying with dignity is not giving up

'If the journey goes well, I feel like I've made a difference'

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The popular image of a doctor is of a healer who helps patients recover from whatever ails them.

That's also what they likely imagine for themselves when they enter medical school and later when deciding on the type of medicine they want to practice.

Yet even patients who have no chance of recovery need a physician to help them live out their lives with dignity.

Dr. Daphna Grossman

Often, doctors who work in palliative care began their careers with other plans, but can recall an incident or patient that inspired them to work in the field.

Dr. Daphna Grossman, a palliative care physician at Baycrest, remembers the exact moment she decided on her specialty.

"I was doing a fellowship in emergency medicine, and a man with metastatic lung cancer came in with cardiac arrest. While the [doctors] were pumping his chest, I thought to myself, 'This man should not be dying like this. He should be dying with dignity.' It was a light-bulb moment."

She said that if people truly understand their loved one's illness, they would be able to make a more informed decision about treatment.

"When people who are extraordinarily ill [come to emergency], should we aggressively try to bring them back, or should we let them live their life as best as possible and die [comfortably?]"

Grossman said that dying with dignity is not giving up.

"It is dying of a chronic illness. What do you want it to look like? Do you want [the patient] to die with tubes in a hospital bed, or be surrounded by family in comfortable surroundings?"

She said that patients in palliative care do receive antibiotics, if necessary, and drugs such as morphine might be used so they can breathe more easily. "We shift to comfort care. We deal with the symptoms, because we know we can't deal with the underlying condition. The trick is to understand when someone is dying, so when they die, they die comfortably."

Palliative Care

Second of a 3-part series

Most people tend to think of palliative care as end-of-life-care, she said, "but really, good care can be given at any point of an illness. End-of-life-care is end-of life care, but palliative care is more holistic. It is about symptom control at any point of an illness, and it can be in conjunction with acute care."

Dr. Adam Rapoport

Palliative care involves a multi-disciplinary approach, which includes a number of professionals, Grossman said.

"There are physicians, a geriatric psychiatrist, clergy – a rabbi or priest to make sure spiritual needs are met – a physiotherapist, a dietician, a swallow expert to teach the patient to swallow properly, and a recreationist."

Dr. Adam Rapoport, medical director of the pediatric advanced care team at the Hospital for Sick Children, is also a palliative care consultant at the Temmy Latner Centre for Palliative Care at Mount Sinai Hospital.

"I often ask myself how I stumbled into this field. [But] along the line, I have dealt with many children from birth to age 18 who have conditions that we could not cure," Rapoport said.

"Children with medical complexities are a growing population, and many who would have died 20 years ago are kept alive today through drugs, surgery and technology. Although they stay alive, though, their problems are not fixed. They are living longer with challenging symptoms."

Dr. Russell Goldman

When he first became exposed to these children, he said, "I realized that we had to give them as good a life as possible. I knew that we needed to add life to a child's time, not time to a child's life. They should not just be alive biologically, they should be enjoying their lives. That's what we try to bring to these children and their families," said Rapoport.

As opposed to end-of-life-care, he said, pediatric palliative care strives for early intervention. "We work with families and try to help them [address] symptoms and control pain. Few parents embrace the idea of end-of-life care. They fight the disease and make sure every day is as good as possible."

By integrating the philosophy of early intervention, he said, "we improve the lives of children and their families. As things begin to change, we can take more of a front seat."

When his medical team is involved early on, Rapoport said, families become familiar with the doctors and are able to trust them. "When things do begin to change, we do not have to begin a new relationship during that very difficult time."

Pediatric palliative care is much more about living than dying, he said. "It is all about how the family wants their children to live their lives."

He admitted that many of his colleagues find it difficult to work in his field. "They are in the business of saving lives, and they don't know how to help [these families]," he said.

"I realized that we have an obligation to be there, even if we can't make things better, so I dove in and got a master's of bioethics at University of Toronto. I started working at Temmy Latner, and then went to Sick Kids in 2011."

This work is clearly not for everyone, he said, "but for me it is extremely rewarding. There may be a sad outcome, but for me it is about the journey. If the journey goes well, then I feel like I've made a difference."

Community partners such as financial consultant Sonny Goldstein, have helped make his work easier, he said.

Goldstein, the founder and chair of Care for Kids (Toronto), raises money for palliative care programs.

"When I was president of Life Underwriters Association in 1991, we were looking to have a charitable giving arm, and one member told us that pediatric palliative care was in desperate need of money," he said.

"We had a campaign, eventually raised $25,000, and used it to send nurses on home visits. In 1993 we formed Care for Kids, and since then have raised about $500,000."

Dr. Russell Goldman, director of the Temmy Latner Centre, said that in 1992, when he was training in family medicine, he became interested in the court case of Sue Rodriguez, the British Columbia resident who had amotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, known as Lou Gehrig's disease) and petitioned the Supreme Court for the right to assisted suicide. She lost her case, but eventually was aided by an anonymous physician.

"This case got me thinking. It's not just about more time, it's about quality of life."

Sometimes the health-care team or the patients themselves are reluctant to discuss palliative care, he said. "We believe in communication. We're not here to dictate. We're here to help make decisions and to focus on comfort."

His centre, he said, provides in-hospital care and provides home care. Through the Max and Beatrice Wolfe Children's Centre, it also looks after children and their families.

"Our team provides home coverage for people with advanced progressive illnesses, and the team tries to keep the patients out of the [emergency room.] The physicians work with visiting nurses to monitor home care."

Goldman stresses that his work is not depressing. "I find it rewarding. I get the opportunity to meet people in the most intimate way. I also work with a great group of people."

Next week: Hospice workers and volunteers.

Miles Nadal JCC

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Members will be held at 750 Spadina Avenue in Room 318, on the the 8th day of April, 2013 at 8:00 o'clock in the evening to

a) Accept as Members of the Corporation those Members listed in good standing tabled and delivered by the Secretary of the Corporation;
b) Elect its Directors;
c) Approve the Financial Statements for the Corporation for the year ended August 31, 2012;
d) Appoint auditors and authorize the Directors to fix their remuneration
e) Ratify and approve all the acts, proceedings, transactions, commitments, contracts entered into, and undertakings given by or on behalf of the Corporation by the Board of Directors from the date of the last Annual General Meeting to the date hereof;
f) Transact such further and other business as may be properly brought before the meeting or any adjournments thereof.

Members of the Corporation may be nominated by written petition signed by not less than twenty-five (25) persons, who are members and eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting. The petitions must be accompanied by the written consent of the nominee and must be received by the Chairman of the Nominations Committee at least fifteen (15) days prior to the Annual Meeting, after which time no further nominations shall be accepted.

Proxy forms for those unable to attend the meeting may be obtained from the Business Office of the Corporation during business hours.

DATED the 28th day of February, 2013
BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
"Jodi Shanoff"
Secretary

UJA Federation

Olivia Varkul, with help from her friends, made security blankets as her bat mitzvah project.

Bat mitzvah creates security blanket for kids

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Preparing for your bat mitzvah is always a busy time – but it was even busier for 12-year-old Olivia Varkul, who decided to make hers more meaningful by doing a mitzvah project to commemorate the occasion.

"At our school, we're always taught to give back," said Olivia, who is in Grade 7 at Toronto Heschel School. "I thought I could do something nice for other people and recognize I'm really lucky to be having a bat mitzvah, and it's nice for other people who are less fortunate than me."

Since she always used to carry around a security blanket as a child, she was excited when she heard about Project Linus, an organization that makes homemade security blankets and donates them to seriously ill children. Since its founding in 1998, the project has delivered more than four million blankets to sick kids.

"I carried [my blanket] around all the time when I was really little," said Olivia. But rather than just donating a blanket, she wanted to make them herself – and include her family and friends. Fabricland donated the fabric, and the Sewing Studio in Toronto donated sewing instruction time. Olivia, along with 13 friends and her brother, went to the studio to learn how to make blankets from a piece of fabric. She'll be using them as centrepieces for her bat mitzvah in March and donating them afterward.

To learn how her project would directly affect ill children, Olivia went to Scarborough Hospital to see how the blankets are used in the child nursery there. "I thought it was cool because I was actually able to go to the hospital and I saw the blankets on all the incubators on the premature babies and saw them being put into use," she said. "Some of [the premature babies] weren't with their parents, so it's nice for them to have a little bit of colour compared to just the white flannel blankets that they have."

Olivia's eagerness to help others and turn her bat mitzvah into something more than just a party has impressed her entire family, especially her mother.

"This wasn't something that she was waking up and saying let's take on the world. She was very open to finding a project and working on it, and through the course, I've seen a lot of maturity and growth in her," said Olivia's mother, Joanna Shapiro. "It's given her some really nice leadership skills and a nice sense of ownership, and has shown her how she can take on mitzvot going forward, not necessarily just giving money, but actually doing something."

Olivia's desire to give back doesn't end there. In lieu of gifts, she's asked her guests to make donations to a B'nai Tzedek fund, a program where teenagers create tzedakah funds in their name, and then donate that money to organizations they choose. And, despite giving up some gifts, Olivia said she's not worried about missing out on anything. "I don't need to be getting so many of these gifts. There are less fortunate people that need it more than I do," she said. "I'm not feeling short of anything."

That's the message that her mother said they try to send at home.

"The amount that kids get for their bat mitzvahs is so much that it's so easy to use it as an opportunity to give to others and still feel like you will get so much yourself," said Shapiro.

"It's hard to strike a balance when planning a bat mitzvah – to make sure we stay focused on the religious milestone, in the midst of all the busyness and excitement of event planning," said Shapiro. "Having this mitzvah project, and needing to work on all the steps to make it happen and be meaningful, really helped us as a family and Olivia to have a grounding through this process."

Mazel Tov
מזל טוב

Happy 90th birthday to George Reiner, an amazing father and grandfather. We love you very much. Andy, Pam, Jordan, Michael and Jennifer

Mazel tov to Jacob Weisbrod on his 99th birthday. With great love from your wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov Michelle & Aaron on your engagement. We wish you a lifetime of health and happiness. Lots of love the Ruby and Goldwasser families.

Mazel tov Stacie Rosenberg & Hartley Perlmutter on your marriage. Wishing you long life filled with health and happiness. Love, the Perlmutters and Rosenbergs.

Happy sixth birthday Caleigh Ariel! Love from your big sis, Tarah.

Happy 11th birthday Tarah Ainsley! Love from your little sis, Caleigh.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Festival Schedule Available in the April 4th CJN
FILM. IT'S WHAT JEWS DO BEST.
TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
APRIL 11-21 TJFF.COM

What's New

Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News
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Deadline reminder: Deadlines will change because of Passover. March 11 is the deadline for the issue of March 21. March 15 is the deadline for the issue of March 28. March 19 is the deadline for the issue of April 4. March 28 is the deadline for the issue of April 11. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 7

NONE IS TOO MANY

Prof. Irving Abella discusses "The Untold Story of *None Is Too Many*," 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion. $5/$10.

AFTER TEHRAN

Na'amat Canada presents **Marina Nehmat**, author of *After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed*, in an International Woman's Day celebration, 7:30 p.m., Borochov Centre. $20/$25. 416-636-5425 or www.naametevents.com.

OUR GENES, OUR DESTINIES

Dr. Peter Byers discusses "Our Genes, Our Past, Our Destinies," 8 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

PAUL PENNA OPEN HOUSE

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School hosts an open house at 10 a.m. Call **Sheri Rapp**, 416-928-3537, sheri@djds.ca.

RETHINKING THE DIASPORA

Prof. Rebecca Kobrin discusses "Bialystok and Beyond: Rethinking the Jewish Diaspora in the Age of Mass Migration," 7:30 p.m., Jackman Humanities Building, 170 St. George St., Room 100.

ROYAL CHASSIDISM

Aaron Nussbaum discusses "The Rabbi of Ruzhin: Regal and Royal Chassidism," Beth Emeth Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 8

ISRAEL'S IDENTITY

Fred Lazin discusses changes in Israel's identity, 8 p.m. tonight and 10 a.m. Saturday, Temple Sinai.

BULLYING AS ADULTS

Lorna Blumen discusses "Bullying in Our Adult Lives," at Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 18 Wynford Dr., 7:30 p.m. 416-385-3910.

Saturday, March 9

TORAH CLASS

Judge Alan Cooper discusses the Torah portion at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Conservative congregation meets in Oakville at 10 a.m. www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto offers a 3-week class on "Making Sense of the Shabbat Service." today, March 16, 23, at 10 a.m.

Sunday, March 10

ISRAELI ELECTIONS

Howard English discusses "Implications of the Recent Israeli Election," 10 a.m., Temple Har Zion.

BOOK SIGNING

A book signing for *DANI Dairy Delights Cookbook* will be held 2:30-4:30 p.m. at Israel's bookstore, Sobey's Plaza, and Hermes Bakery, 2885 Bathurst St. www.dani-toronto.com.

Continued on page 25

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Continued from page 24

WAYNE AND SHUSTER

Prof. Adam Fuerstenberg discusses "Wayne and Shuster: Brilliant Pioneers of North American TV Comedy," 2 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. The lecture is mostly in Yiddish and sponsored by Friends of Yiddish. $5. 416-458-1440.

FASHION SALE

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto is holding a fashion sale, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Proceeds go to youth programming.

WHY ZAIDA?

Alvin Abram discusses his book, *Why Zaida? A Holocaust Survivor Answers His Grandson's Questions*, Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

VOICES FROM THE GHETTO

A film and discussion about the Lodz Ghetto will be held at 2 p.m., Osgoode Hall Law School, Room 1001, York University.

Monday, March 11

SING FOR THE CHILDREN

Yitzchak Perlman and **Cantor Yitzchak Helfgot** perform at a fundraising concert for Chai Lifeline, 7:30 p.m., Roy Thomson Hall. For tickets, www.chaiconcert.com.

A MODERN-DAY JEW

A lecture on "Is It Possible to be a Modern-Day Jew?" will be given at 8:30 p.m., Chai Centre, 1098 Spadina Rd. $18. info@thechaicentre.com.

MITZVAH KNITTERS

Mitzvah knitters at Shaar Shalom meet at 1 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. Call **Arna Cappe** 905-881-8631 or mitzvah_knitters@live.ca.

Tuesday, March 12

MUSIC OF THE DIASPORA

The Amernet String Quartet performs music from three periods of Jewish history, 8 p.m. Temple Sinai. 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

MOVIES WITH LARRY

Sholem Aleichem:Laughing in the Darkness at 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. $5.

PRE-PESACH WORKSHOPS

Beth Tzedec Synagogue presents an evening of pre-Pesach workshops, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 13

HILCHOT PESACH

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky discusses "Another Look at Hilchot Pesach," 8 p.m., B'nai Torah Congregation.

JEWS IN FILM

Shlomo Schwartzberg discusses "Remarkable Movies, Part II," Beth Tzedec Synagogue. Dessert 1:30; lecture at 2 p.m.

GALICIA GENEALOGY

Pamela Weisberger discusses "Searching the All-Galicia Database,"8 p.m., Temple Sinai.

JEWISH DIABETES MEETING

Noah Wayne on "Exercise Is Good for You (Sorry, Were You Hoping for Something Else?)" at Jewish diabetes chapter meeting, 8 p.m., Pride of Israel Synagogue. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403; jewishdiabeteschapter@rogers.com.

COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

Dr. Morris Freedman discusses "Cognitive Impairment: Causes, Risk Factors and Effects of Spirituality and Bilingualism," 8 p.m., Workmen's Circle Centre, 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

Thursday, March 14

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

Dr. Joseph Minkowitz discusses "Making Sense of Scientific Literature," Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 8 p.m.

TOUR TO ISRAEL

An information night about Beth Emeth's trip to Israel (Oct. 23-Nov. 4) will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the synagogue.

THE VILNA GAON

Aaron Nussbaum discusses "The Vilna Gaon" Beth David Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Other News

SEDERS & PRE-PESACH PREP

Beth Emeth Synagogue holds a musical pre-Pesach "Nash and Drash" with **Cantor David Edwards**, March 18, noon. Deadline to register, March 13. Call 416-633-3838.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Pre-Passover Shabbat dinner March 22. Deadline for tickets March 15. Call 416-221-3433.

Temple Har Zion holds a seder, March 26. Deadline to register, March 12. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 232, or thzpasso verseder@gmail.com.

Chabad of Markham holds a seder, March 25. Discount before March 14. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or info@chabad markham.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 28

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Shella**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

When You're About to Separate – What To Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation, March 19, 9:30 a.m.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2-12. Starts March 21, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors holds a seder, March 26, Bernard Betel Centre. Tickets on sale at the Betel Centre.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Rama, March 13. Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. March 12, **Rouhama Danto** on "The History and Mystery of the Haggadah," 10 a.m.; March 14, "Healthy Eating, Part I," 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons for Seniors is a discussion group meeting at Beth Tzedec, March 11, 1:30 p.m.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. **Osnat Lipa** discusses "Impressionist Art and Artists," March 14, 1:30 p.m. Series on "Influential Jewish Artists & Their Art," starts April 16.

Day Centre for Seniors provides a secure Jewish environment for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

A Support Group for Russian-Speaking Seniors. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale.

Sarah's Key will be shown March 18, 1 p.m. Book review of *Foreign Bodies*, March 19, 1 p.m.

Film lectures on "Produced and Abandoned Films," with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

Social art program, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Shalom Singers, Thursdays, 10 a.m.; duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers. March 11, screwball comedies, 7 p.m.

Register for the MNJCC Theatre Lab, March 7-May 30. Develop voice, movement and character skills. Ext. 606.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. The Women's Chorus meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets March 13, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

60X60 Dance Toronto, presented by **Tova Kardonne** and Vox Novus, March 10, 8 p.m., at the Al Green Theatre. $20.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3025.

Seniors bagel breakfast, March 15, 9 a.m.

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BRIDAL

Israeli students aim to dispel myths about home

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A group of Israeli students visited Canada last month, a week ahead of Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), to try to spread the word that what people see in mainstream media doesn't necessarily represent Israel.

WordSwap was formed just three months ago, but the group of 17 volunteers have already embarked on their first outreach trip to spark dialogue about Israel by meeting with students of all backgrounds on Ontario university campuses and at McGill University in Montreal.

They arrived Feb. 21, and met with several groups on various campuses. At the University of Toronto, they held a session to educate listeners about diversity in Israel, with a discussion that featured five of the volunteers. They were all Israelis, but the mix included Jews, Druze and Bedouin.

WordSwap's Muhamed Heeb speaks in Toronto about living as part of a minority culture in Israel. *[Cara Stern photo]*

"The only thing we agree on is that Israel has the right to exist. Other than that, we can argue about everything," said Nachi Brodt, a 24-year-old Montreal native who moved to Israel when he was seven years old. "If it wasn't for that 12-hour flight, I could easily be sitting... with the other side of the table."

Raya Azmi described life as a Druze Israeli-Arab as somewhat challenging. She said people sometimes challenge her, asking how she could feel comfortable living as an Arab in Israel, but she sees herself as proof of peace and democracy in a country where she is free to practise her religion and celebrate her culture.

Ruthie Berber said she joined the group to try to counter the hatred she experienced when she was 16. She had moved to Israel when she was 15, and the next year, she visited her native city of London, England. She introduced herself to a friend of a friend in London and said she lived in Israel, and he responded by spitting and calling her a dirty terrorist.

"I had no idea what was going on. I couldn't express how shocked I was," she said. "I saw something that terrified me: a hatred that I could not understand where it was coming from."

She said peace could be achieved through dialogue, which is why she opposes ideas like the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, and IAW.

"We wanted people to be a little more open minded before they participate in an event that just promotes blind hatred, and maybe get to know a little more about Israel before they start proclaiming apartheid and genocide without real backing," she said.

The response has been good, she said, adding that it's given her the chance to introduce herself and her friends and tell their stories to people she probably wouldn't otherwise meet.

Brian Lee, a student who attended the discussion, said it gave him an opportunity to learn about a country he knew little about.

"I thought [this] was one of those unique experiences that's very hard to come by," said the third-year commerce student at University of Toronto. "It was enlightening. I didn't know a lot about Israel as a country, and I thought it was really informative."

"We're trying to have conversation and dialogue with people, sharing a couple of stories, talking about experiences in Israel," Brodt said, adding that the conflict isn't their only focus. Instead, the goal is to have a conversation with students simply to humanize Israelis.

"I hope we will hear each other, and speak to each other... and support each other," he said.

The WordSwap team were in Canada from Feb. 21 to March 3. Jewish organizations who helped them co-ordinate their trip included Hillel, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, among others. IAW is March 4 to 8 in Canada this year.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Arthur Brugger	Jan 29/13	30 Manor Road, West
Ziva Weizman	Jan 31/13	866 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Cesia Zaifman	Jan 30/13	67 Corksfield Avenue
Varda Hall Berenstein	Jan 30/13	85 Skymark
DriveDebbie Risman	Jan 30/13	65 Skymark Drive
Edith Knopf	Jan 29/13	350 Lonsdale Road
Rita Birenstok-Cumming	Jan 29/13	271 Ridley Blvd.
Samuel Tomkin	Jan 31/13	1 Malabar Place
Nat Hennick	Jan 31/13	18A Hazelton Avenue
Bernie Pont	Jan 31/13	5351 Yonge Street
Henry Dickler	Jan 31/13	525 Lawrence Ave. West
Gloria Mandel	Jan 31/13	63 Burbank Drive
Laurie Arnold	Feb 1/13	43 Glen Cedar Road
Sydney Wise	Jan 31/13	1555 Finch Ave. East
Molly Walker	Feb 3/13	429 Walmer Road
Helen Fox	Feb 4/13	36 High Point Road
Sylvia Latner	Feb 5/13	14 Baintree Street, East
Helen Pasternak	Feb 4/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Edythe Stein	Feb 6/13	602 Melita Crescent
Bernard Braun	Feb 8/13	2 Covington Road
Peggy Birnberg	Feb 8/13	40 Merritt Road
Edith Rosenheck	Feb 8/13	366 Humewood Avenue
Anne Pollock	Feb 8/13	25 Brunswick Avenue
Zeana Rauch	Feb 9/13	644 Sheppard Ave. East
Frances King	Feb 10/13	28 Nugent Road
Ziva Davis	Feb 11/13	115 Florence Street
Steven Samuels	Feb 10/13	165 Elm Ridge Drive
Ida Blake	Feb 11/13	100 Antibes Drive
Barbara Harris Bonder	Feb 12/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Min Baker	Feb 13/13	55 Ameer Avenue
Donna Dale	Feb 12/13	2220 Lakeshore Road W.
Eli Fagen	Feb 13/13	110 Promenade Circle
Clara Stein	Feb 13/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Nancy Hersh	Feb 12/13	Kendal Avenue
Sharryn Ross Phillips	Feb 15/13	6200 Bathurst Street
Sylvia Weber	Feb 16/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Sammy Miller	Feb 16/13	19 Northern Heights Dr.
Shirley Gold	Feb 15/13	7440 Bathurst Street
Dr. Bruce Pomeranz	Feb 15/13	158 Lyndhurst Avenue
Shirley Katz	Feb 16/13	6 Portsmith Road
Anna Laksman	Feb 17/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Bella Schneiderman	Feb 17/13	25 Brunswick Avenue
Judy Gelman	Feb 18/13	3600 Yonge Street
Leo Snowball	Feb 18/13	19 Honeywood Road
Stephen Wiskin	Feb 19/13	8 Lowbank Court
Marshall Balsam	Feb 20/13	640 Grace Street

HEDREW BASIC

Mildred Bregman	Feb 7/13	529 Rushton Road
Sylvia Bell	Feb 16/13	179 Queensdale Avenue

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Igelman, David	Feb. 17/13	1131 Steeles Ave W
Plotnick, Freda	Feb. 15/13	
Grinbaum, Regina	Feb. 17/13	6250 Bathurst St
Herzig, Mozes David	Feb. 17/13	12 Dorchester Dr
Cohen, Beatrice	Feb. 17/13	170 Red Maple Rd
Mahler, Carl	Feb. 19/13	131 Torresdale Ave
Brodie, Andrew S	Feb. 19/13	
Amiramova, Anna	Feb. 21/13	300 Antibes Dr
Diamond, Alan	Feb. 21/13	64 Kayla Cres
Peto, Dr. Robert	Feb. 21/13	429 Walmer Rd
Gurfinkel, Izrael	Feb. 21/13	5935 Bathurst St
Gould, Allan	Feb. 21/13	24 College View Ave
Garshowitz, William	Feb. 20/13	3560 Bathurst St
Leschinski, Mira	Feb. 22/13	Private
Baum, Bronia	Feb. 22/13	1121 Steeles Ave. W
Swartz, Jack	Feb. 22/13	640 Sheppard Ave E
Rothman, Lillian	Feb. 24/13	718 Sheppard Ave. W
Goldstein, Rena	Feb. 25/13	140 Clifton Ave

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IAW is really a non-event for students

As we approach Israeli Apartheid Week (or IAW) in early March, we can expect the usual gathering of fringe activists to host seminars (most of which are sparsely attended) slandering the only liberal democracy in the Middle East. Their disgusting and false rhetoric will rightfully upset Jewish and non-Jewish supporters of Israel.

Guest Voice

David Koschitzky

To what extent does their inflammatory message resonate with average students? Very little it seems. Last year, an analysis by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated: "In general media terms, IAW is a non-event. Israel Apartheid Week has not been successful in attracting mainstream media coverage." The report further noted that "Israeli/Jewish media outlets are now responsible for the bulk of media coverage of IAW."

This matches our own monitoring of IAW in recent years across Canada. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) always considers our strategic advocacy efforts through the lens of our target audience. As a starting point, this means understanding that most students and faculty members devote very little (if any) consideration to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To the bystander, the subject seems heated, ancient, and – most importantly – complicated. As such, average students are not interested in the aggressive, black-and-white narrative offered by IAW.

IAW organizers want to provoke Jewish students into a week-long shouting match on campus. We need to recognize that in organizing terms, this kind of on-campus conflict serves only to mobilize the anti-Israel base; it alienates the vast majority of students from both sides. By refusing to provide anti-Israel groups with the kind of direct conflict they seek, we are depriving them of the leverage to mobilize their own activists and push their agenda beyond a small fringe on campus.

This is not to say that we should allow the anti-Israel rhetoric of IAW to go unanswered. Especially given that – on occasion – anti-Israel activists have infringed the free speech and academic rights of Jewish and pro-Israel students. In this regard, we see three critical campus challenges that warrant our particular attention.

The first involves the primary issue of the well-being of students. Although rare, episodes of harassment and intimidation of Jewish and pro-Israel students are unacceptable and cannot go unchallenged. Despite evidence that this has diminished in recent years, we must remain responsibly vigilant on this point.

The second is the phenomenon of student governments being misused as a platform for symbolic, anti-Israel resolutions. We are not alone in this concern. Students of all backgrounds pay mandatory union fees with the expectation that their student government will address student issues, rather than irrelevant and marginal political agendas.

Third, we must continue to counter 'abuse of the podium'. On some campuses, particular faculty members involved with anti-Israel campaigns have brought their politics into the classroom – and in a manner of highly dubious academic value. Although this is worrisome, it is important to note that it goes against the grain; Canadian universities are substantially expanding ties with Israel. Through formal partnerships with Israeli institutions, influential Canadian faculties (law, medicine, and science to name just a few) are publicly rejecting calls to isolate Israel.

Through Hillel and grassroots activists, we are confronting the above challenges by making Israel relevant to non-Jewish students, faculty, and administrations – in ways that have proven to resonate. Our campus partners host engaging events and programming throughout the school year, because anti-Israel activism must be countered beyond a single week in March. The centre works with academics to foster university exchanges and collaborative projects, forging concrete relationships between the Jewish state and the next generation of Canadian business and academic leaders. This positive approach works to develop meaningful, long-term connections that pay dividends.

Israel's campus detractors naturally arouse our outrage at this time of year, for their message is outrageous. They must also inspire our ongoing, strategic efforts to counter the above three challenges. Given that these trends ultimately threaten the academic rights of all students, they warrant our continued focus, resources, and commitment to build winning relationships.

David Koschitzky is chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs – the advocacy arm of the Jewish Federations of Canada.

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Mount Royal riding should stay as is: report

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The riding of Mount Royal will likely remain as is for the next federal election after the commission studying proposed changes to the federal electoral map recommended something close to the status quo.

The district's Liberal MP since 1999, former justice minister Irwin Cotler, who led the opposition to the elimination of Mount Royal, said he was "delighted" by the report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec that was tabled in the House of Commons on Feb. 25.

Irwin Cotler

"The initial proposal of the Commission called for the dismantling of the riding, erasing even the name 'Mount Royal' from the Quebec electoral map," he said. "I am delighted that today's report preserves this historic riding, benefiting both the communities and residents therein."

Mount Royal is one of two ridings in the country with a Jewish plurality. The other is Thornhill in the Toronto area.

The proposal was that the territory that is now Mount Royal, which was created in 1925, be split into three ridings, most of it in the proposed new John Peters Humphrey riding.

The former Mount Royal would have lost much of its eastern territory in Côte des Neiges-Snowdon and would have been extended west to include Dorval and St. Laurent. The city of Côte St. Luc, which is now wholly within Mount Royal, would have straddled two ridings.

But the commission recommends that Mount Royal stay virtually as it is.

John Peters Humphrey was the first director of the United Nations human rights division and the principal drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Noting that Mount Royal's population is about 36 per cent Jewish, Cotler said at the commission's public hearings last fall that the changes would "dramatically undermine the 'community of interest and identity,'" one of the criteria that the law stipulates should be considered when drawing electoral district boundaries. Other ethnic communities in multicultural Mount Royal would also be adversely affected, he said.

The Council on Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), Federation CJA and its social services agency Ometz, as well as the YM-YWHA, the Jewish General Hospital, the Jewish Russian Community Centre and Congregation Shomrim Laboker also made submissions to the commission. They said Mount Royal should remain as it is, because carving up the territory would divide the community and separate it from its institutions.

"CIJA is very pleased that the commission took our recommendations into account and decided to leave this historical riding – important to the Jewish community – within the same boundaries, and keep the name Mount Royal," said Jonathan Kalles, the organization's associate director of government relations.

The commission's report will now be put before a Commons committee for debate prior to the next election in 2015.

Cotler said he's confident "the integrity of Mount Royal will remain and the recommendation of the commission for this riding will be confirmed."

Airport gets kosher catering

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Herb-encrusted rack of lamb with a balsamic jus nestled on polenta. Thai beef strips napped in ginger and soy. Braised short ribs atop roasted garlic-infused red-skinned potato mash.

Travellers flying out of Trudeau International Airport who order a kosher meal in the future may find such delectable fare on their tray.

Gate Gourmet, a Swiss-headquartered company that caters to 14 major airlines at Trudeau, including Air Canada, now has a kosher kitchen supervised by Montreal's Vaad Ha'ir, which supervises the MK hechsher.

The new service was launched Feb. 21, and the company says it will be able to supply up to 1,000 kosher meals a day.

The Vaad's executive director, Rabbi Saul Emanuel, is thrilled with the new venture, saying both observant Jews and many others who opt for kosher believing it represents higher quality will benefit.

Airlines, too, he said, will gain from working with an established international company that describes itself as the world's largest independent provider of catering and provisioning services to airlines and railroads.

Rabbi Emanuel has been trying to persuade Gate Gourmet to open a kosher kitchen in Montreal like the one it runs at Toronto's Pearson International Airport.

"Their services in Toronto have received excellent ratings," he said

Until now, airlines contracted with local kosher caterers to supply meals, and they still have that option the rabbi noted.

At the official opening of its Montreal kosher kitchen, located at offices on Rodolphe Pagé Street, a short walk from the terminal, executive chef David Tushingham showed off the type of kosher food Gate Gourmet offers.

To read full story, go to cjnews.com

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Hate crimes debate probes free speech limits

Ron Stang
Special to The CJN

WINDSOR — Canada's hate crime laws may infringe on absolute freedom of speech, but they're no different from a range of laws that restrict freedom in some fashion, according to Mark Sandler, chair of the board of the Law Foundation of Ontario.

Alan Borovoy

Sandler, a former chair and legal counsel of the B'nai Brith League for Human Rights, was debating Alan Borovoy, former general counsel of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, in a Feb. 21 debate on hate crimes and Holocaust denial, at a public forum sponsored by Assumption University.

"Even the most fervent civil libertarians… do not advocate for the absoluteness of freedom of speech," Sandler said. "We recognize, for example, that it's a criminal mischief, to use the most trite example ever given, to yell fire without cause in a crowded theatre."

He said Canadian law also obviously provides sanctions against threats of bodily harm or death.

Sandler said libel and slander laws are other examples of laws that "curtail speech."

But he said that when it comes to the particular law regarding the wilful promotion of hatred against specific racial or religious groups, the issue is more complex, though ultimately valid.

Referring to the Supreme Court of Canada's definition of hatred arising from the 1990 case against Alberta teacher James Keegstra, Sandler said that "we cannot look at freedom of expression as if it is the only value, the only Charter guarantee, that exists."

Other guarantees include Section 15's "equality" clause that protects vulnerable groups. He said it's "not merely the impact that hate propaganda could have on the community at large, but the impact it has, regardless of whether it increases the number of adherents, on those who are targeted by the hate."

And Section 27 promotes multiculturalism. "We interpret all of our freedoms, including freedom of speech, having regard to the need to promote and preserve our multicultural heritage," Sandler said.

But even these parameters aren't sufficient to bring hate speech prosecutions.

Sandler said there must be "willfulness" as opposed to speech merely having "an effect," and someone must be an "instigator" and do so in the public realm against identifiable groups. As well, prosecutions must be approved by the attorney general, which is extremely rare.

"What a hill the prosecution has to climb before speech can be the subject of criminal prosecution," he said.

As well, Sandler said there are a series of defences, such as the truth of statements or relevance "to any subject of public interest the discussion of which is for the public benefit.

"We're not going to prosecute marginal conduct. We're not going to prosecute in the gray areas," he added.

But Borovoy said the "registering of a conviction is not the only way to judge these things."

He said he was concerned "by the prosecution that is initially threatened. You don't enjoy a viable free speech if you have to look over your shoulder worried that you're going to be charged or harassed for engaging in legitimate speech."

Borovoy acknowledged the various legal safeguards. But he asked "what happens to all those people in the real world who get harassed?"

He also said that despite supposedly clear definitions of hatred, "the human rights tribunals and courts out West were all over the map as to what hatred means," he said.

Borovoy would only limit free speech in extremely rare circumstances, such as a speech during the Rwandan genocide calling for the extermination of an opposing tribe.

"I'm not suggesting that the arguments I made to you could necessarily hold for all time and all places," he said. "I'm arguing that in Canada today this legislation is over the top and constitutes a number of threats that we ought not to incur."

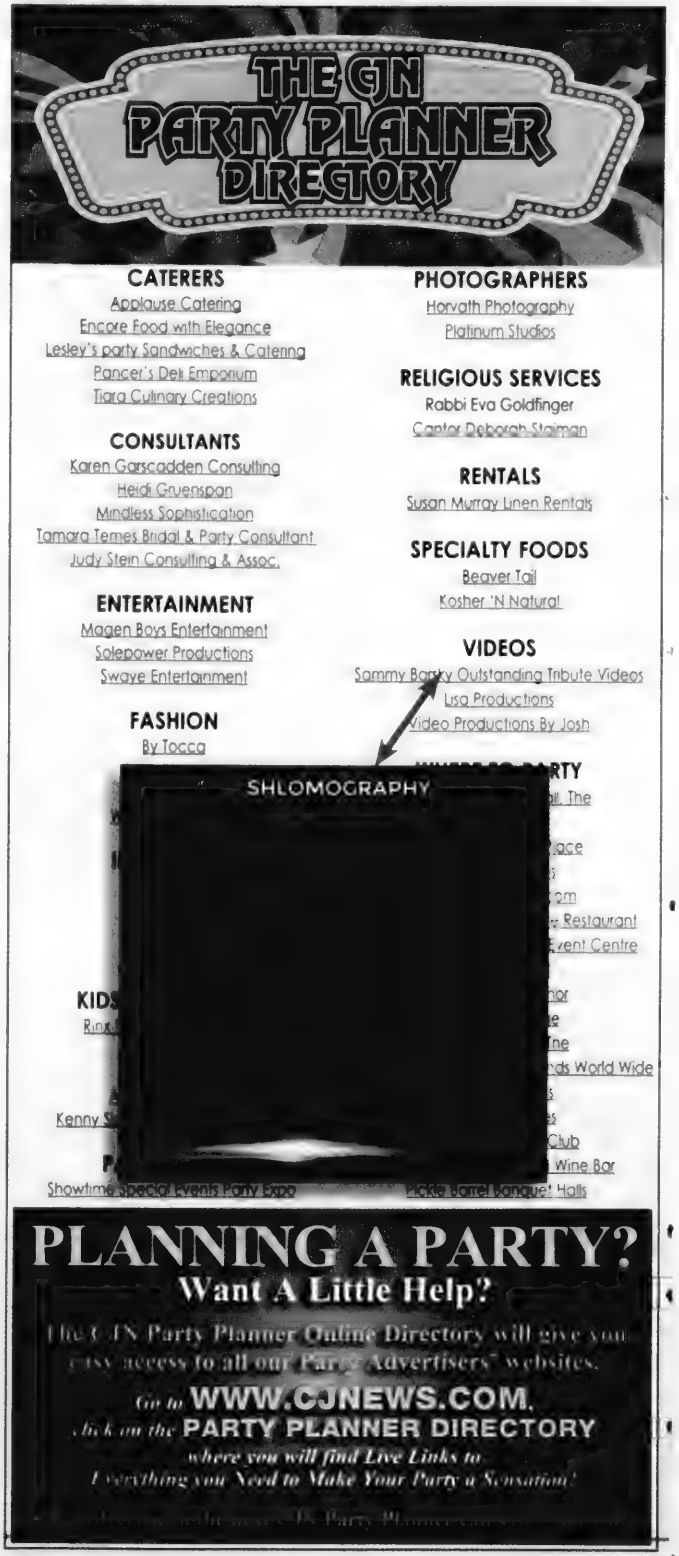
Encyclopedia examines eastern European Jews

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — Though he broke his ankle on a slippery sidewalk in Montreal, McGill University professor Gershon Hundert still showed up in Vancouver recently to talk about the *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, a 2,400-page book he edited in 2008.

The book represents the work of 500 scholars over seven years, and its goal was to mediate and reflect the entire civilization of eastern European Jewry. Hundert, the Leanor Siegel Professor of Jewish Studies at McGill and the Itta and Eliezer Zeisler Memorial Lecturer, spoke at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver last month.

To read full story, go to cjnews.com



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'TumorGraft' technology helps oncologists treat cancer

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Rochelle Schwartz is not the kind of woman who takes no for an answer. Particularly when her husband's life is at stake.

A couple of years ago, Schwartz's husband, Yaron Panov, was told his cancer was inoperable and there was not much doctors could do to help him. He was given six months to live.

Schwartz, herself a physician, suspected that was not the case. She knew of new treatments available in the United States, and she had the gumption to take the bull by the horns and make things happen.

She contacted doctors south of the border and an American-based company with ties to Israel, Champions Oncology, a leader in innovative cancer treatments.

Champions' "TumorGraft" offers a model for growing and testing human tumours, providing oncologists with the best course of drug treatments for cancer patients. The procedure involves extracting cancer cells and the surrounding tissue, growing them in lab mice, and then testing various drugs on them to see which is best suited for that particular cancer in that particular patient.

The treatment worked and Panov is now several years past the deadline Toronto physicians had set for him.

Now, Schwartz is hoping a young Russian man can benefit from the same techniques that helped her husband. Andrew Avetikov is suffering from a particularly aggressive cancer. His family is staging a fundraising campaign to raise the money to send him south of the border to Champions, in the hope they can do for him what they did for Panov.

Avetikov was receiving chemotherapy last week and was unavailable for comment. However his cousin, Flora Krasnoshtein, said, "The family hopes that Champions Oncology will be able to give us information about specific mutations in Andrew's tumours via targeted sequencing analysis that they are going to perform, which in turn will enable the expert panel of oncologists to make a more informative decision about personalized treatment options that would help treat Andrew's cancer."

In 2009, Avetikov was diagnosed with cancer. He underwent treatments and his condition improved. But after being in remission for 2-1/2 years, a completely different cancer appeared and, "it's aggressive." That means, "it grows very fast and is hard to treat," said Schwartz.

Avetikov has been receiving treatment – powerful drugs administered intravenously. The result has been a lot of harmful side effects, but "nothing is working," Schwartz said.

She was alerted about Avetikov's situation by one of her patients from Toronto's Russian Jewish community.

Avetikov, like Panov a few years ago, is running out of options in Canada. But as for Panov, there may be treatments available south of the border.

Recounting Panov's story, Schwartz noted that after he underwent surgery in December 2010, they were told, "There's nothing [more] to do." Their only option in Toronto was massive surgery, the removal of organs, chemo with a small chance of success.

"I just couldn't believe that, so I got in touch with Champions Oncology," Schwartz said.

The principals behind the company are Americans who spend a lot of time in Israel. One of their implantation sites is in Rehovot; others are in Singapore, London and in the Baltimore area.

Following a teleconference with American doctors – Panov's Canadian doctors declined to participate – her husband's pathology reports were sent south.

A program of "personalized chemotherapy" was prescribed by Champions.

Rochelle Schwartz and her husband, Yaron Panov

Speaking from Israel, Champions' president Ronnie Morris explained the procedure as one that designs a chemo treatment regimen based on each particular patient's cancer.

Currently, doctors employ a "first line of treatment" that benefits 50 to 60 per cent of patients. For those who require more, the odds of success go down rapidly, he explained, to only 15 per cent in the second-round line and even lower in the third.

Doctors historically prescribe chemo or cocktails of drugs based on trial and error, but in recent years, researchers have attempted to tailor the chemo drugs to work specifically against a patient's particular cancer.

Champions developed a technique in which the whole tumour from a patient with all its supporting microenvironment are implanted into mice, thereby creating a very similar personalized model of their disease. Then they are able to take this patient's "live" growing tumour and test different groups of mice with treatments that the oncologist is considering giving to the patient. Once a drug or a combination of drugs proves efficacious against the tumours in the mice, they are used in treatment of the patient, Morris said.

"In terms of the success rate, once we find an answer, it has a 94 per cent success rate of working in the patient. The results that we empirically see in the mice are very similar to what we clinically see in the patient.

In other words, if the mice tumours shrink, disappear or remain stable, similar results are found in patients. That compares to the 15 per cent success rate for the "basket of drugs" used by doctors after the "first line of treatment."

The process can take from three to six months from the time the tumours are removed from the patients. In addition, it's expensive.

It's $1,500 to implant the tumours into the mice, and each drug test or combination of drugs runs $3,000 a test. Most patients require four or five rounds before the most effective cocktail is found; that's a total of $12,000 to $15,000.

The drug that was found for Panov made him sick, weak, and he lost his hair, "but it worked," Schwartz said.

Her husband, an engineer by profession, continues to take medication "to prevent the sarcoma from coming back," Schwartz said. One month's supply runs $10,000.

She said American doctors' attitude to cancer differs from what she's noticed in Canada. "They [Americans] turn cancer into a chronic disease and treat it with new drugs that come out all the time." It becomes something you manage, like diabetes, she said.

As for the costs of treatment, "OHIP did not pay anything for my husband's treatment… If you're not a doctor or an engineer, you can't afford it, so you die," she said.

Or you mount a fundraiser. For more information, send an email to: supportandrewshealthfund@bell.net or visit www.oncleanicepro.com/andrew/andrew.html.

Iran's nuclear program: a defiant quest for modernity

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Iran's quest to build a nuclear arsenal by hook or by crook has degenerated into a global crisis, having consumed the efforts of diplomats for the past decade.

Israel's threat to bomb Iranian nuclear sites, combined with U.S. President Barack Obama's determination "to prevent [Iran] from getting a nuclear weapon," as he stated in his State of Union speech to Congress last month, only amplifies the issue.

It remains to be seen whether it can be resolved peacefully, but as British journalist David Patrikarakos correctly observes in *Nuclear Iran: The Birth of an Atomic State* (Palgrave Macmillan), the need to find a solution is critical. Its resolution, he adds, "will affect the world for at least a generation."

Although Iran's nuclear program was launched more than 50 years ago, the full story of its development, from birth to the present day, has not been told until now. With this book, based mainly on primary sources, Patrikarakos fills in the gap admirably.

He's a dispassionate writer, but he doesn't bury his opinions. As he puts it, "If the spectre of a possible attack on Iran is deeply troubling, the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran is worse."

Iran's possession of nuclear arms, he argues, would be catastrophic –strengthening the Islamic fundamentalist Iranian regime at the expense of its neighbours, further inflaming the already tense standoff between Iran and Israel, emboldening Tehran's proxies, Hezbollah and Hamas, setting off a regional arms race and prompting non-nuclear states in the Middle East to emulate Iran.

"It is a deeply undesirable outcome, one that must be avoided at all costs," he asserts.

In his view, the nuclear program offers Iran an opportunity "to engage with modernity" and "negotiate a place within a perennially hostile world." He adds, "Understand the nuclear program and you will understand modern Iran."

Iran, unlike its Arab neighbours, has never experienced the impact of direct colonialism, but it has been subjected to foreign meddling. Iran lost substantial territories to Russia in a war in the 1820s, and in the same decade, Iran was forced to cede land in Armenia and Azerbaijan. During World War II, the Soviet Union and Britain occupied Iran, and in the 1950s, a U.S.-backed coup deposed a nationalist prime minister.

As a result, he points out, Iran has been zealous to preserve its independence and territorial integrity.

Iran entered the nuclear age in 1957 when a nuclear training centre was established in Tehran under the auspices of the Central Treaty Organization, an alliance composed of Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan and Britain. Subsequently, Iran signed a treaty with the United States for co-operation on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, the shah of Iran since 1941, believed that nuclear energy would lessen Iran's dependence on oil for domestic power, put an end to endemic electrical shortages and place his underdeveloped country on a path of industrial and economic progress.

With German assistance, Iran built its first nuclear reactor in Bushehr. By the end of 1978, the eve of the Islamic revolution that deposed the shah's monarchy, Iran had a civil nuclear program in place.

The Iranian government, having publicly rejected the allure of nuclear weapons, signed and ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, but the shah warned he might revise his policy if "20 or 30 ridiculous little countries are going to develop nuclear weapons."

The shah's arrogant comment notwithstanding, Iran was really in no position to build an atomic device because its nuclear program was based entirely on power plants rather than uranium enrichment.

Nonetheless, as Patrikarakos notes, the nuclear program was probably the "most developed expression" of the shah's modernization program. Nuclear power, he elaborates, was "intertwined with notions of national pride and progress" and personal ambition on the part of the hubristic shah.

Yet in opposition circles, the nuclear program was synonymous with corruption, waste and royal excess. Frequent power cuts in the mid-1970s led critics to conclude that nuclear power was hardly a panacea for Iran's problems.

The new Islamic regime initially considered the nuclear program excessively expensive and ideologically unclean, calling it a Trojan horse for western infiltration and imperialism. Nevertheless, a decision was taken that nuclear research, particularly in prospecting and extracting uranium, should continue.

Severe electricity shortages convinced the mullahs that the shah's nuclear program could be useful. In 1982, with the Iran-Iraq War raging, the nuclear program was officially restarted. The program was now "an integral part of how the Islamic republic defined itself in the modern world," says the author.

Iranian scientists living abroad were invited back, and Iran began exploring the possibility of signing co-operation agreements with Argentina, Pakistan, India and China.

Convinced that a nuclear deterrent would confer prestige on Iran and protect the Islamic revolution from the schemes of its enemies, namely the United States and Israel, the regime took concrete steps to rebuild the nuclear program.

Iran secretly purchased centrifuges from the Khan network in Pakistan and bought equipment from China. Russia, however, would become Iran's chief nuclear partner. In 1994, the Russians agreed to complete one of two unfinished reactors in Bushehr.

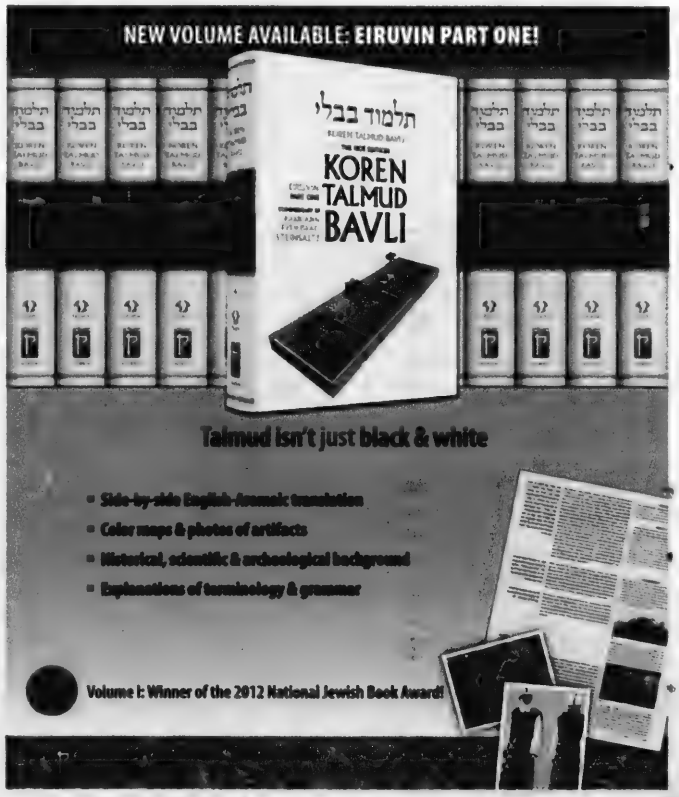
Iran's belligerent attitude toward Israel, an undeclared nuclear power, prompted the Israeli government in 2002 to warn that Iran posed an existential threat to its statehood. With Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's election as president in 2005, Israel hardened its policy toward Iran's nuclear program.

By then, Iran had made headway in its covert pursuit of the full nuclear cycle and had officially informed the International Atomic Energy Agency of its uranium enrichment program, says Patrikarakos.

United Nations sanctions, he writes, had no effect on its nuclear ambitions.

He suggests that Iran's willingness to engage the major powers in talks has been little more than a stalling tactic. Iran regards its nuclear program as "a symbol of a defiant modernizing state" and will not likely abandon it in the face of international pressure.

Iran's defiance prompts Patrikarakos to write, "The supreme irony ... is that Iran's nuclear program is the ultimate expression of its desire for acceptance (but on its own terms) that is pursued through the one means that will ensure it remains a pariah."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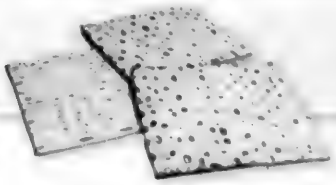


Passover Food Ideas

Scrumptious salads...

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

I'm always a bit hesitant about suggesting salads for a food article. There's so much time and effort dedicated to planning a dinner party, let alone a Passover seder, that surely a recipe for a salad is not needed. You simply buy some lettuce, perhaps some sweet peppers, a red onion and cucumbers, slice them all and combine them in one of your loveliest serving bowls – not really much thought required.

Having said that, I also think it's a bonus to get some inspiration, a different way to select greens and accompaniments when you head to the grocery store.

This is especially so since the Passover meal is usually delicious but very rich. A salad or a salad course can help balance that richness, add texture and a refreshing edge to the repast. With that in mind, I offer some salads that are not only beautiful to look at but provide a welcome tangy element to the meal. The various elements of each salad can be made ahead as well, leaving the hostess only the chore of assembling the components just before the main event.

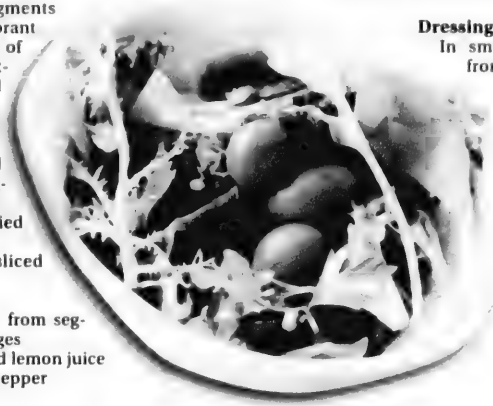
BLOOD ORANGE, LETTUCE AND DATE SALAD

Blood orange segments add colour to this vibrant dish as well as a burst of freshness. Lightly toasted sliced almonds lend crunch.

10 cups torn romaine lettuce
6 blood oranges, peel cut off and cut into segments (juices reserved)
1/2 cup chopped dried dates
1/3 cup toasted sliced almonds

Dressing

1/4 cup reserved juice from segmenting of blood oranges
2 tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
pinch ground cinnamon
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil



Dressing

In small bowl, combine juice from blood oranges, lemon juice, salt, pepper and cinnamon. In thin steady stream, gradually whisk in olive oil until emulsified.

In large serving bowl, combine lettuce, orange segments and dates. Pour dressing over and toss gently until well combined. Top with sliced almonds. Serve immediately. Makes 8 servings.

Continued on page 33

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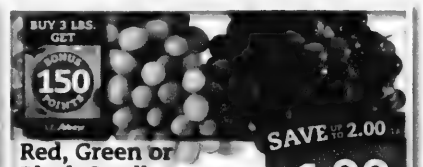

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Royal Gefilte Fish
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... add colour and crunch

Continued from page 32

BABY GREENS WITH AVOCADO AND HERBS

This delightful salad, full of herby goodness, combines the velvety smoothness of ripe avocado with the refreshing overtones of lemon and sherry vinegar.

10 cups assorted baby greens
1/2 cup torn fresh coriander leaves
1/2 cup torn fresh basil leaves
1/4 cup torn fresh mint leaves
2 avocadoes
4 tsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice

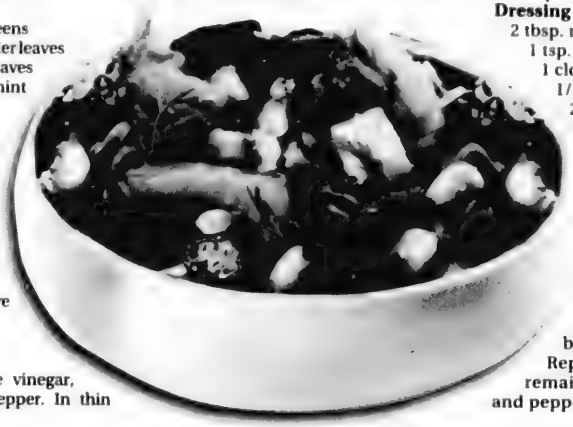
Dressing
2 tbsp. sherry vinegar
1 tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

Dressing
In small bowl, combine vinegar, lemon juice, salt and pepper. In thin steady stream, gradually whisk in olive oil until emulsified.

In large serving bowl, combine assorted greens, coriander, basil and mint. Peel and cube avocadoes. Toss with lemon juice

Pour dressing over salad and toss gently until well combined. Mound avocado cubes over greens. Serve immediately

Makes 8 servings.



BEET SALAD WITH CHIVES AND PECANS

6 red beets
6 golden beets
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1/4 tsp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
1/4 cup chopped toasted pecans

Dressing
2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 tsp. kosher for Passover mustard
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
2 tbsp. chopped fresh chives
1 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 325. Keeping red and golden beets separate, wash beets well. Dry thoroughly.

Place red beets on large piece of aluminum foil. Drizzle with half of the oil, half of the thyme and half of the salt and pepper. Enclose beets tightly within the foil. Repeat with golden beets and remaining olive oil, thyme, salt and pepper.

Place both packages on rimmed baking sheet. Bake in centre of preheated oven for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until a thin knife glides easily through beets. Remove from oven. Let cool. (Beets can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Bring to room temperature).

Dressing
In small bowl, combine vinegar, mustard, garlic, salt and pepper. In thin steady stream, gradually whisk in olive oil until emulsified. Stir in chives and parsley.

Still keeping beets separate and using two cutting boards to avoid any colour bleeding, peel and thinly slice beets. Place in separate bowls. Pour half of dressing into each bowl; toss beets gently until well coated with dressing.

Arrange beets in alternating rows on large serving platter. Sprinkle with pecans. Serve immediately. Makes 8 servings.

Note
These dressings can all be made and refrigerated up to 24 hours in advance. Bring to room temperature before adding them to salads.

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Chopped Liver with Matzah Crackers	$15.00 per lb
Wild Mushroom Crepes	$5.00 per piece
Homemade Meatballs	$16.50 per lb
Homemade Turkey Meatballs	$17.50 per lb
Traditional Chicken Soup	$10.00 per litre
Matzah Balls	$1.75 per piece
Butternut Squash and Pear Soup	$10.00 per litre
Cajun Root Vegetable Soup	$10.00 per litre
Tomato Bisque	$10.00 per litre

MAINS

Chicken & Turkey

Pan Seared Chicken Supreme	$15.00 per piece
Matzah Breaded Chicken Roulade	$18.00 per piece
Stuffed Chicken Supreme	$18.00 per piece
Chicken Fingers	$20.00 per lb
Chicken Wings	$16.00 per lb
Traditional Turkey Meatloaf	$48.00 per loaf
Roasted Whole Chicken	$38.00 per chicken
Stuffed Cornish Hen	$24.00 per hen

Beef

Slow Roasted Beef Brisket	$15.00 per 6 oz
Herb Roasted Ribeye	$16.50 per 6 oz
Sheppard's Pie	$55.00 per pan

Fish

Cranberry Apricot Herb Matzah Crusted Salmon Filet	$15.00 per 6 oz
Pan Seared Halibut	$19.50 per 6 oz

Vegetarian

Wild Mushroom Beggar Purse	$10.00 per piece

SALADS
(1lb serves approx. 4 people)

Pear Salad	$4.50 per serving
French Country Salad	$4.50 per serving
Cucumber Salad	$8.00 per lb
Creamy Coleslaw	$8.00 per lb
Red Cabbage Slaw	$8.00 per lb
New Potato Salad	$7.00 per lb

SIDE DISHES
(1lb serves approx. 4 people)

Oven Roasted Herbed Potatoes	$20.00 per lb
Roasted Herbed Yams	$20.00 per lb
Seasonal Vegetable Sauté	$25.00 per lb
Honey Balsamic Root Vegetables	$25.00 per lb
Egg Noodles	$12.00 per lb

EXTRAS

Seder Plate	$8.00 per plate
Charoset	$6.00 per 1/2 lb
Potato Kugel	$30.00 per pan
Apple Kugel	$31.00 per pan
Sweet Potato & Zucchini Kugel	$30.00 per pan

DESSERT
(Each cake serves 12 to 14)

Apple Matzah Cake	$50.00 per cake
Frozen Lemon Meringue Torte	$55.00 per cake
Chocolate Orange Cake	$50.00 per cake
Coffee & Chocolate Cake	$50.00 per cake
Assorted Biscotti	$9.00 per 6 pieces
Fresh Fruit Salad	$5.00 per 6 oz

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Plan early to be ahead of Pesach stress

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

When it comes to preparing for Passover, I've learned over the years that nothing beats good organization. It's why I shop year-round for non-perishable Passover food, stashing it in a deep cupboard where it won't see daylight until the holiday draws close.

With a guest list that easily hits 20 or more each year, I find that being organized keeps the panic at bay and makes the holiday less stressful and more enjoyable – the food portion of the holiday, at any rate.

My to-do list before Passover is a long one, but the earlier I begin, the easier it is to manage. Here are my tips for staying one step ahead of the holiday.

• **Plan your menu:** I keep a document containing my annual Passover menus on my computer. A couple of months before Passover arrives, I print it and remind myself what worked the previous year, which recipes I might want to consider repeating and which ones were duds.

I cautiously begin creating a new menu, moving my stash of Passover cookbooks to my bedside table and mulling over combinations and ingredients in the evenings. By knowing what I need well ahead of time, I save myself rushing from store to store in a last-minute panic. I do this not just for the seders, but also for the Passover meals my family will have over the course of the holiday.

If I have a pre-determined meal plan, as well as a list of ingredients I need to make it possible, my shopping list is much more effective. This way, I can sleep easy with the knowledge that each night, there are at least a couple of dishes on the menu that the kids will eat – meaning I hope they'll consume something other than matzah for their evening meal.

• **Set the Table:** The table is the stage for a Passover meal and there's nothing that gives more pleasure to both a guest and a host than sitting down to a beautifully laid table. It can take awhile to organize a Passover table, given the number of items needed, so I like to start early – a tip I learned from my mother-in-law, who will lay her table up to a week ahead of time. As I collect the various accoutrements needed for the Passover table, I begin a list of items to purchase, from napkins to plastic frogs to wine and grape juice. Then I can be certain that this chore is complete and there's one less thing to think about. A set table also creates a sense of excitement and expectation in the family. The children are that much more aware that Passover is approaching and that with it will come shared family meals and a memorable seder.

• **Start cleaning early:** The cleaning necessary at this time is enough to stress any mother, particularly when much of it is done within hours of the seder and is added to the pressure of cooking a big meal. Again, I find starting early to be the ideal solution. I clear a few cupboards, put the unused, long-buried food products into boxes or the recycling bin and make a space that is purely for Passover. Once that's done, I can think ahead to the cooking.

• **Budget your time:** I plan my calendar, starting a week to 10 days before Erev Pesach, and I allot myself a Passover-related task for each day to make my life easier on the day of. Usually I begin with the day before Passover, planning those few hours and considering which dishes I'll need to make from scratch that day.

By working backwards and determining what I can't possibly make ahead of time, I start plotting what I can do in the days leading up to the seder. One day is dedicated to shopping, another to laying the table and others still for making dishes like charoset and herring, which are easily preserved in the refrigerator. Soup is done the day before, and slowly, by way of elimination, the meal is planned in such a way that on Erev Pesach, there's little fuss.

complete seder dinner

Includes: Seder plate; matzo; old fashioned dill pickles; tzimmes with fresh prunes; yams and carrots; salt and pepper Gefilte fish.
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Choose 1: Cabbage borscht with flanken or housemade matzo ball soup.

Choose 1: Coleslaw or baby spinach salad with red onion, toasted almonds, Mandarin oranges and citrus vinaigrette.

Choose 2: Brisket au jus, BBQ chicken, baked salmon with orange miso glaze or grilled salmon teriyaki.

Choose 1: Garlic mashed potatoes with caramelized onions, vegetable farfel or herb roasted mini potatoes.

Choose 1: Green beans with caramelized onions and toasted almonds or candied roasted root vegetables topped with toasted pecans.

Desserts: Gourmet fresh fruit and Passover biscotti.

à la carte
Minimum order 10 people per selection.

Seder Plate 6.49
Salt and Pepper Gefilte Fish 4.99 per piece
Chopped Liver 6.98 per pound
Matzo Ball Soup (serves 12) 29.85 per gallon
Matzo Chicken Fingers 17.99 per dozen • 2 dozen min.
Mini Latkes 12.99 per dozen • 2 dozen min.
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Brisket au Jus 12.96 per pound
BBQ Satays (4 dozen) 75.99
Each additional dozen added to the platter 18.99
Add Black Tiger Shrimp with a Hoisin Ginger Sauce 24.99 per dozen
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Two Mushroom Farfel (9" round) 10.99
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Chag Samayach

With spring just around the corner, Jewish cooks everywhere turn their thoughts to Passover, the eight-day celebration of the ancient Hebrews' liberation from slavery more than 3,000 years ago.

As kosher for Passover food items begin to appear on the grocery shelves, we start thinking about clearing our house of every trace of chametz, and taking out our special Passover pots, pans dishes and linens.

We also plan the seder, the ritual meal where we retell the story of the journey to freedom and the birth of the Jewish nation, and we picture in our minds the seder table set with the traditional wine, matzah, green vegetables, bitter herbs, charoset, salt water, roasted bone and cooked egg.

Most of all, however, we think about the food – what to serve at the seder and what to feed our families for the rest of the week.

In our food pages each year, we urge readers to concentrate on the wide range of food items available for Passover rather than lament over what they'll miss during these eight days.

We've provided a list of substitutions that helps convert year-round recipes into kosher for Passover recipes, and our writers have provided tips for making creative meals.

Whether you're preparing for Passover for the first time, or you're just looking for a few new recipes, our upcoming pages should have something for you.

The ingredients in all our recipes are acceptable for Passover use, and can be purchased kosher for Passover in most large Jewish communities.

From all of us at *The CJN*, we hope you will enjoy your Passover meals, and we wish you a chag kasher v'samayach.

Carolyn Blackman, food editor

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Where's the wheat? Gluten-free sweets

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

If you're looking for Passover-friendly desserts that are gluten-free, look no further. Here are some delicious recipes that are easy to make, taste terrific and happen to be gluten-free, wheat-free and dairy-free. And the best part is that none of your guests will notice that anything is missing!

According to an annual *Kosher Today* review of new kosher for Passover foods, gluten-free continues to lead the way in 2013. Many new items introduced in the past two years have remained on supermarket shelves year-round. Always check food labels carefully. If you are in doubt as to whether a product is gluten-free, contact the manufacturer directly.

This is a terrific time to stock up on some of the following gluten-free baking items which are more readily available for Passover:

- Ground almonds/almond meal/almond butter
- Potato starch, gluten-free matzah meal (check labels carefully)
- Passover marshmallows, jams, preserves and jellies
- Passover chocolate chips, bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, unsweetened cocoa
- Passover baking powder, Passover baking soda
- Passover icing sugar (made with potato starch)
- Gluten-free macaroons, meringue cookies, gluten-free Passover cake mixes and frostings.

Passover Gluten-Free Baking Substitutions:

- To replace 1 cup flour in baking, use 5/8 to 3/4 cup (10 to 12 tbsp.) potato starch.
- To replace 1 cup cake meal in Passover sponge cakes, use 1 cup finely ground almonds.
- To reduce fat and cholesterol, substitute 2 egg whites for 1 egg. You can usually replace up to half the eggs called for in baking recipes.
- When converting your baking recipes, use kosher for Passover baking powder and baking soda. They contain potato starch, whereas regular baking powder and baking soda contain cornstarch.
- Passover icing sugar: process 1 cup granulated sugar with 1/2 tbsp. potato starch in a food processor or blender for 2 to 3 minutes. The texture will be grainier than icing sugar.

Sweet wishes for a happy, healthy and delicious Passover. These gluten-free sweets are so good that you may decide to add them to your regular baking repertoire all year round!

NORENE'S FUDGY BROWNIES

Adapted from the NEW Food Processor Bible: 30th Anniversary Edition

These gluten-free-nut-free brownies are excellent for Passover – or any time of year. They freeze well – if they last that long!

4 eggs
1 3/4 cups sugar
1 cup oil
1 cup potato starch
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 9x13-inch baking pan with nonstick spray.

Insert steel blade in processor bowl. Process eggs and sugar for 1 minute, until light. Add oil through feed tube while machine is running. Process 30 seconds longer. Uncover and sprinkle potato starch, cocoa and salt over mixture. Blend in with several quick on/off pulses, just until combined. Pour into prepared pan and spread evenly.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes. Cool completely.

Frost with your favourite chocolate frosting or glaze with Decadent Chocolate Glaze.

Rocky Roads: Five minutes before end of baking, sprinkle 4 cups miniature marshmallows evenly ever brownies. Return pan to oven and bake 5 minutes longer. Cool completely. Prepare Decadent Chocolate Glaze (below). Drizzle over marshmallow topping in a zigzag design.

Decadent chocolate glaze
2 oz./60 g semisweet chocolate
1 tbsp. honey
1 1/2 tbsp. hot water
1/2 tsp. Passover vanilla

Melt chocolate in microwave on medium (50%) for about 2 minutes, stirring once or twice. Add honey, hot water and vanilla and blend well. Use as a glaze for brownies and cakes.

Continued on page 37

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MENU #5
Gefilte Fish & Horseradish, Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls, Roast Chicken, Roast Brisket of Beef, Chicken Fingers, Green Beans Almondine, Lockshen Pudding, Chocolate Brownies, Seder Plate, Charoses
$185 for 5 people

MENU #6
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls, Sweet & Sour Meatballs, Poached Salmon, Pan Roast Potatoes, Green Beans Almondine, Lockshen Pudding, Chocolate Brownies, Seder Plate, Charoses
$169 for 5 people

MENU ITEMS
MEAT DISHES: Roast Turkeys, Turkey Breast, Cornish Hens, Chopped Liver, Cabbage Rolls, Veal Roast, Flanken in Borscht, Roast Duck, Lemon Chicken Breast, BBQ Chicken Wings, Honey Garlic Wings, Chicken Fingers, Knishes -Potato or Beef, Kishke, Meat Kreplach
VEGETABLE DISHES: Vegetarian Loaf, Matzo Lasagna, Stir Fry Vegetables, Grilled Vegetables, Apple Farfel Pudding, Farfel & Mushrooms, Potato Latkes, Green Beans Almondine, Broccoli & Mushrooms, Handmade Egg Noodles, Seder Plates, Charoses
SALADS: Cole Slaw, Pickled Beets, Tossed Salad, Cucumber Salad
FISH: Poached Salmon, Sweet Gefilte Fish, Salt & Pepper Gefilte Fish
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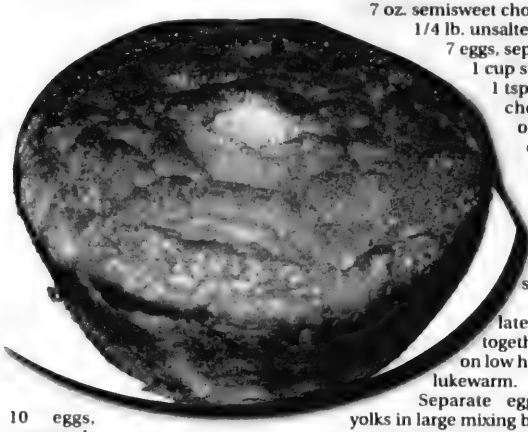
Great endings

Continued from page 36

CHOCOLATE OR VANILLA SPONGE CAKE

My friend Helene Medjuck has been making this delicious, gluten-free cake for years. She got the recipe from her friend Susan Beckerman but has modified it slightly. Helene adds an extra egg and uses an electric mixer to combine the yolk mixture whereas Susan uses her food processor. The chocolate version is lighter in colour than regular chocolate cake but both ways are delicious. Helene says: "This nongebrochts cake is ideal whenever I have guests on Pesach because everyone is able to enjoy it!"



10 eggs, separated
1 cup sugar, divided use
1/2 cup oil
3/4 cup potato starch
1 package (3.3 oz.) Passover instant chocolate or vanilla pudding
Passover icing sugar and grated chocolate to garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 350. Place egg whites in large bowl of electric mixer and bring to room temperature.

Beat whites on high speed, gradually adding 1/2 cup sugar. Beat until stiff, about 8-10 minutes. Set aside.

In another large bowl (or food processor), beat yolks with remaining 1/2 cup sugar until well mixed. Add oil and beat until light. Add pudding mix and potato starch and mix just until combined. Batter will get very thick.

Using a rubber spatula, gently fold whites into yolk mixture, just until whites disappear. Make sure to fold in thick batter at bottom of bowl.

Pour batter into an ungreased 10-inch tube pan. Bake at 350 for 1 hour. Immediately invert pan and cool completely.

Use a flexible spatula to loosen cake from sides, centre tube and bottom of pan. Remove cake carefully from pan and transfer to a cake platter.

If desired, sprinkle lightly with icing sugar and grated chocolate. Makes 15 -18 slices

• • •

DECADENT CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE

Marilyn Abram kindly shared her recipe for this gluten-free smooth and silky dessert that she got from her cousin, Karen Truster. The cousins have been making their Passover seders together for at least 15 years, if not longer, and this cake is always on their menu. Marilyn told me: "This amazing dessert is easy and foolproof. If you love chocolate, you'll really love this!"

7 oz. semisweet chocolate
1/4 lb. unsalted margarine
7 eggs, separated
1 cup sugar, divided use
1 tsp. Passover vanilla
chocolate leaves or shavings or chopped nuts for garnish

Preheat oven to 325. Grease bottom and sides of a 9-inch spring form pan.

Melt chocolate and margarine together in a saucepan on low heat. Let cool until lukewarm.

Separate eggs, placing egg yolks in large mixing bowl.

Place egg whites in another bowl and let stand until room temperature.

Beat yolks with 3/4 cup sugar until fluffy, about 5 minutes. Slowly add warm chocolate mixture and vanilla; mix until combined.

Beat egg whites on high speed, gradually adding remaining 1/4 cup sugar, until stiff peaks form. Fold chocolate mixture into egg whites.

Pour 3/4 of the batter into prepared spring form pan and spread evenly with a rubber spatula. Cover remaining batter and refrigerate.

Bake at 325 for 35 minutes, or until top of cake is set and cake pulls away from sides of pan. Remove from oven and let cool. (Cake will drop as it cools.) Remove outside of pan.

Stir refrigerated batter to soften it slightly and spread on top. Refrigerate until firm.

Garnish with chocolate leaves or chocolate shavings and chopped nuts. Serves 8-10.

Note: The refrigerated mousse-like batter used to top the baked cake contains uncooked eggs. If you prefer, bake the entire batter in step 8, increasing baking time by about 10 to 15 minutes. Sprinkle top of cooled cake with icing sugar and garnish with chocolate shavings.

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Substitutions for the week

Eileen Goltz
Special to The CJN

At some point during Pesach preparations, we've all tried to convert a regular recipe, only to discover that we don't know what to substitute for a chametz ingredient. This is why I started compiling my list of Passover substitutes. I've added some new substitutions this year. If anyone has any other substitutions to share please let me (eztlog@gmail.com) know.

•1 oz. baking chocolate (unsweetened chocolate) = 3 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1 tbsp. oil or melted margarine
•16 oz. semi-sweet chocolate = 6 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1/4 cup oil and 7 tbsp. granulated sugar
•14 oz. sweet chocolate (German-type) = 3 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder plus 2 2/3 tbsp. oil and 4-1/2 tbsp. granulated sugar
•1 cup confectioners' sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar minus 1 tbsp. sugar plus 1 tbsp. potato starch pulsed in a food processor or blender
•1 cup honey = 1-1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/4 cup water
•1 cup corn syrup = 1-1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/3 cup water, boiled until syrupy
•1 cup vanilla sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar with 1 split vanilla bean left for at least 24 hours in a tightly covered jar
•1 cup flour = 5/8 cup matzah cake meal or potato starch, or a combination sifted together
•1 tbsp. flour = 1/2 tbsp. potato starch
•1 cup corn starch = 7/8 cup potato starch
•1 tsp. cream of tartar = 1-1/2 tsp. lemon juice or 1-1/2 tsp. vinegar
•1 cup graham cracker crumbs = 1 cup ground cookies or soup nuts plus 1 tsp. cinnamon
•1 cup bread crumbs = 1 cup matzah meal
•1 cup matzah meal = 3 matzot ground in a food processor
•1 cup matzah cake meal = 1 cup plus 2 tbsp. matzah meal finely ground in a blender or food processor and sifted
•3 crumbled matzot = 2 cups matzah farfel
•1 cup (8 oz.) cream cheese = 1 cup cottage cheese pureed with 1/2 stick butter or margarine
•chicken fat or gribenes = 2 caramelized onions. Sauté 2 sliced onions in 2 tbsp. oil and 2 tbsp. sugar. Cook until the onions are soft. Puree the onions once they are golden.
•1 cup milk (for baking) = 1 cup water plus 2 tbsp. margarine, or 1/2 cup fruit juice plus 1/2 cup water
•1 cup wine = 13 tbsp. water, 3 tbsp. lemon juice and 1 tbsp. sugar. Mix together and let set for 10 minutes.
•for frying: instead of chicken fat, use combination of olive oil or vegetable oil and 1 to 2 tbsp. pareve Passover margarine.
•eggs: Passover egg substitutes don't work quite as well as the chametz substitutes. For kugels, matzah balls, fried matzah and some cakes, the recipes will probably be okay. However, if you want to avoid them (and I do) you can add one extra egg white and 1/2 tsp. of vegetable oil for each yolk eliminated when baking. Use only egg whites as the dipping to coat and fry meats.
•1-1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning = 1/4 tsp. each dried oregano leaves, dried marjoram leaves and dried basil leaves plus 1/8 tsp. rubbed dried sage.
•2/3 cup curry powder = 2 tbsp. ground coriander, 1 tbsp. black pepper, 2 tbsp. red pepper, 2 tbsp. turmeric, 2 tbsp. ground ginger
•Pancake syrup: use fruit jelly, not jam and add a little water to thin. I always like to combine the jelly and water in a microwave safe bowl and heat it gently before I serve it.
•1/4 cup seasoned rice wine vinegar = 3 tbsp. white vinegar, 1 tbsp. white wine, 1 tbsp. sugar, 1/2 tsp. salt
•flavoured vinegar = lemon juice in cooking or salad, grapefruit juice in salads, wine in marinades.
•water chestnuts: substitute raw jicama
•orange liqueur: substitute an equal amount of frozen orange juice concentrate.

You can mince the tops of green onions and use them in recipes that call for chives.

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Consider unilateral separation from West Bank: Barak

JTA

WASHINGTON — Israel should consider unilateral steps to separate itself from the Palestinians if peace talks fail, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak said.

Such steps would include dismantling settlements beyond the separation barrier and maintaining a military presence in the Jordan Valley along the West Bank-Jordan border, Barak said Sunday at the annual American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) policy conference in Washington.

"We should consider unilateral steps in order to place a wedge on this extremely dangerous slippery slope to a binational state," he said.

Barak, who is leaving government, has been the chief advocate within the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for advancing talks with the Palestinian Authority.

On Sunday, he told AIPAC that Netanyahu had been a "courageous" advocate for peace, noting his freeze on settlement building in 2010, and that the failure of the talks was "mostly" the fault of the Palestinians.

Ehud Barak

His warnings about the dangers of a binational state also come at a time when Israel's leaders are more preoccupied by Iran and domestic social issues.

Barak cited the American euphemism for possible military action: "All options must be on the table – we expect all those who say it to mean it," he said.

Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird, also speaking at the conference, expressed skepticism over negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear program.

"We must be clear and unequivocal – we will not back down on sanctions and pressure just for Iran showing up at the negotiating table," Baird said, referring to recent talks between the major powers and Iran to set the terms for negotiations on access to Iran's nuclear program.

Iran insists its nuclear program is peaceful, while western intelligence agencies believe it is close to having the capability to manufacture a nuclear weapon.

Hungarian Jews create antisemitism monitor

JTA

BUDAPEST — Hungary's Jewish communities have created a watchdog organization on antisemitism modelled after the Anti-Defamation League.

The Budapest-based, nongovernmental entity was registered recently in Hungary as the Action and Protection Foundation, or TEV by its Hungarian-language acronym, and is set to have six employees and about 20 volunteers by June, according to Daniel Bodnar, chair of the organization's board.

Bodnar said TEV is made up of delegates from the major organizations representing Hungarian Jews.

"We decided to create this body out of the realization that antisemitic statements have become more common and acrimonious as public discourse continues to deteriorate in Hungary, a country which unfortunately has a strong, par excellence neo-Nazi party in its Parliament," Bodnar said in reference to Jobbik, the country's third-largest party.

In November, a senior lawmaker for Jobbik said in Parliament that Jews needed to be listed as "security threats," drawing international condemnations and triggering several protest rallies in Hungary.

"A body which monitors and counters this phenomenon is now sadly a pressing necessity for the Jewish community because it is affecting the quality of life of this community of about 100,000 Jews," Bodnar, a leading member of the Chabad-affiliated EMIH, Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation, told *JTA* at EMIH's Budapest offices. TEV will be headquartered in a nearby building, he said.

The Hungarian authorities do not collect data specifically relating to antisemitism, according to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' annual report for 2012.

Bodnar added that despite verbal and political antisemitism, "physical attacks are very rare, virtually nonexistent, in Hungary and are not comparable with what we see in France and other western European countries."

"We need to instil the awareness that any offence can and needs to be reported – an awareness that exists in the U.S. and other western countries," he said.

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Hamas warns Obama against Temple Mount visit

Elhanan Miller
The Times of Israel

Responding to unconfirmed rumours that U.S. President Barack Obama intends to visit the Temple Mount in Jerusalem during his trip to Israel this month, Hamas recently warned the American leader against the idea.

The terror group called it "a diplomatic catastrophe," in a statement issued on Feb. 26, and local Muslim leaders set stiff conditions for a presidential tour there.

Hamas said Obama's potential visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, located at the southern perimeter of the mount, is "an imminent danger that the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Jerusalem have never faced."

Hamas stated that a visit by the American president to the contested site under the auspices of "the Zionist occupation" would be more dangerous than the relocation of any country's embassy to Jerusalem, considering the international pre-eminence of the United States.

Ekrima Sabri

The Temple Mount, revered by Jews as the site of the First and Second Temples, and by Muslims as the point from which Muhammad ascended to heaven, is administered by the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf, a trust that has governed the site since the 12th century.

Ekrima Sabri, who used to administer the Temple Mount as mufti of Jerusalem and currently heads the High Islamic Council in Jerusalem, told the *Times of Israel* that Obama would be allowed to visit the site only if he abided by three conditions.

According to a protocol drafted by the Waqf in 1967, official visitors may enter the Temple Mount through any of its 11 gates, excluding the Mughrabi Gate, which is connected to the Western Wall plaza by a bridge.

"The Israeli army stole the keys to that gate from the Islamic Waqf, so entry through that gate gives the impression that Israel has sovereignty over Al-Aqsa," Sabri said.

"We insist on Muslim sovereignty over the Temple Mount," he said.

Israel took control of Jerusalem's Old City, including the Temple Mount, in the 1967 Six Day War.

The other conditions placed by the Waqf on Obama's visit are that no Israeli official accompany the president onto the mount, and that the visit be of a sight-seeing rather than a political nature.

Sabri said that in the past, visiting officials – including French president Jacques Chirac, Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI – abided by the Waqf's regulations.

"If Obama does not abide by these rules, we will refuse to accept him in Al-Aqsa," Sabri said, adding that his organization intended to send a petition to the American consul general in Jerusalem next week outlining its conditions and protesting Israeli attempts to "Judaize" Jerusalem.

The White House gave no indication that Obama actually planned to visit the Temple Mount.

A visit to the site by former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon while he was opposition leader in September 2000 is widely regarded as the immediate precursor – Israel says it was a pretext – for the outburst of the second intifadah, marked by a strategic onslaught of Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel, and referred to by Palestinians as the Al-Aqsa intifadah.

Timesofisrael.com

'Ignorant, hateful attack on the Jewish People'

Continued from page 1

In a March 4 interview with the *Jerusalem Post*, Baird said he "deplores" Erdogan's remarks and that they are "incredibly unhelpful."

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, chief rabbi of Moscow and the head of the Conference of European Rabbis, said Erdogan's criticism of Zionism amounted to antisemitism.

"This is an ignorant and hateful attack on the Jewish People and against a movement with peace at its core, which relegates Prime Minster Erdogan to the level of [Iranian President] Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and to Soviet leaders who used anti-Zionism as a euphemism for antisemitism," Rabbi Goldschmidt said in an emailed statement.

"The irony of these comments will not be lost on the families of those slaughtered during the Armenian genocide, a crime still not recognized by the Turkish government," he added.

About 17,000 Jews live in Turkey, a country of 76 million people.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's spokesperson issued a statement March 1 condemning the remarks. "The secretary general believes it is unfortunate that such hurtful and divisive comments were uttered at a meeting being held under the theme of responsible leadership."

UN Watch, a Geneva-based watchdog group monitoring anti-Israel bias and human rights abuses at the organization, also condemned the Turkish leader's remarks last week.

In a statement, the group also criticized the UN chief – "who was present on the stage yet stayed silent" – for not immediately condemning Erdogan's remarks.

"We remind Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that his predecessor Kofi Annan recognized that the UN's 1975 Zionism-is-racism resolution was an expression of antisemitism, and he welcomed its repeal," it said in a statement.

David Koschitzky, chair of Canada's Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, in a letter to Tuncay Babali, Turkey's ambassador to Canada, urged Erdogan to publicly apologize to Israel and the Jewish people "as an important first step toward undoing the damage caused by his offensive remaks and wrong-headed policies."

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt

Israel and Turkey enjoyed close diplomatic and business relations for years until a gradual deterioration accelerated after the May 2010 Gaza flotilla incident, in which clashes between pro-Palestinian activists and IDF troops aboard the Mavi Marmara ship resulted in the deaths of nine Turkish citizens and injuries to several Israeli soldiers. Relations between Ankara and Jerusalem have since remained sour, with Turkey demanding an apology and compensation for the families of those killed as prerequisites for the warming of ties.

In related developments earlier last week, a report on xenophobia in the Turkish media said Jews and Armenians had the most hateful writings against them of any group in Turkey.

The report by the Hrant Dink Foundation, a human rights watchdog, is based on material that appeared in 16 national circulation newspapers and another 1,000 local publications between last September and December, according to an article about the report that appeared Feb. 28 in *Hurriyet*, a Turkish daily.

The researchers found 39 instances of anti-Jewish writings in Turkish newspapers during the period, which accounted for 25 per cent of the total of hateful articles. The levels were slightly lower for Armenians. The third most targeted group was Christians with 18 per cent.

Timesofisrael.com, with files from JTA and The CJN

Israel Briefs

Will Obama postpone visit?

U.S. President Barack Obama will call off his imminent visit to Israel if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has not managed to form a new governing coalition by March 16, an Israeli television report said last week. Obama is due to arrive in Israel on March 20 for a working visit, his first as president.

Netanyahu seeks more time

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with President Shimon Peres last week to request an extension in forming a government. Under the law, Netanyahu can ask for an extension of up to two weeks, which Peres has said he'll approve.

No violence or foul play

The preliminary results of Arafat Jaradat's autopsy revealed no signs of violence or poisoning, Israeli pathologists said Feb. 28, contradicting previous statements by a Palestinian doctor who attended the procedure. Jaradat died Feb. 23 of what Israeli officials said was a heart attack while in custody at Megiddo Prison. The Palestinian Authority was quick to lay blame at Israel's feet, following the report of a Palestinian pathologist who attended the Feb. 24 autopsy and determined the 30-year-old gas station attendant had been tortured to death and had not died of cardiac arrest. A team of Israeli doctors, pathologists and forensic specialists reported, based on an examination of microscopic remains from Jaradat's body that "no evidence was found of poisoning and no evidence was found of physical violence." According to a Health Ministry statement, Jaradat's internal bleeding and fractured bones were characteristic of the 50 minutes of resuscitation attempts made by prison and emergency response staff to save his life.

Hospital, church aid kids

An Israeli hospital near Tel Aviv is partnering with the Living Bread International Church to provide medical care to children in Gaza and the West Bank. The Jerusalem-based church and the Assaf Harofeh Medical Center are calling the project "Rescue the Child." Israeli and Palestinian authorities have approved the co-ordination of the project and the moving of the patients from Gaza and the West Bank into Israel for treatment.

Iranians aid Hamas

Iranian rocket specialists are in the Gaza Strip helping terror groups develop their arsenal of projectiles, Palestinian security officials said Feb. 26, hours after a rocket was fired at Israel for the first time in months. Representatives of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard are helping Hamas and Islamic Jihad develop long-range rockets, the Hebrew news site *Walla* reported, citing the unnamed Palestinian officials. Israeli officials confirmed there is an Iranian presence in Gaza, adding it isn't the first time Iranian officials have entered the strip, said the report, which could not be independently confirmed.

Files from JNS.org and Times of Israel

Syria elected to UN decolonization committee

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Apparently, when it comes to elections to plum United Nations positions – such as rapporteur of a decolonization committee – representing a country that murders its own people in the tens of thousands does not disqualify you.

Last week the permanent representative of the Syrian government, Bashar Jaafari, was unanimously re-elected as rapporteur of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization.

Jaafari will serve as a special rapporteur to oppose the "subjugation, domination and exploitation" of peoples.

Meanwhile, the UN itself has accused the Syrian regime of killing 70,000 of its own people in a bloody civil war that has raged for more than two years. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has accused Syria of victimizing women by using rape as a weapon of war.

Recently, Vuk Jeremic, president of the General Assembly, joined Navi Pillay, the UN's high commissioner for human rights, in criticizing the lack of an international response to Syrian violence.

UN Watch, a non-governmental organization based in Geneva, called on UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, as well as U.S. and European diplomats, to condemn the "revolting and absurd" re-election of Jaafari.

Posters of Syrian President, Bashar el-Assad, can be found throughout the country even though his regime, fighting for its life. The UN has accused the Syrian regime of killing some 70,000 Syrian civilians. ***[Wikimedia Commons photo]***

"The UN is helping the Assad regime portray itself as a UN human rights arbiter. That's indefensible and an insult to Syria's victims," said Hillel Neuer, director of UN Watch.

"It's contradictory and it makes no sense," Neuer told *The CJN*.

While senior UN officials speak out against Syrian atrocities, "the system of elections is entrenched. It's immoral and amoral," he said.

Neuer attributed Jaafari's re-election to purely political considerations – backroom horse-trading on an international level. Positions in UN bodies are apportioned on a regional basis, and regional groups vote for colleagues in exchange for support later. **The result is that some of the worst human rights offenders seek and attain prestigious posts on human rights bodies.**

"The sad reality is that in the UN system, mass murderers get elected to high posts," Neuer said.

In addition to Jaafari's re-appointment, Syrian representatives were elected in November 2011 – while the massacres were ongoing – to two UNESCO human rights committees. As well, Sudan was named to a senior position on ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council), while Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Venezuela, all human rights violators, were named to the UN's Human Rights Council.

Countries that are human rights violators seek these sorts of appointments to deflect attention from their own human rights records, and the Syrian news agency SANA is already trumpeting Jaafari's appointment, Neuer said.

Late last week, a UN venue was again the scene for an anti-Israel diatribe.

Speaking at the Vienna forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, a UN body for west-Islam dialogue and tolerance, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan called Zionism a "crime against humanity" and compared it to antisemitism, fascism and Islamophobia.

Ban sat silently through Erdogan's statements, which UN Watch characterized as the misuse of a global forum "to incite hatred" and "Ahmadinejad-style pronouncements," a reference to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's repeated anti-Israel and antisemitic statements.

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Young playwright tackles the Holocaust

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Reflecting on her exacting craft, Canadian playwright Hannah Moscovitch talks about the difficult trick of "pulling something from nothing."

"I tend to write without knowing where I'm going," she explained in an interview. "I believe in the emergence of an idea while I'm writing. I write to find an idea."

This method may seem chaotic to those who prefer a tightly scripted outline. But for Moscovitch, spontaneity is extremely important. Indeed, it is her modus operandi in the creative process, her passport to a world of imagination.

Judging by the arc of her career, Moscovitch's approach has served her rather well.

At the age of 34, she is one of Canada's most accomplished young playwrights. The Tarragon Theatre's playwright-in-residence, Moscovitch has written 11 plays since 2005, some of which have won Dora Mavor Moore Awards and one of which was nominated for a Governor General's Award.

With a new year having begun, Moscovitch is in the news again, thanks to her association with Toronto's Tarragon Theatre. Until March 24, it is staging four of her plays – *In This World, This Is War, Little One* and *Other People's Children*, her newest play. All four plays will hit the road after that.

As well, she is writing a play for the Stratford Festival and the Manhattan Theatre Club, working on an adaptation of Anne-Marie MacDonald's novel, *Fall on Your Knees*, and adapting Alison Pick's novel, *Far to Go*, for the screen.

In addition, she is working on a new play about Jewish gangsters. "I love badassed Jews," she said with a glint of mischief in her eyes.

As reviewers have consistently observed, Moscovich's talent lies in an ability to mix tragedy with humour and leaven intellect with emotion.

"There is always dark humour in my work. I'm interested in showing a world that is complex, where people can be very malicious or very generous. We have a great capacity for good and evil. It's hard to understand people without understanding their complexity."

Moscovitch, originally from Ottawa but now based in Toronto, discovered her niche while studying acting at the National Theatre School in Montreal, in which she enrolled after spending several months on a kibbutz in the Galilee.

Hannah Moscovitch

Upon discovering that she was more interested in achieving contact with the text of a play rather than in wringing the meaning out of it as an actor, she dashed off her debut play, *Don't Walk Alone*, in 1999. Read and work-shopped at the National Theatre School, it was a turning point for her. As she observed, "It became immediately evident to me that I was better at playwrighting than acting."

Nonetheless, she remained in the National Theatre School's acting program. But after graduating, Moscovitch rejected an opportunity to audition for a role at the Stratford Festival and thereby effectively turned her back on a career as an actor. "I was not that fond of acting," she said. "I felt called to writing. I had a vision of the world I wanted to communicate."

Moscovitch moved to Toronto to realize her dream, but it was a hard slog. As she continued to hone her skills as a budding playwright, she settled down to complete a BA in literature at the University of Toronto.

To support herself, she took odd jobs as an actor and a drama teacher, and toiled as a server and bartender at a restaurant, where she was exposed to a sexist environment and the vagaries of human behaviour.

"My life was uncertain and unstable," she recalled.

But persevering, Moscovitch wrote *Essay*, a play concerning gender politics in academia and staged in 2005. She took a further step forward in 2006 with *The Russian Play*, a romance that unfolds during the Stalinist era in the former Soviet Union.

By this juncture, she was no longer a student, having dropped out of the University of Toronto. "My dad jokes I'm the only member of the family without a degree," she chuckled.

Her Jewish father, Allan Moscovitch, teaches economics at Carleton University, while her Catholic mother, Julie White, works as a labour researcher. Moscovitch's younger sister, Sarah, is an intern at a publishing company.

With *East of Berlin*, premièred at the Tarragon Theatre in 2007, Moscovitch hit her stride as a professional playwright. As she put it, "I had worked out my voice and learned how to structure a play."

Looking back, she believes that two events catapulted her to her current status as one of Canada's leading playwrights.

The Russian Play, written when she was a University of Toronto student, was picked up by the Magnetic North Theatre Festival in Ottawa. Shortly afterward, the Tarragon Theatre mounted a production of *East of Berlin*.

In retrospect, she agrees that these plays were of the utmost importance. "I got offered a bunch of commissions from theatres across Canada," she said. "I was now on their radar."

Two of her plays, *East of Berlin* and *The Children's Republic*, have delved into the Holocaust.

Moscovitch, who was brought up Jewish, was drawn to the Holocaust when she was 12. "I was obsessed with it," she said. "I remember asking my father: how many people is six million?"

East of Berlin, her first foray into this genre and the recipient of the Governor General's Award nomination, turned on the legacy of the Holocaust and focused on the relationship between the son of a Nazi war criminal and the daughter of an Auschwitz concentration camp survivor.

She submitted *The Children's Republic* after writing *In This World*, which deals with racial and sexual politics, and *The Huron Bride*, a treatment about the supernatural.

The Children's Republic, set in the Warsaw Ghetto, was produced in 2009 and was inspired by her visit to Poland as a teenage participant in the March of the Living, an annual educational tour of former extermination camps.

"It had an incalculable effect on me," she mused. "The Holocaust is never far from my thoughts. It overshadows my life. I see extremes of human behaviour in the Holocaust."

Apart from connecting her to such an horrific and unprecedented event, the March of the Living forced Moscovitch to sadly acknowledge that some Jews do not even consider her Jewish.

During the trip to Poland, an Orthodox rabbi pointedly questioned her identity as a Jew. His comments left a bitter taste in her mouth: "I went to Hebrew school. I had a bat mitzvah. We kept kosher. I went to temple. I know all the prayers."

Since the March of the Living, Moscovitch has adopted an ambivalent approach to her Jewishness. When she was asked whether she considers herself Jewish, she replied, "Yes and no. I identify completely, yet not at all."

Moscovitch, however, remains deeply Jewish. She plans to marry her fiancé, the theatre director Christian Barry, with whom she has worked, in a Jewish ceremony. The wedding date is set for the summer of 2014.

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
President

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

'PLAYFULLY PROVOCATIVE' FILM *COWJEWS AND INDIANS* TO HEADLINE TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

Marc Halberstadt's "playfully provocative" film *CowJews and Indians* will be the headliner at this spring's Toronto Jewish Film Festival, TJFF organizers announced last week.

In a nutshell, *CowJews and Indians* offers a quirky Swiftian modest proposal as its main thesis. North American Jews are owed reparation money from Germany for the Holocaust, the filmmaker observes, and native Americans are owed reparations from the Europeans who deprived them of their lands. The thesis is that natives should "skip the middleman" and seek reparation payments directly from Germany.

"I think Marc is an idiot for even coming up with the idea," said former Mohawk chief **Cheryl Jacobs** about the film. The quote comes directly from the TJFF's promotional material, which further describes the film as "*Borat* meets **Michael Moore**."

But the filmmakers and producers earnestly describe *CowJews and Indians* as "a serious, unflinching yet entertaining examination of both Jewish and native American displacement, and the contributing causes." It was screened at a Beverley Hills film festival last November but positive comments about it on the Internet seem highly elusive.

The festival opens April 11 and closes 10 days later with *Hava Nagila*, a cinematic "look at the history of the song that represents both kitsch and continuity." tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• • •

The Book of Life: The Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto has published *The Book of Life – A Decade of Stories*, edited by **Bonnie Goldstein** and **Jackie Shulman**. The large, attractive volume offers a collection of narratives from some 250 people, deemed "legacy holders," who tell their life stories or philosophies and share their reflections. As part of its philanthropic endeavours the foundation collects about 10 such stories with photographs each year; a wide cross-section of the city's Jewish community is represented. 416-631-5703.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Friends of Yiddish presents the film *Wayne and Shuster: Brilliant Pioneers of North American TV Comedy*, in Yiddish with English subtitles. Featuring **Adam Fuerstenberg** and **Shlomo Schwartzberg** introducing the film. Non-members $5. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. Sunday March 10, 2 p.m.

• Film critic **Adam Nayman** discusses the films *The Hudsucker Proxy* and *Intolerable Cruelty* as examples of screwball comedy in the latest instalment of his series on "The Coen Brothers in Naymen's Terms." $12, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC. Monday, March 11, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Active Seniors & Boomers presents art educator **Osnat Lipa** who discusses French Impressionist artists. $4. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, March 14, 1:30 p.m.

• **Arthur Schnitzler's** *La Ronde*, first published at the turn of the last century, was sensationally banned for its frank sexual content. A new stage production adapted by **Jason Sherman** opens at Soulpepper on March 26. soulpepper.ca.

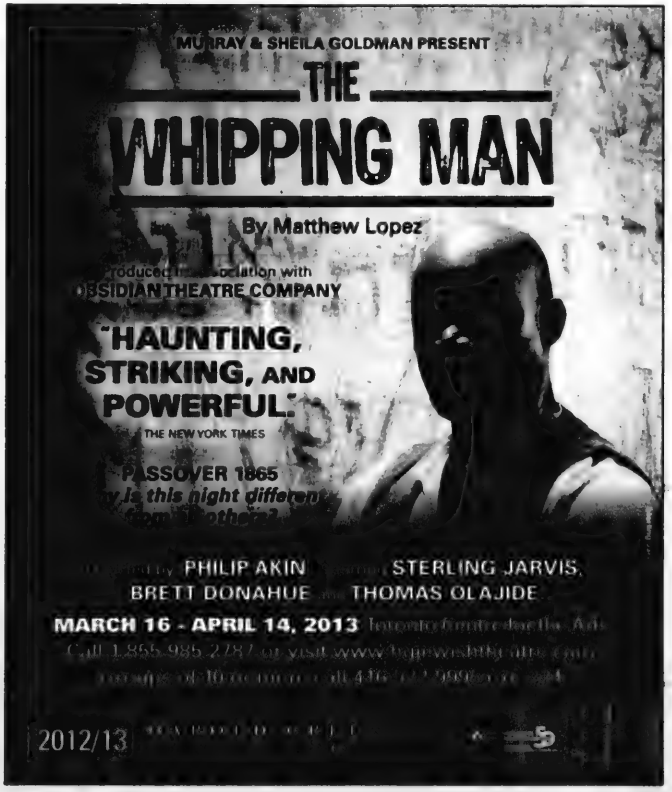
Marc Halberstadt's "playfully provocative" film *CowJews and Indians* will be the headliner at this spring's Toronto Jewish Film Festival.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *Scrap*, an exhibition of works by **Rochelle Rubinstein**, includes the two large-scale, block-printed, painted and carved wood panels *Senescence* and *Sonogram*. In *Senescence*, the framework is a repetition of the Hebrew text of *Kaddish*, the mourner's prayer, while *Sonogram* depicts a fetal sonogram using dozens of prints of fish, babies, stones and flying women; the amniotic fluid resembles a pond, overflowing with vibrant life, while an incongruously placed yellow sock represents the only surviving remnant of a half-brother murdered in Auschwitz. Loop Gallery, 1273 Dundas St. W. Until March 24. The artist participates in a Q&A session, Sunday, March 24, 2 p.m. 416-516-2581.

• The Art Gallery of Ontario is partnering with the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles to present a large exhibition of rare Florentine masterpieces including more than 90 paintings, manuscripts, sculptures and stained glass from the 14th century. *Revealing the Early Renaissance – Stories and Secrets in Florentine Art* opens March 16 and runs to June 16. www.ago.net.



Top Israeli clarinetist to perform in Canada

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

Israeli clarinetist Anat Cohen is on top of the music world. She has been voted as clarinetist of the year six years in a row (2007 to 2012) by both the Jazz Journalists Association and *Downbeat Magazine*. She has been compared to Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw, who are considered by many as the greatest clarinetists in history.

Cohen will be performing in concert March 8 in Edmonton and March 9 and10 in Winnipeg. There are no other Canadian shows planned as of yet.

"Being clarinetist of the year is an honour that I will never take for granted, and I appreciate all the support from the jazz music critics and my fans. Lots of people associate the clarinet as exclusively for folk music and klezmer music, but the clarinet is a prime musical instrument in jazz as well," the 36-year-old Cohen said in a phone interview.

In her upcoming concerts, Cohen will play music from the latest of her six CDs, *Claroscuro*, which features 11 songs that range in style from New Orleans to Brazilian and New York City jazz. Released last October, the CD has been praised by jazz writers as showcasing Cohen's innovative arrangements on both the clarinet and the saxophone.

"I enjoy playing different styles of jazz. I pay tribute to Artie Shaw in *La Vie En Rose* and feature New Orleans jazz in *And The World Weeps* on *Claroscuro*."

Anat is not the only Cohen in her family to have become an acclaimed musician. She often joins brothers Avishai and Yuval on tour in concert, calling themselves The Three Cohens.

Anat Cohen

The Cohens all excelled as jazz musicians in Israel where they grew up. The trio has strong roots as well in Boston, where they studied music at the Berklee College Of Music.

Avishai Cohen, the youngest of the trio, plays the trumpet, and elder brother, Yuval, plays the soprano saxophone.

"We all had talent and were influenced by the jazz recordings that we heard from our father in the house. I took to jazz when Avishai played the trumpet. But our skills became honed when Berklee did recruiting in Israel for all of us to get music scholarships. First, they wanted Yuval, then me and then Avishai," Anat Cohen said.

As The Three Cohens, Anat and her brothers recorded the CD *Family* last year.

However, Anat has been the most acclaimed of the three, and is astute as both an artist and a music entrepreneur.

She has released her six CDs on her Anzic Records label, including the highly acclaimed *Clarinetwork* (2010), a salute to Benny Goodman on his centennial.

Cohen studied classical music at age 12, but switched to jazz in high school, playing for the Jaffa Conservatory Dixieland Band. Prior to enrolling at Berklee, she served in the Israeli military, playing in the Israeli Armed Forces Band.

"Our soldiers put their lives at risk every day, so it was a great honour to play for them, and [I was] proud of all I achieved, even before going to Berklee".

After graduating from Berklee in 1998, Cohen developed world music genres in Afro-Cuban, Argentine tango, Brazilian, klezmer and other world music genres.

"Oddly enough, most of us think of klezmer as Jewish music, but the minor sound in the clarinet is found in other cultures as well. The great thing about playing music is that I think of myself as an international musician with no borders."

Although she has lived in New York for the past 20 years, Cohen is considered a music ambassador for Israel.

"I feel blessed that people view me as an ambassador of music for Israel, even if I perform not only in Israel, but all over the world."

Anat Cohen will perform March 8 at 9 p.m. at Yardbird Suite in Edmonton. For tickets, call 780-432-0438 or go to www.yardbirdsuite.com.

She will also do three shows March 9 at 8 p.m. and March 10 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Rady Jewish Community Centre Winnipeg. For tickets, call 204-477-7534 or go to www.radyjcc.com

New symphony features the sounds of Toronto

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

Classical music composer Tod Machover has created a most unusual gift for Toronto residents.

As part of this week's annual Toronto Symphony Orchestra's New Creations Festival, Machover worked with some 10,000 collaborators for almost 15 months via the Internet to create *A Toronto Symphony: Concerto For Composer And City*, which will have its world premiere March 9 at Roy Thomson Hall.

Torontonians collaborated with Machover and the TSO by blog and email, Skype and smartphone, using audio and video recording and streaming, and through numerous face-to-face meetings and music-making sessions in the city.

"I love collaboration. Music should be central in people's lives. Today, music is often an afterthought as background to riding the elevator or shopping at a mall. So, the idea of collaborating with Torontonians to create a symphony interested me, both because I thought it would lead to a diverse and timely musical portrait of this wonderful city, and also because I felt that it would propose a new model for people with diverse musical backgrounds and experience to work together towards a common goal," said Machover, 59.

"We embarked on an adventure that has led me to new sounds, new friendships, new discoveries about Toronto, and new ideas about musical storytelling. When I started the project, my hope was to convey how the incredible diversity of Toronto is wrapped in a beautiful and unified connectivity. The audience will hear and also see the sounds of Toronto on the subway, in the parks and streets, dancing and walking, to create the beautiful mosaic of ethnic groups that make up Toronto."

Tod Machover

To add to the excitement of the world premiere of *A Toronto Symphony: Concerto For Composer and City*, the CN Tower will feature a customized light show synchronized with the music to be heard at Roy Thomson Hall.

"Our city needs a symphony of our own, and it was due to Tod's vision and the thousands of collaborators in Toronto, [that we could] create a music composition that will make us all proud," said TSO music director Peter Oundjian, who will conduct the new composition.

Machover is widely regarded in music circles not only for his imaginative compositions, but for being a leader in music technology as well – his mother is a pianist and his father is a computer scientist. The composer has created new instruments to augment the sound of traditional instruments, including the hypercello, hyperpiano, hyperviolin and hyperscores, all invented by him at the Massachusetts Institute Of Technology in 1986.

"The hyper instruments involve computers that augment and enhance the sound. The result is that the cello not only has a rich and vibrant sound, but could be accessed in the musical spectrum to also sound like other instruments. I am also proud of hyperscores, which is a visual device that can help novices compose music."

Machover's innovative technologies and approaches to composing music have made him a sought-after collaborator.

He created an opera titled *Death And The Power*, featuring singers, visual screens and robots that enhanced the music. The 2010 opera debuted in Chicago and was praised by opera fans for its innovations.

Machover has also worked on creating new composition for cellist Yo Yo Ma and violinist Joshua Bell among other artists, and he was a finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music.

He hopes to visit Israel soon. "I am very proud of my Jewish roots and want to go to Israel and perhaps work with the many gifted musicians there," he said.

Tod Machover's A Toronto Symphony: Concert For Composer And City, *has its world premiere March 9, 8 p.m., at Roy Thomson Hall in downtown Toronto. Also on the same program on the final night of the TSO New Creations Festival will be* Four Angels, *composed by Andrew Staniland, and Steven Mackey's* Four Iconoclastic Episodes. *For tickets, call 416-593-4828 or go to www.tso.ca.*

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Jaffa Road thrilled about Juno nomination

From left, Aaron Lightstone, Chris Gartner, Aviva Chernick, Sundar Viswanathan, Jeff Wilson. *(Steve Carty photo)*

Cara Stern
CJN Staff

Toronto multi-ethnic band Jaffa Road has been nominated for a Juno Award for its sophomore album, *Where the Light Gets In*, which was released in October last year.

This is the second nomination for Jaffa Road, whose first album, *Sunplace*, was nominated for a 2010 Juno Award, also in the World Music Album of the Year category.

Vocalist Aviva Chernick called it a dream come true to receive this recognition. "It brings Jewish culture forward to the Canadian cultural sphere," she said. "We're part of a whole movement of people who are slowly edging Jewish culture more into the main so it's not ghettoized, so that it can be celebrated as a voice in our national arena."

The band blends influences from Jewish, Ladino and Indian music, jazz, and more.

Guitarist and oud player Aaron Lightstone said he was overwhelmed with feelings of excitement and accomplishment, as well as gratitude when he heard the news.

"We also saw the other nominees, and my first thought was that we're in some pretty good company," he said. "The competition is pretty stiff."

Even if Jaffa Road doesn't win, the band will feel honoured to have been included in the category, Lightstone said. "There are some great albums that didn't even get nominated."

Chernick said she is thrilled to find the band nominated in the same category as Danny Michel, whose album, *Black Birds Are Dancing Over Me*, is her current favourite.

"It's the album we play in my house to dance around to and share joy, and I couldn't believe it, that we're nominated with him," she said.

Jaffa Road spent almost a year on and off working on the newest album, said Chris Gartner, bassist and producer. It was the result of a collaborative effort involving a team of people that includes four guest artists.

It's a huge accomplishment that a group with Hebrew music and obvious Jewish influences could reach such mainstream appeal, band members say.

"As much as we value and appreciate the support we've received from the Jewish community, we have a bit of a bigger vision for the band and what we think the band could do," Lightstone said.

He added that the band's success shows that Canadians are open to any kind of artistic expression. "There are other cultural communities doing this sort of thing – taking an aspect of one cultural heritage and putting it in the blender with everything else that's around us in a multicultural mix and producing something new," he said.

Chernick said Canadians who speak Hebrew can turn on the radio and hear their language, and people have thanked her for contributing to that effort. "They heard a piece of themselves on the radio," she said. "That's the joy for me."

Lightstone said he found the group was being taken more seriously after the first Juno nomination. If he wants to play at a festival, for example, having the nomination attracts attention from the organizers.

"Even if we don't end up getting the gig, at least I get call-backs now," he said.

He also thinks it helped put a spotlight on the band, helping it stand out in the vast Canadian music scene.

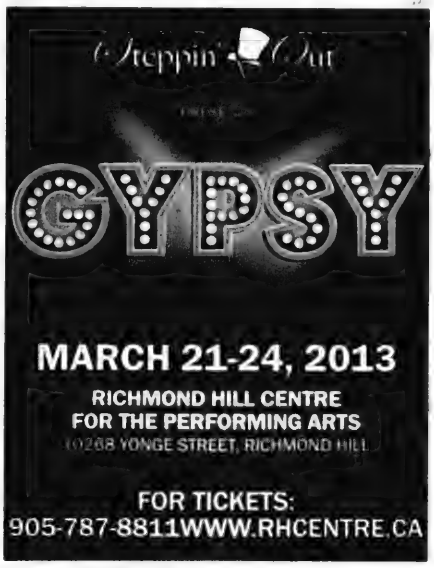
It "makes it a little easier to be noticed in that very large crowd where there is a lot of high-quality music coming out of Canada," he said, adding that he is looking forward to the awards ceremony for the opportunity it presents to connect with this network of acclaimed musicians.

Chernick said she is also looking forward to the ceremony, which she described as intimate despite being in a large room.

"You get to hear people speak about their journeys making the music. It feels good to be a part of it all," she said. "It's like other artists, working away in the woodshops, fine-detailing the piece for hours and hours, and all of sudden you get to be with people who appreciate it, and it makes it come alive."

She said she's especially looking forward to representing the community of people who have supported the band over the years.

The 2013 Juno Awards take place on April 21 in Regina.



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Fichman plays key role as Canada advances in Fed Cup

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

MIAMI — Sharon Fichman of Toronto led the way for Canada to advance in Fed Cup tennis play with three wins in singles and two in doubles against four nations at the Americas zonal competition in Colombia recently.

The Canadians will now play in Ukraine in the world Group 2 playoffs in April, reaching the Group 2 playoff for the first time since 2011.

Fed Cup tennis is a year-round global competition for women involving 64 nations, much as Davis Cup is for men.

Fichman and her three teammates were impressive in combining to defeat their opponents with a stunning 9-1 win-loss record over the three days of competition. Fichman played both singles and doubles, as the number 2 seeded Canadian, behind Eugenie Bouchard.

After sweeping Peru 3-0, Venezuela 3-0, and host nation Colombia 2-0, the Canadians had a tougher time in the final round-robin matches against Brazil. In the first match, Fichman won the first set easily 6-0 against Paulina Goncalves, but the Brazilian rallied in the final two sets to win the match 0-6, 6-0, 6-4 to give Brazil a 1-0 lead.

"I lost concentration and did not fight as hard as I should have. Goncalves deserves credit for coming from behind for the win," Fichman said following the loss.

Bouchard evened things for Canada at 1-1 after she beat Telina Pereira 6-2, 6-2 to set up the final match in doubles.

Fichman teamed with Gabriela Dabrowski in a hard fought doubles win 7-6(4), 7-5 over Pereira and Laura Pigossi to defeat Brazil 2-1 and advance to the Group 2 playoffs.

Trailing 2-5 in the opening set, Dabrowski and Fichman rallied with two breaks of service to take the first set to a 7-4 tie break win and broke serve once in the second set for the decisive victory against the Brazilians.

"I felt much better with the doubles win for my team after I lost. It was a doubles match that we could have easily lost, but Gabriela and I fought hard and pulled out the win," said Fichman, who celebrated the win with her teammates by rallying around the Canadian flag after the final match.

"Sharon showed much heart, with her belief in herself and fought hard in every match," Canadian Fed Cup coach Sylvan Bruneau said. "I was especially impressed how she rallied following her loss."

Prior to the final round-robin matches against Brazil, Fichman contributed to Canada's victory by defeating Katerina Miranda-Chang of Peru 6-2, 6-2 and Andrea Gamiz of Venezuela 6-1, 7-5, as well as having a 6-2, 6-1 doubles win with Dabrowski against Ferri Angles Paz and Ximera Siles-Luna of Peru.

"Hopefully, our Fed Cup will keep the positive momentum going... in Ukraine," Bruneau said.

The 22-year-old Fichman is the first Jewish player to play Fed Cup for Canada since Vicki Berner of Vancouver who played from 1964 to 1968. Fichman has a total win-loss record of 20-6 since she started playing Fed Cup in 2005.

Since the Fed Cup competition, Fichman has improved her ranking to 128th (as of Feb. 25) on the pro tennis circuit, her highest since being ranked No. 114 in March 2010.

"Winning in Fed Cup has given Sharon a lot of confidence. I expect her ranking to continue to climb this year," Bruneau said.

Fichman finished her junior career ranked fifth in the world in 2006, and she won the prestigious Orange Bowl junior title in 2003.

She was born in Toronto two years after her parents immigrated from Israel in 1988. Her parents moved to Israel from Romania in 1983.

Fichman started playing tennis at age five, following her brother Thomas, who was a top Canadian player in the 14-and-under category. She is the youngest athlete, at age 14, to have won a gold medal at the Maccabiah Games in Israel, which she did in 2005.

Should Jesse Levine play Davis Cup for Canada in April as expected, Fichman and Levine would become the first Canadian Jewish man and woman to play Davis and Fed Cup in the same year since 1968.

Sharon Fichman

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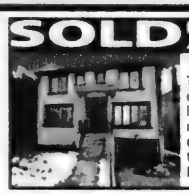

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IDF prepares for security threats from Syria

Ben Sales
JTA

KATZRIN, Israel — For nearly 40 years, Israel's border with Syria has been, perhaps improbably, its quietest.

The two countries technically have been in a state of war since the ceasefire that ended the 1973 Yom Kippur War. But over the past four decades, while Israel's other borders occasionally have exploded with missile salvos, intifadahs, shooting incidents and cross-border terrorist attacks, the Syrian frontier on the Golan Heights has stayed largely peaceful.

With Syria now entering a critical phase in its bloody, two-year civil war, however, the years of quiet may end. The Syrian fighting has claimed an estimated 70,000 lives, according to UN officials, and recently spread to Damascus, Syria's capital city. Analysts warn that the regime of President Bashar Assad could collapse in a matter of months or even weeks.

In its place may come Islamist terrorist groups seeking to take advantage of the power vacuum and attack Israel on the Golan border, Israelis fear.

"There won't be a country called Syria," said Oded Eran, a former Israeli ambassador to Jordan and the European Union. "Then there's no central rule. It creates a vacuum for terrorists to enter the space. It will be a wonderful opportunity to attack Israel."

Analysts do see some bright spots to the fall of Assad, whose regime is a key ally of the Hezbollah terrorist group and Iran, and serves as Iran's main corridor for funnelling arms to Hezbollah. A Syrian rebel victory would hinder that corridor.

That would be "a major blow to Hezbollah and Iran," said Eyal Zisser, a Syria expert at Tel Aviv University. "Hezbollah will stay there, but it will be much weaker."

But Prof. Mordechai Kedar, a Syria expert at Bar-Ilan University, says Israel could face increased danger in the near future. In the long term, Kedar said, Assad's regime may be replaced by a government more amenable to peace with Israel. But before he falls, Assad might transfer his large stock of chemical weapons to Hezbollah.

The Syrian conflict already has spilled over into Israel – a bit. In November, stray Syrian shells landed across the boundary, prompting Israel to fire back. In January, Israel reportedly bombed a weapons convoy heading from Syria into Lebanon that was thought to be carrying weapons for Hezbollah. Last month, seven Syrian men injured in fighting just over the border were brought into Israel and are being treated at an Israeli hospital.

Israeli soldiers are on high alert on the Golan Heights. *[Flash90 photo]*

In the meantime, security officials are beefing up measures in the Golan to prevent any additional spillover into Israel from the Syrian conflict. Last month, Israel announced that it would begin building a fence along its Syrian border, as it has done along its border with the Sinai.

Should the Syrian region adjacent to the Golan descend into anarchy, experts expect it to most closely resemble the Sinai. Terrorists there have taken advantage of diminished control following the overthrow of the former Egyptian leader's Hosni Mubarak regime in Cairo to smuggle in weapons and launch occasional attacks into Israel.

One significant difference between the Sinai and Syria, some analysts say, is that the Sinai is ruled by a central Egyptian government with which Israel has a formal peace accord, thus limiting Israel's military options. Operating in an anarchic Syria would not carry the same diplomatic risks.

"What's happening on our border is what's happening in Sinai," said Ely Karmon, a Hezbollah expert at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya. "But with Sinai, we have a peace agreement with Egypt. We don't have freedom of action in Sinai like we have in Syria. If there will be terrorist acts, I assume Israel will react hard."

Pazit Ravina, a columnist for the Israeli newspaper *Makor Rishon* who has been in contact with Syrian rebels adjacent to the Golan, says that Sunni and Shiite Muslim terrorist groups may not attack Israel because they will be too preoccupied fighting each other for control of Syrian territory.

"They're very tired," Ravina said. "There is not enough food. They'll be busier fighting Sunni-Shia battles than fighting Israel. It's all kinds of groups, and trying to unite them against Israel doesn't work."

For now, analysts say, Israel's options are limited. They say its best bet is to protect its border and stay out of the Syrian conflict, but react forcefully should a Syrian group try to attack the Golan. The Israeli government, which declined to comment for this story, appears to be following that policy. Other than that, analysts say, Israel should push the United States to prevent Syria from becoming a base of Iranian influence.

N.Y. couple killed in accident

JTA

NEW YORK — A New York Jewish couple was killed in a hit-and-run accident on the way to the hospital to have their first baby.

Nachman and Raizi Glauber, 21-year-old Satmar Chassidim from Brooklyn, were killed late Saturday night while riding in a cab to Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan. The driver and passenger of the car that hit the cab fled on foot and have not been identified, the *New York Post* reported.

The couple died of head injuries, according to the *Post*. The baby was born in the hospital and was in serious condition, but was initially expected to survive. However, a community spokesperson said the child died around 5:30 a.m. Monday morning.

Potash Corp determined to buy Israeli company

JTA

VANCOUVER — A Canadian fertilizer company is determined to buy a major Israeli chemical company, despite opposition among MKs and employees of the Israeli company.

Potash Corp of Saskatchewan is seeking to acquire a controlling stake in ICL, Israel Chemicals Ltd., Israel's second-largest corporation by market size.

More than 20 Israeli lawmakers met in Jerusalem on Feb. 27 to discuss the issue, with some voicing strong opposition to the deal, according to Bloomberg.

"The sale of ICL to a foreign company would be abandoning residents of the Negev region and a slap in the face of every citizen of Israel," Yesh Atid MK Meir Cohen was quoted as saying.

Potash Corp is the largest producer of the potash crop nutrient and currently owns a 14 per cent stake in ICL, which mines chemicals from the Dead Sea and is the world's sixth-largest producer of potash.

"The opposition you're seeing now is fear of the unknown," Potash Corp chief financial officer Wayne Brownlee said Feb. 26. Brownlee, speaking at a conference in Florida, said Potash Corp wouldn't cut production or lay off ICL employees.

But that hasn't placated Israel Chemicals employees, who plan to stage protests in coming weeks to try to block the deal, according to Reuters.

Before discussions begin between the companies, Potash Corp must secure approval from the Israeli government, and talks are currently suspended due to "political events," Brownlee said Feb. 26. Israel is currently in the process of forming a new government.

The removal of water from the Dead Water to mine lucrative chemical products such as potash has been blamed for the shrinking of the popular natural attraction. The flow of water into the sea was 100 million cubic metres in 2008, down from 1.4 billion cubic meters in 1948 when Israel was founded.

In additional to fertilizer, potash is also used to make glass and soap.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Camp friends to embark on 5,000-km canoe trip

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Marc Soberano has never canoed for more than two weeks at a time, but this summer, he's planning to spend at least four months retracing routes taken by early explorers of Canada.

The 23-year-old is planning to spend up to five months paddling in a canoe with five friends from Rocky Mountain House, Alta., to Lachine, Que. He's hoping a 5,000-kilometre canoe trip will be the ticket to figuring out what to do when he comes back, since he graduates from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario just before leaving on May 10.

"I'm hoping a flash of genius comes to me somewhere along the way – that the light bulb goes off and I'll figure out what I want to do for the rest of my life," he said.

The Toronto native spent time canoeing as a child attending Camp White Pine in Haliburton, Ont., but he met his five friends at Camp Tamakwa in Algonquin Park, Ont. All six of them worked at the camp as canoe trippers, which means they would take campers out on canoe trips.

Soberano said his love of canoeing doesn't have as much to do with the actual activity, but rather being outside spending time with friends.

The group, which is now called Paddling Across Canada Tour (PACT), was initially called Six Friendly Voyagers, which Soberano described as a perfect description of the team, and why he chose to participate.

The idea for the voyage began when one of Soberano's friends, Peter Vooys, had a hernia. Although it wasn't life threatening, it left him with a reminder that life is unpredictable, so he decided he wanted to go on this big adventure, Soberano said.

The team ranges in age from 22 to 31, and includes three Canadian men and one Canadian woman, one Australian man and one American woman.

The group is working away at preparing for the trip, with a mandate that each day they should get one step closer to making the trip happen, said Soberano.

"The planning that goes into this is like nothing I've ever attempted before," he said, adding that it's especially difficult given that no two members of the group live in the same city. Five are spread out in Ontario and one is in Colorado, so much of the planning happens online.

The planning involves figuring out how to evacuate if there's an emergency, or where they will resupply food, but also finding funds both for the trip and for charity. Although fundraising has been slow going so far, Soberano said he hopes they'll be able to donate to three charities that offer outdoor opportunities. These charities are Camp Outlook, Couchiching Community Initiative and the Pine Project.

Soberano said his trip isn't unique – lots of people have paddled along these routes in the past, and that means there's a wealth of information and people ready to offer advice. For example, his friend's sister's boyfriend did this trip two summers ago and has shared his experiences with Soberano.

"One segment of the trip is paddling Lake Superior – it's essentially like an ocean. At any moment the wind could pick up, and sometimes they had to sit on the shore for five to seven days waiting for the wind to calm down," he said. "That's going to be the one where we're going to be the most careful."

He'll be sharing his own experience through photos, stories, music and blogs that will be updated online throughout the journey.

This trip is the longest Soberano will be away from the Jewish community, which he thinks will make for an interesting situation.

"Hopefully, I'll let my years of Jewish education give me energy and perspective," said the graduate of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and United Synagogue Day School, who compared canoe trips to Shabbat, in that you sit around and talk with friends, without worrying about getting caught up in other parts of your life.

"Every time I've been on trips, that's when I get most spiritual," he added.

He's most looking forward to visiting the various cities he'll be paddling through, including Edmonton and Winnipeg.

"Any time we see a little civilization, it'll be interesting," adding that he hopes to meet people along the way who might offer help to the group through what he called random acts of kindness. "There's bound to be times where morale gets kind of low. The thing that keeps people going is the people they meet along the way that are enthusiastic about the trip."

Although there is still a lot to do to prepare, Soberano said he's looking forward to spending months paddling in this six-person canoe and is confident the journey will be a success.

"As long as we're making a bit of progress every day, we'll make it happen," Soberano said.

For more information, visit the website paddleacrosscanadatour.org.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Marc Soberano

אז אני צפונית

נינה שנהב
nina.shenhav@gmail.com

"אני מוטרפת, מודאגת ועצבנית!" צועקת טלי כשאנו מתיישבות. "תזמיני לי דבל אספרסו דחוף, לפני שאני משתגעת!" אני מזמינה בחשש, ומוסיפה ליתר בטחון גם ארבע עוגות שוקולד ושישה קרואסונים. שיהיה.

אני: אז מה קורה, ממי? ממה את כל כך משתגעת?

טלי: לא משנה. לא רוצה לדבר על זה, תעשי לי טובה.

אני (מושכת בכתפיי בהשלמה): טוב, אז בואי נדבר על הסיילים של ...

טלי (קוטעת אותי): אני בהלם ממך. את לא מתכוונת לשאול אותי מה קורה?!

אני: אבל הרגע שאלתי אותך ואת אמרת...

טלי: אז אמרתי. אז מה. עכשיו תתייחסי לכל שטות שאני אומרת? את לא רואה שאני שקטה מופנמת ומכונסת?! אולי עובר עלי משהו? מה עם הקפה כבר?!

אני: שקטה מופנמת ומכונסת... כן, בהחלט. אז מה עובר עלייך, מתוקה?

טלי: אי פעם סיפרתי לך על המזכירה החדשה של בעלי?

אני: אתמול בערב והבוקר בטלפון...למה מה קורה? דווקא אמרת שהיא בחורה טובה אחראית וחכמה, אחת עם ראש על הכתפיים.

טלי: ליטרלי! איפה הצוואר שלה?... אבל עזבי. לפני כמה דקות הוא מתקשר ואומר "אני צריך לנסוע לדיונים מחוץ לעיר. נישאר שם עד מחר". קולטת?!

אני: בטוח אין לו רומן איתה. השתגעת? (ואחרי שנייה) ניראה לך שיש לו?

טלי: תגידי את חושבת שאני איזו פוסטמה נאיבית שלא יודעת מהחיים שלה?

אני (בבהלה): קראת את היומן שלי? לא, ברצינות. הוא לא בוגד בך. בחייך מי תשים עליו? (ושוב בבהלה) אני מתכוונת, אמרת שהיא רק בת 27 לא? ואגב להבא, את בוחרת לו את המזכירה האישית. במשך כל חיינו מאיר ידע לבחור אך ורק מזכירים ממין זכר, ותמיד הכל הסתדר. חוץ, כמובן, מרוברט הרקדן לשעבר. שמעתי שהוא התגבר על הקראש ממאיר, בעזרת פסיכיאטר טוב.

טלי: טוב, תפסיקי לבלבל את המוח ותקשיבי לי. החלטתי. אני הולכת עכשיו הביתה, מוציאה את כל הבגדים שלו מהארון וזורקת אותם לבריכה. נכון, היא ריקה כי חורף, אז לפני זה אני גוזרת אותם. אחר כך אני הולכת לעורך דין ו... (הסלפון שלה מצלצל והיא עונה) מה אתה רוצה! (מאזינה) עכשיו? איך אני אתארגן כל כך מהר? מה אתה צריך. שתי עניבות. וגם את הז'קט האפור. ביי.

אני: תגידי את חולת נפש? את עוזרת לו לארוז? את מסיעה לו עניבות לעבודה? הבנתי שהבגדים שלו ממילא כבר תיכף גזורים ומונחים לבטח בבריכה!

טלי: הוא ביקש שאני אצטרף אליו ונעשה מזה כבר חופשה רומנטית... חייבת לארוז בגד ים, יש בריכה מחוממת במלון. ולמה את תמיד מסכסכת כל הזמן?!

PASSOVER MOLTEN CHOCOLATE CAKES

3 c semi-sweet chocolate chips
½ c margarine spread
1 tbl coffee powder, (mixed with few drops hot water)
3 tbls cocoa powder
6 eggs
1 c sugar
2 tbls potato starch
1 tbl vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375°F. Melt chocolate, margarine, coffee and cocoa over very low heat. In food processor; beat eggs and sugar until light and fluffy. Add slightly cooled chocolate mixture and mix. Add potato starch and vanilla; pulse until just combined. Pour mixture into 8-10 greased ramekins or muffin tin; bake about 12 min., or until tops are barely set and center is still slightly wet. Watch baking closely after 12 mins. Do not overbake or center will solidify. If too runny, return to oven for another couple minutes. Invert cakes onto dessert plates; serve immediately while hot. **Recipe Source:** *Levana Kirschenbaum*
Author of "The Whole Foods Kosher Kitchen"

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Montreal KANPE Foundation who have introduced a project for Haitian agronomists to do a year-long internship at the Hebrew U faculty of agriculture.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says that deadlines are sometimes very helpful.

A new Jewish dating site was launched Feb. 28, kicking it off with a party in partnership with JUMP. At JToronto, a professional matchmaker sets up the matches based on a user-submitted profile and criteria, as well as over-the-phone and in-person discussions with each applicant. Once a potential match has been made, each side gets a chance to approve the match, and once they do, the man is expected to call the woman within three days.

At the launch of JToronto

Hating Jews, hating the Roma

Only recently have I started to learn about anti-Roma (Gypsy) sentiment.

I've read the books, listened to hateful radio shows hosted by such angry people as Ezra Levant and talked to people involved in the Roma community and people outside of it. This education helped me to understand what antisemitism is all about.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

We didn't have a homeland. The Roma still don't. The Conservative government recently ran an advertising campaign in Hungary to tell the Roma not to come to Canada. Hungarian leadership responded by saying, if any Roma left Hungary for Canada and were rejected, they could not come back. At that moment, it became clear to me what homelessness as a people meant and how it must have translated for our grandparents living in Germany and Poland. They were destitute. They were without protection. They were hated. That is the Roma in 2013. Actually, they are despised.

In my mind, I saw a Gypsy in 2012 begging for a country to embrace them as world citizens, as creations of God. This vision looked terribly similar to a Jew in Germany in 1933, 1934, 1935... in 1945. The Jewish children, the Roma children, looked to their father for safety. He returning their gaze, saying, "We have nowhere to go."

The Roma are second-class citizens, and they are vermin in the eyes of the world, just as we were. In the 1930s, our children were kicked out of school. Today, culturally biased psychological testing often leads to non-disabled Roma children being placed in schools for the learning disabled. The Roma are targeted by the Canadian government, just as we were.

In 1948, the Jewish People legally secured a homeland – Eretz Yisrael. Countries like Canada stopped messing with us. That was not the fortune, however, of the Roma, who lost 500,000 of their people during World War II (some say more than one million). They remained stateless wanderers and were denied reparations by the German government. They, therefore, continue to fight for the safety of their children, unlike us, who have established ourselves in Israel and around the world. We have it made; the Gypsies did not.

At 52 years old, I am utterly aghast at what our people went through during the war, and before and after. In many ways, the suffering of the Jewish People is synonymous with that of the Gypsies and the terrible experiences they are enduring throughout Europe and now in North America. I am astounded at the hatred directed toward the Roma. Stunned.

We must defend the Roma. We must stand behind them when called upon to do so; protect them by standing in front of them when they need cover, and walk hand in hand with them until the world embraces their rich culture and sees them as brothers and sisters, equal in the eyes of God and human within the psyche of all nations.

We said, "Never again." What did we mean? Our Torah says 39 times, "Know the stranger," because we were slaves in Egypt. How will we explain this to our children on Pesach? Invite a local Roma to your seder. Call Roma Centre director Gina Csanyi-Robah at 416-561-0770. She'll help. Or support International Roma Day on April 8, by attending a music fundraiser on March 13 at Lula Lounge in Toronto.

Ask our government, why is it targeting the Roma? Then ask yourself what Holocaust education taught you.

Avrum@veahavta.org

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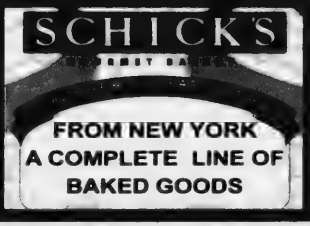

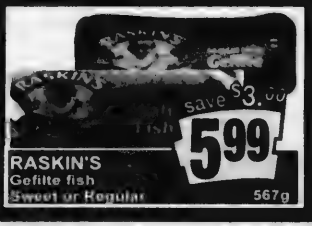

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Make your dinner sweeter with matzah. *Page 36*

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All Aboard! Next stop: Jason Shron's basement. *Page 62*

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New Israeli government imminent

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu bade farewell to his cabinet on Sunday, expressing confidence in the imminence of a coalition deal that would usher in a new cadre of ministers.

"This is probably the final meeting of this government," Netanyahu said at the opening of the weekly cabinet session. "I wish to thank all of the ministers for their fantastic work over the past four years."

The meeting was shunned by the outgoing ministers from the haredi Shas party, who have been fuming over their exclusion from a coalescing government that they perceive as being anti-haredi.

At a meeting of Likud ministers before the cabinet meeting, Netanyhau said most of the policy principles for the next government have been agreed upon, and all that remains is to settle the matter of ministerial portfolios.

Representatives from the Likud-Beiteinu, Yesh Atid and Jewish Home parties met Sunday afternoon to try to push through a final agreement that was apparently snagged on which party will fill the education minister's chair. Likud was reportedly determined to see party member and current Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar maintain his position, while Yesh Atid wants the post to go to MK Rabbi Shai Piron.

At the opening of the cabinet meeting, Netanyahu praised the outgoing government's achievements, saying, "This government will be remembered as one that achieved more than almost any other government in Israel's history."

Continued on page 52

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his outgoing cabinet. *[Flash90 photo]*

Venezuelan Jews hold their breath

Hugo Chavez was mourned last week in Ramallah. *[Flash90 photo]*

Uriel Heilman
JTA

Analysis

For more than a decade, Venezuelan Jews have been holding their breath, subject to the whims of a mercurial president who used his pulpit to bully, intimidate, rail against Israel and embrace Iran.

The police raided a Caracas Jewish school in 2004, allegedly to search for evidence in the high-profile murder case of a prosecutor. When war broke out between Israel and Hamas in December 2008, President Hugo Chavez demanded that Venezuelan Jews rebuke Israel for its conduct in Gaza. Chavez developed a warm alliance with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and Venezuelan state radio was used to spread antisemitic canards.

Most recently, there were revelations that Venezuela's intelligence service, SEBIN, was spying on the country's Jewish community.

While Chavez never explicitly threatened the Jews of Venezuela, his frequent harassment and staunchly anti-Israel positions kept them continually on edge. Afraid to criticize their president, the Jewish community found itself in a predicament that took on a frightening resemblance to the one faced by Jews in another staunchly anti-western, anti-Zionist country: Iran.

Continued on page 52

Vayikra
Candlelighting: 7:05
Havdalah: 8:09
Greater Toronto Area

Hungarian ultranationalists make pact with Iran – please see page 53

CANADA

Radler Heads Paper

VANCOUVER — David Radler, ex-newspaper mogul Conrad Black's longtime business partner, has been named interim publisher of the *Victoria Times Colonist*, one of Canada's oldest newspapers, after its publisher resigned. Working from his Vancouver office, Radler runs the Alberta Newspaper Group, a subsidiary of Glacier Media, which bought the *Times Colonist* and some weeklies from Postmedia in 2011, the *Globe and Mail* reported. Radler testified against Black in 2007 in a U.S. mail fraud case related to their management of the Hollinger newspaper chain. In exchange, Radler served 10 months in a Canadian jail. Black served 42 months in U.S. jails before his release last year.

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WORLD

Leader Backs Israel

LONDON — Ed Miliband, the Jewish leader of Britain's opposition Labour Party, has pledged to oppose boycotts of Israel and to protect Jewish customs, including circumcision and kashrut. Speaking March 7 at an event organized by Britain's main Jewish umbrella group, Miliband, a self-described socialist and son of a famed Marxist academic, warned of the need to be "ever-vigilant" against antisemitism and said, "Ways of life must be preserved," the *Jewish Chronicle* reported. He also condemned the delegitimization of Israel, adding that boycotts are "totally wrong." But he also said people must "understand the anger and dismay about settlements." When asked if he was a Zionist, he answered: "Yes, I am a supporter of Israel," the *Daily Telegraph* reported.

Group Not Admitted

LONDON — Britain's Zionist Federation (ZF) defended its decision not to admit a dovish group that defines itself as pro-Israel but opposes Israeli settlements. The umbrella group's president, Paul Charney, said Yachad was rejected by "a clear majority" of the ZF's national council because it isn't vocal enough in support of Israel. Yachad director Hannah Weisfeld said the ZF was being exclusionary. "We are a pro-Israel organization right at the heart of the Anglo-Jewish community," she told the *Jewish Chronicle*. Charney said that though Yachad signed the platform of the World Zionist Organization, which the Zionist Federation is part of, "in practice, they do not comply with it."Yachad can reapply in six months.

Baird Warns Palestinian Against ICC Move

WASHINGTON — Canada will consider "consequences" against the Palestinian Authority if it uses its new non-member observer state status at the UN to bring Israel before the International Criminal Court, Foreign Minister John Baird told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) conference in Washington, D.C., last week.

John Baird

"Palestine" gained elevated status at the UN last fall. Canada, the United States, Israel and a handful of other nations voted against the upgrade.

Speaking March 3 to the pro-Israel conference, Baird said Canada remains committed to a Palestinian state, but it must come about by direct talks and not unilateral actions at the UN or elsewhere.

"We were very clear from the outset that further actions, like we've seen at UNESCO, like we've seen at the United Nations, particularly at the International Criminal Court, will be ones which… will not go unnoticed and will have certainly consequences in… relations with the Palestinian authority," he said.

Baird's comments came as Canada's three-year, $300-million economic aid package to the PA is scheduled to expire at the end of this month. A spokesperson for the Canadian International Development Agency, which oversees most of the money, told *The CJN* Ottawa is reviewing the funding as part of normal procedure.

Responding to Baird's comments, senior PA official Saeb Erekat told China's *Xinhua News Agency* that the Palestinians "do not know why Canada is showing all this hostility against us. Those who fear international courts must force Israel to stop its crimes."

The PA has said it plans to take Israel to the ICC over settlement building in the occupied territories.

Divestment Bid Fails

SAN FRANCISCO — Stanford University's student senate rejected a bill calling for selective divestment from Israel. The Associated Students of Stanford University Undergraduate Senate rejected the proposal, put forth by Students for Palestinian Equal Rights (SPER). The bill originally would have committed the Senate to urge the university's board of trustees to reconsider endowment investments in eight companies, including Caterpillar, Lockheed Martin and Motorola. The March 5 vote centred on a revised version that pared the list to two. The failure of the SPER bill capped off several weeks of contentious debate on campus. SPER co-president Omar Shakir, a law student, had alleged the companies listed in the proposal profit from Israel's control of the West Bank and "commit human rights abuses and violations of international law." Groups on both sides received support from prominent outside voices. On SPER's side were a pair of Nobel Peace Prize laureates, Northern Irish peace activist Mairead Maguire and Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. Author Alice Walker had also backed the measure. The Stanford Israel Alliance (SIA) opposed the bill and was backed by U.S. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor and U.S. Congressman Charles Rangel.

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Postal union slammed for anti-Israel newsletter

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) has drawn its sights on Israel once again, with the union's *The Rose* newsletter accusing Canada of "perpetuating war crimes" by supporting the Jewish state.

Jewish organizations, MPs and postal workers slammed the union, accusing it of overstepping its mandate and of misusing workers' funds.

MPs' rebukes were non-partisan: Conservative MP Mark Adler strongly condemned CUPW, saying, "It is shameful that CUPW is abusing hard-working union members' money by using it to fund hate. Spreading rhetoric about Israel has nothing to do with the mandate of the union and does nothing to help Canadian postal workers."

Liberal party interim leader Bob Rae said, "I continue to be astonished by the extent to which ideas which should be on the 'loony tunes' margins of politics have now been adopted by a union which represents thousands of its members."

Bob Rae

NDP MP Peter Stoffer also slammed CUPW's "war crimes" reference, saying, "I think their position would be very wrong on that and I would ask them to carefully reflect upon that."

The anti-Israel comments were part of the March 2013 edition of *The Rose*. Timed to coincide with International Women's Day, the newsletter featured a page titled "Reflections from Palestine," a report by Ruth Breen, a member of CUPW's Fredericton local who visited "Palestine" last year. The Atlantic Region's Solidarity Fund paid for her trip.

Breen describes hardships faced by several Palestinian women and concludes, "The lives of these women should motivate us. Our country plays a key part in perpetuation war crimes and we can use our voice to oppose it. Canada is allowing Israel to terrorize occupied people, breach international law, normalize home demolitions, build prison-style walls and checkpoints, and steal resources."

Last year, CUPW was denied public funds after five members attended an anti-Israel forum in Brazil that called for the release of Ahmad Saadat from an Israeli jail.

Saadat was sentenced in 2008 to 30 years in prison for heading the left-wing terrorist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and for orchestrating the 2001 assassination of Israeli tourism minister Rehavam Zeevi.

In 2008, CUPW passed a resolution supporting the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement (BDS). It has also supported a Canadian ship that attempted to run the blockade of Gaza, and it has mused about refusing to deliver mail to Israel.

Last week, after the union came under fire for the *Rose* article, CUPW issued a news release saying, "we want to pressure the Israeli government to respect international law in order to create a lasting and just peace. This position reflects the democratic will of CUPW's membership and the union remains committed to it."

Continued on page 30

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To sigh, cry or find strength

From the editor's desk...

Jews who are partners with God in ensuring the eternity of the faith and the people must convey the importance of that partnership to their children. And we should do so for positive reasons, for the sake of the life-sustaining embrace of the intrinsic, shining beauty of the religion.

Sometimes however, we do so for negative reasons, i.e., not to let the enemies of the Jews have the last say.

This is unavoidable given the history of the Jewish People and the increasing conflation in so many places of antisemitism with anti-Israelism as a vehicle for their anti-Jewish attitudes.

And so, in the poignant words of the late scholar, philosopher, theologian Emil Fackenheim we embrace Judaism to avoid granting Hitler "a posthumous victory." Thus, ever since the middle of the last century at least, we do not remain quiet in the face of efforts by others to defame or harm the Jewish People.

The ubiquity throughout the Jewish world of communal organizations and agencies that call out the antisemites for their antisemitism is eloquent proof of this fact.

It is in this context, therefore, that I note a number of news items from Europe last week that evoked a sigh of deep exasperation, anger, possibility and perhaps even optimism.

The *Times of Israel* reported that according to a survey conducted by Market Institut on behalf of the Austrian newspaper, *Der Standard*, over 40 per cent of Austrians think life under Hitler was "not all bad."

In a survey of 502 individuals, the poll found that 42 per cent believed that "not everything was bad under [Adolf] Hitler."

The survey asked a number of other related questions, but for our purposes, this one response calls attention to itself like an incision hemorrhaging blood onto a white sheet.

If "not everything was bad," then some things must have been good. But for the millions of *untermenschen* in the Third Reich – especially but not exclusively, the Jews – whom the Nazis sought to annihilate, pray tell, what part of their lives could have been good under Adolf Hitler?

Not surprisingly, the survey also found that 61 per cent of respondents, mostly the same people who said life under Hitler had some good aspects, would be happy with a strong-armed leader who did not have to contend with rival lawmakers or elections.

The *JTA* reported that the municipal government of the Paris suburb, Bezons, recently bestowed the special distinction of honorary resident upon the convicted murderer of Rehavam Ze'evi, the minister of tourism in the government of Israel.

In a unanimous vote, that Bezons Mayor Dominique Lesparre called "a strong political act," the Bezons councillors last month conferred the honorific upon Majdi Al-Rimawi for "defending his city and its inhabitants, calling for the application of international law for the establishment of Palestine in the 1967 borders as recognized by the United Nations and Jerusalem as its capital."

The councillors did not care – if they knew at all – that Rimawi was convicted in 2008 for the 2001 murder of Ze'evi in Jerusalem. Rimawi was one of four shooters who waited for Ze'evi, Israel's minister of tourism, outside a hotel in Jerusalem and cut him down in cold blood.

Both news items set one's teeth on edge.

In both cases, ignorance rules. And where ignorance rules, danger lurks.

Societies indifferent to the veneration of such gross distortion of truth imperil themselves. History is rich with examples, in every century, of societies that were poisoned and ultimately convulsed by the ingestion of this uniquely pernicious toxin.

In contrast however, as a countervailing positive force against the ingestion of poisoned seeds, we have the example last week of Bulgaria's Parliament.

In a declaration adopted March 8, the 70th anniversary of the massive public protests that prevented the deportation of more than 48,000 Bulgarian Jews to Nazi death camps, the Parliament in Sofia described the rescue in 1943 as a "remarkable act of humanity demonstrating the tolerance of the Bulgarian people."

Alas, some 11,343 Jews from Macedonia and Aegean Thrace, territories then administered by Bulgarian authorities, were indeed murdered by the Nazis and their confederates. But Bulgaria, though an ally of Nazi Germany, was the only eastern European country that actively saved its Jews from the Holocaust.

At a special ceremony in Brussels marking the anniversary, Bulgarian President Rosen Plevneliev said his country would not recoil from the truth or cower in the face of terror.

He was, of course, referring to his country's plea to the European Union to brand Hezbollah a terrorist organization for having arranged the slaughter of five Israelis and one Bulgarian last summer.

Where knowledge rules, danger has much less room to manoeuvre.

–MBD

SeeJN

CANADA CHAIRS HOLOCAUST AGENCY

Canada took over the 2013-2014 chairmanship of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) from Belgium in a ceremony last week in Berlin. The alliance is an intergovernmental body comprising government officials and experts from 31 countries devoted to "fostering and promoting Holocaust education, remembrance and research around the world," according to its mandate. Former Liberal MP Mario Silva will chair the alliance for Canada. The annual IHRA conference will be held in Toronto in October. Pictured, from left, are Jan Deboutte, outgoing Belgian IHRA Chair, Silva, and Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney. Please see related story on page 31.

[Citizenship and Immigration Canada photo]

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Fla. police say couple was asphyxiated

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Crime Stoppers is offering a $51,000 (US) reward for information leading to an arrest for the murders of Rochelle Wise and Donny Pichosky. The Toronto snowbirds, who were found dead in their Hallandale Beach condominium townhouse Jan. 10, died of asphyxiation, Hallandale Beach police revealed at a press conference March 5.

Hallandale Beach police chief Dwayne Flournoy told reporters there were at least two perpetrators, and police have "no reason to believe the people responsible were known to [the couple]."

Flournoy would not comment on the gender of the perpetrators, nor on their motive or whether they took anything from the couple's home.

Wise, 66, was a retired preschool administrator at Bialik Hebrew Day School, and a former director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp. Pichosky, her husband of four years, was a retired businessman who volunteered with seniors at Baycrest. The couple belonged to Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in Toronto.

Flournoy said police are still hoping to identify a woman seen on a neighbour's security surveillance video Jan. 9. She may

Donny Pichosky and Rochelle Wise

be a witness and not even know it, he said. "She may have seen a car… It's someone we need to identify."

He appealed to anyone who knows "any bit of information" as well as to one of the perpetrators who may be "less culpable" than the other or others.

"Your freedom is short-lived, but your incarceration may be diminished if you're the one that comes forward and tells us what happened," he said.

He expressed confidence that the murder would be solved. "It may not be tomorrow, it may not be in a month… I may be sitting home retired in 10, 15, 20 years, but this case is going to be solved, trust me."

One of the reasons police did not initially release many details, he said, was because of the "volumes" of evidence.

"We're still in the early process of going through the evidence. The lab has placed us on high priority… We just need that one piece to the puzzle, so we can fill it all in."

A January visit to Toronto by Flournoy and other members of his team helped them develop and test theories, he said.

Wise's son Jamie, speaking at the press conference, likewise expressed his confidence in the chief and his team.

Pichosky and Wise spent the morning of Jan. 9 at synagogue, then headed to Walmart, and later spoke to a family member on FaceTime.

A neighbour became concerned when the couple didn't show up for a planned lunch and failed to answer repeated phone calls.

Flournoy said the murder angers him. Wise and Pichosky "have no enemies. They were nice people. They were enjoying their retirement, their new marriage. They went to shows, went out to eat, they went to temple, they loved their grandkids."

He added it was "almost laughable" that one of the tips had to do with a "windfall" at the casino. The only reason Pichosky went to the casino is because he loved to take his grandchildren to the ice cream parlour there, Flournoy said.

Jamie Wise told reporters that his mother and Pichosky were "very caring people… She worked hard her whole life and finally found love."

The couple had met on a blind date. Pichosky, a widower, had been married to his first wife, Sandra, for 46 years. Wise was divorced.

"It's so sad on so many levels, because it's senseless. It was so the wrong time," Jamie Wise said.

"Today we're putting the pain aside, so we can appeal to everyone, if they know any bit of information that can help us solve this, then that's what today is for."

Wise's friend, Pearl Gladman, also speaking at the press conference, described Wise as the sister she never had.

She said she felt "a tremendous loss" that hurts even more because the murder happened in one of the couple's favourite places. "They loved this area a lot," she said.

Gladman said Wise had been "so happy… She always said God was good to her."

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A bludgeoned country

Once a flowering, prosperous community contributing in all facets to the advancement and betterment of their society, Venezuela's Jews now number fewer than 9,000. After 14 years of Hugo Chavez's populist, strongman rule in which he harassed and intimidated the 22,000-strong Jewish community, most of the Jews left. To be sure, they fled Venezuela out of fear for their economic as well as their physical wellbeing, but it was the mean-spirited, almost playful delight he took in constantly singling out the Jews that drove them from the country that had been their home.

The Anti-Defamation League's Abraham Foxman has described Chavez' approach to the country's Jews as "blatant and persistent antisemitism." A handful of examples are enough to prove the accuracy of Foxman's description.

In 2004, the police raided a Jewish school in what was described in a report out of Tel Aviv University as "perhaps the most serious incident ever to have taken place in the history of the Jewish community" in Venezuela.

In 2009, Chavez demanded of the Jewish Venezuelans that they renounce and rebuke Israel for fighting against Hamas in Gaza. Chief Rabbi Pynchas Brener told *JTA* "people are being taught to hate."

In the 2012 presidential campaign, state-run media urged voters to reject Chavez's opponent, Henrique Capriles Radonski, by associating him with "international Zionism" and describing him as part of the "Jewish-Zionist bourgeoisie."

Last year a report surfaced that Venezuela's intelligence service, SEBIN, has been spying on the Jewish community for years. This was happening as state-run radio regularly broadcast antisemitic messages and themes.

The anti-Jewish atmosphere had become so chokingly worrisome, that Jewish organizations in Caracas had even developed a contingent emergency plan to evacuate the country's Jews. Apparently, according to *JTA*, the plan has not been put away.

A society inhospitable to Jews, history has taught us, will soon be inhospitable to a great many more.

And so it is now in Venezuela. The country is a social and economic shambles, bludgeoned by the brutish application of anti-western ideology, expedience, scapegoating and rampant antisemitism.

Following the ways of every demagogue who ever bent the rules of democracy, fairness and due process toward the massive black hole of his own narcissistic, nationalistic, jingoistic, malevolent ambitions, Chavez ran roughshod over the many individuals and groups who did not fit into his grand plan for his country.

But the grand planner died March 5 at the age of 58.

We hope his country will heal from the wounds he slashed into its body politic.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Speaking to a delegation of presidents of major Jewish organizations, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir called for a clamp-down on Diaspora Jewish criticism of Israel's handling of the ongoing unrest in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as on news coverage of the situation there.

Dry Bones NETANYAHU

BIBI'S NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT IS MADE UP OF...
POLITICIANS WHO SUPPORT HIM BUT DON'T REALLY TRUST HIM.
IT'S THE NATURE OF COALITION GOVERNMENTS
AND IN ISRAEL EVEN MORE SO!

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Jewish education in Ottawa

I read with great interest your editorial on the costs of Jewish education, ("Summit on Education," Feb. 12). The silence on this topic has been particularly deafening in Ottawa, where our Jewish community day school recently announced significant changes to its tuition and financial model. The proposed tuition model will increase the tuition by 15 to 22 per cent for middle-income families of $150,000 to $250,000 gross income.

Climbing tuition fees are driving out families headed by professionals who want their children to attend day school. It makes sense economically (not necessarily philosophically) to spread the distribution of tuition assistance to middle-income households rather than focusing solely on full funding at the lower end of the income spectrum – that is, when you subsidize the cost by a few thousand dollars per, let's say, 10 families in the middle rather than full scholarships for one or two families.

We know that gross household income is not a good measure of affordability of private school. Many families obtain assistance or other sources of income not necessarily identified on their tax return. As well, there are families that might have expenditures beyond their control, such as daycare or after-school care costs.

In Ottawa, our community day school enrolment has fallen by 39 per cent in the last five years. We know from 2001 census information that the majority of Jewish households in Canada represented families of "middle" income – those between $150,000 and $250,000 (old information but incomes in general in Canada have changed very little since 2001). In a smaller Jewish centre such as Ottawa, there is little room for alienating this middle class of parents.

If a community is dedicated to making Jewish day schools accessible to as many families as possible, then providing assistance to all but the wealthiest families might achieve this goal. On the other hand, if the goal is to make schools that are financially self-sustainable by charging the real costs of the school and limiting subsidies to those defined as "in need," the community must recognize that the schools will suffer as middle-income families will not be able to attend. In Ottawa, the debate about the future of Jewish education is bubbling to the surface. Significant change will happen, and we are most ready to be a part of a large strategy or summit.

Jackie Luffman
Ottawa

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Kwinter voted against his party

Monte Kwinter, while a minster in former Ontario premier's Dalton McGuinty's first government, did vote against his own government's rescinding of the Equity in Education Tax Credit shortly after the 2003 provincial election ("Kwinter and Jewish education," letter, Feb. 28). This deserves special notice, because minsters are expected to support all government legislation, and Kwinter did take the bold step opposing this legislation. Kwinter suffered retribution for this, because he was ultimately shuffled out of cabinet. While I am a diehard conservative and a supporter of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, we must keep to the facts when dealing with this issue. It was the mean-spirited McGuinty who sold out the soul of the Ontario Liberal Party to engage the votes of schoolteachers in attempting to win the election. And it was the mean-spiritedness of McGuinty that ultimately threw Kwinter under the bus by removing him from cabinet.

Mark A. Greenberg
Toronto

• • •

Palliative care

The three-part series on palliative care, published on Feb. 28, March 7 and in today's *CJN*, indicates that it is based on Jewish values. But is it based on Jewish law? I understand and appreciate the need for palliative care, but does this type of patient intervention take into account halachic restrictions against the removal of life support, the deprivation of oxygenation and the denial of hydration and nutrition? This is a complicated area of Jewish law and practice that requires the utilization of halachic authorities to work in conjunction with palliative specialists.

Rabbi Howard Finkelstein
Ottawa

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Pesach Jews vs. Purim Jews: the agony of our dilemma

Yossi Klein Halevi

As I travelled through North American Jewish communities on a lecture tour about Israeli society in the aftermath of the elections, I sometimes felt as though I was in a time warp.

Visiting an Orthodox community, I may find myself back in the 1970s and 1980s, before the first intifadah convinced a majority of Israelis that the occupation is a mortal threat to the Jewish state; right-wing North American Jews will insist instead, that Israel must continue building settlements and creating "facts" on the ground. And when I visit a liberal community, I may find myself back in the 1990s, before the second intifadah convinced that same majority of Israelis that a one-way peace process is likewise a mortal threat to the Jewish state; left-wing North American Jews will insist instead, that a peace agreement is always within reach and just a matter of Israeli will.

In the recent Israeli election, most of the voters showed what Klein Halevi called "a centrist persona." ***[Israel Sun photo]***

And so I try to explain that most Israelis have internalized the left-right divide and agree with the left's anxiety over the occupation and with the right's anxiety over a delusional peace. For most Israelis, I note, a Palestinian state is an existential necessity that would save us from the demographic threat to Israel as a Jewish and democratic state – and also an existential threat that could turn greater Tel Aviv into the next Sderot, the Israeli town near Gaza that has absorbed thousands of rocket attacks in the last decade.

Most polls confirm the centrist persona of the Israeli majority. Asked whether they support a two-state solution, upward of 70 per cent of Israelis respond affirmatively. Asked whether a two-state solution would bring peace, upward of 80 per cent say no. In other words: Israelis want to be doves, but reality forces them to be hawks.

The rise of Yair Lapid and his Yesh Atid party – appearing from nowhere to become the second-largest party in the Knesset – is only the latest example of the longing of many Israelis for a centrist politics that embodies the realism of the left about the occupation and of the right about the peace process.

What most depresses me is that this insight – by now commonplace in Israeli discourse – comes as a revelation to many North American Jews. The two most important Jewish communities in the world aren't communicating.

During the recent elections, a puzzled American Jewish journalist asked me: "Why aren't Israelis debating the collapse of the peace process?" My response was: "Most of us have already resolved the issue. If there were a credible partner able to contain Hamas and address our red-line issues, like the right of return, we would make the necessary territorial concessions. In the absence of a credible peace partner, we're moving on with our lives."

North American Jews today are divided over two anxieties relating to Israel's future. Like Israelis, many North American Jews are keenly aware of the external dangers facing the Jewish state. In a Middle East that is imploding and turning increasingly fundamentalist, and with Iran approaching the nuclear threshold, there is a whiff of May 1967, the anxious weeks before the Six Day War, when threat pressed against Israel's borders and war seemed imminent.

For many liberal North American Jews, though, the primary focus of their Israel anxiety is on internal issues: the fraying of democracy, the seemingly irreversible occupation and the receding promise of peace.

A healthy people knows how to set its priorities of anxiety. It knows how to focus first on imminent threat. Yet a healthy people also knows that it cannot afford to allow even immediate threat to serve as pretext for denying long-term dangers.

Jewish history speaks to our generation in the voice of two biblical commands to remember. The first voice commands us to remember that we were strangers in the land of Egypt, and the message of that command is: "Don't be brutal." The second voice commands us to remember how the tribe of Amalek attacked us without provocation while we were wandering in the desert, and the message of that command is: "Don't be naive."

The first command is the voice of Passover, of liberation; the second is the voice of Purim, commemorating our victory over the genocidal threat of Haman, a descendant of Amalek.

"Passover Jews" are motivated by empathy with the oppressed; "Purim Jews" are motivated by alertness to threat.

Both are essential; one without the other creates an unbalanced Jewish personality, a distortion of Jewish history and values.

One reason the Palestinian issue is so wrenching for Jews is that it is the point on which the two commands of our history converge: the stranger in our midst is represented by a national movement that wants to usurp us.

And so a starting point of a healthy North American Jewish conversation on Israel would be acknowledging the agony of our dilemma.

Yossi Klein Halevi

Imagine an Orthodox rabbi, a supporter of the settlers in Hebron, delivering this sermon to his congregation: "My friends, our community has sinned against Israel. For all our devotion to the Jewish state and our concern for its survival, we have failed to acknowledge the consequences to Israel's soul of occupying another people against its will."

Now imagine a liberal rabbi, a supporter of J Street, telling his congregation: "My friends, our community has sinned against Israel. For all our devotion to the Jewish state and our concern for its democratic values, we have failed to acknowledge the urgency of existential threat once again facing our people."

When North American Jews internalize or at least acknowledge each other's anxieties, the shrillness of much of the North American Jewish debate over Israel will give way to a more nuanced conversation.

The good news is that parts of the Jewish community have begun that process. Jews from left and right are quietly meeting across the country, trying to nurture a civil conversation on Israel.

But civility is only the starting point. The goal is to create multi-dimensional Jews, capable of holding more than one insight about Israeli reality. It is to translate the centrist Israeli ambivalence into American Jewish discourse.

Yossi Klein Halevi is a senior fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem.

Israel criticizes Dutch for labelling West Bank products

JNS.org

JERUSALEM — Israel last Thursday sharply condemned an initiative in the Netherlands directing businesses to label products originating in the West Bank, eastern Jerusalem and the Golan Heights as separate from those produced in Israel.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Yigal Palmor, according to *Israel Hayom*, said, "If the Europeans claim that labelling products made in the settlements is intended only to inform the consumer that the product comes from a disputed area, they should also be consistent and mark any product from disputed territories in Europe and around the world. But if the move denigrates Israel, and only Israel, it is clearly a manifestation of blatant discrimination and thus inherently wrong."

Interior Minister Eli Yishai also responded to the Dutch government initiative on Thursday, saying, "Products from the settlements beyond the Green Line [Israel's pre-1967 borders], just like those made within the Green Line, are proud blue and white products. The State of Israel will stand as one entity against any attempt to boycott its products."

Eli Yishai ***[Ira Abramov Wikimedia Commons photo]***

Last Wednesday, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs issued a directive to all retail chains in the country, instructing them to assist consumers in making fully knowledgeable decisions in stores by labelling products from Jewish communities beyond the 1967 Green Line differently than products from the rest of Israel.

The directive calls for the labelling of fresh products not as made in Israel, but as made in "Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights, east Jerusalem, the West Bank or in Palestinian territories."

Though retailers are responsible for the labelling, as opposed to importers, they will not be punished for not complying, nor is it illegal to import products from the Jewish communities in question. The move follows a Feb. 27 report written by European Union mission heads in Jerusalem and Ramallah recommending that EU countries "prevent" all financial transactions that support Israel's activities in those communities.

Holland joins other EU countries, such as Britain and Denmark, both of which also recommended such labelling to retailers. Last May, South Africa also directed retailers not to mark products made in Jewish communities beyond the Green Line with the same label as those made in the rest of Israel.

Facelessness and faces in the Shoah

As if we need reminding, the headline in the *New York Times* read, "The Holocaust Just Got More Shocking." The story reported on the multi-volume encyclopedia in production by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on ghettos, labour and concentration camps, and killing centres during the Nazi genocide. With several volumes already published and more to come, the research is staggering: approximately 42,000 sites, more vast than anyone had imagined.

The *Times* report, quickly picked up by other publications, reminds us that we still don't know all that there is to know about the Holocaust. This was true 30 years ago, when my colleague at the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York University, Irving Abella, together with Harold Troper of the University of Toronto, published *None is Too Many*, exposing Canada's shameful wartime record. It's still true today, even with survivors speaking out, writing memoirs, and recording testimonies, and with many researchers making the study of the Shoah their life's work.

No matter how much we learn, we must retain the capacity to be shocked by the Holocaust. Amid the numbers, we must keep in mind the human beings caught up in the web of the Nazi genocide. Princeton University historian and sociologist Jan Gross focused on both the shock and the human question when he visited our campus recently and spoke to an audience of approximately 250 about his research. A specialist in Polish-Jewish relations during and after the war years, Gross discussed the physical torture inflicted on Jews by their neighbours – by people they knew from school, work and local events – and the exploitation for profit of the Jews' terrible circumstance.

Because the victims of localized torture were murdered, accounts are drawn largely from participants and a few eyewitnesses. And because the story has not been told in the voice of its Jewish victims, Gross observed, the victims remain "faceless."

Yet whenever they were able, the Jews of Europe insisted on a voice, a name, a face. We see this in the countless diaries that were kept, at great effort and personal risk, in ghettos and in hiding, even in labour camps. And we see the faces, quite literally, in a special group of photographs that survived the war.

Gross' talk at York marked the opening of a remarkable photography exhibition, *The Face of the Ghetto: Pictures by Jewish Photographers from the Lodz Ghetto 1940-1944*, now on display until March 17 at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University. Hosted by the Koschitzky Centre and Osgoode Hall Law School, and co-sponsored by the Azrieli Foundation and the Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education, with support from the consulates of Germany and Poland, the exhibition features approximately 50 large-scale pictures taken by photographers in the Lodz (or Litzmannstadt) Ghetto between 1940 and 1944. Assembled by the Topography of Terror Foundation in Berlin, and shown there and at the United Nations in New York, the exhibition was brought to York for its only showing in Canada.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

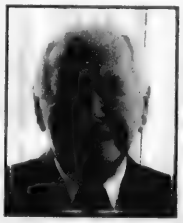
The Jews in the Lodz Ghetto were prohibited from possessing cameras. However, the German authorities issued cameras to a small number of Jewish photographers and commissioned them to document the efficiency of the ghetto factories and other sites of slave labour. At their own initiative and at risk to their own lives, the photographers took thousands of pictures of Jewish life in the ghetto.

They depict not only – not primarily – atrocity and suffering, but Jewish life, dignity and spirit. Quite literally, they show the faces of the people in the ghetto, and, metaphorically, their humanness – precisely what was denied by perpetrators and their collaborators. Unlike photographs taken by Nazi photographers, these were taken by photographers who shared the fate of the people they photographed. They reflect a deep empathy and a sense of the efforts of the ghetto inhabitants to maintain their dignity and culture in face of an unspeakably harsh and increasingly helpless situation.

It is fitting to host this exhibition in Osgoode Law School, as a reminder of the sanctioned lawlessness and also the rule of perverse law under National Socialism in Germany. We are privileged to share it with the community.

Truth, strength and love: remembering David Hartman

In a lecture in Jerusalem some four years ago, Rabbi David Hartman, who died last month, sounded uncharacteristically despondent. I decided not to argue with him in public, but wrote him a letter. Part of its concluding paragraph reads: "Though the Hartman line hasn't conquered the world, or even Israel, its influence has been enormous. You have helped your generation of rabbis and the next to think outside the denominational box. I am always happy to describe you as the father of contemporary post-denominational Judaism."



Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

At that time, one of his disciples had become the president of the (Reform) Central Conference of American Rabbis. Another, who spoke at the funeral that was attended by hundreds of people – from black hats to bare heads – is Rabbi Rick Jacobs, the president of the Union for Reform Judaism. He said that he would have never become who he is today without the inspiration and mentoring he had received from Rabbi Hartman.

Though not a Reform Jew by any stretch of the imagination, Rabbi Hartman was a proud recipient of an honorary doctorate from Hebrew Union College, where most Reform rabbis in the world are trained. Many of its graduates have been touched by his teachings.

Rabbi David Hartman was also Prof. David Hartman, one of the most significant thinkers in contemporary Judaism. His innovative writings that sought to reflect the new reality of Jewish sovereignty in Israel will influence generations to come. The institute he created and named after his late father, Shalom, now in the capable hands of his son Rabbi Donniel Hartman, has become a centre for new and creative thinking in contemporary Judaism.

In his eulogy, Prof. Israel Knohl, distinguished Bible scholar and one of the senior fellows of the institute, illustrated Rabbi David Hartman's greatness by showing how he constantly modified his thinking in the light of new realities, insights and experiences. As an example, he reported that only recently, Rabbi Hartman declared that he had erred in understating the true significance and impact of the Holocaust for contemporary Jewish life and thought.

The two most distinguished Jewish philosophers to make aliyah from Canada were Rabbi Hartman, who left his thriving congregation in Montreal in the 1970s, and the late Prof. Emil Fackenheim, the world-famous thinker, who came a decade later when he retired from the University of Toronto. They were neighbours in Jerusalem, yet could have inhabited different planets. What divided them was their understanding of the Holocaust. Should they now meet in the next world, they'll at last be at one.

The many moving words spoken at the funeral by his children and colleagues praised Rabbi Hartman not only as teacher and philosopher, but also as a warm and complex human being. Knohl used three Hebrew words to describe him, each beginning with the letter aleph, albeit vocalized differently: *emet* (truth), *ometz* (strength) and *ahavah* (love).

Rabbi David Hartman was the quintessential seeker of truth, always eager to learn from everybody, yet arguing with all, including the teachers he admired and who had inspired him, notably Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik.

Rabbi Hartman possessed great strength and determination, reflected in the magnificent institution he built and the impact it continues to have on countless women and men across the entire spectrum of Jewish life, both in Israel and, particularly, abroad. He was a courageous man whose commitment to truth made all whose lives he touched to admire and respect him.

But above all, Rabbi David Hartman was a man who loved not only his family, as nobly expressed by three of his five children who spoke at the funeral, but also Torah in all its manifestations and the Jewish People in all its diversity. That was the secret of his charisma. He attracted disciples by the strength of his personality no less than through the power of his writings.

Rabbi Hartman never ceased to struggle with God and tradition: his latest book is called, *The God Who Hates Lies*. But he never abandoned either. He remained a passionately faithful and consistently observant Jew to his last day. He taught his students and his readers how never to compromise with the quest for truth and, at the same time, never to give up on the strength that Judaism bestows on those who practise it.

Obama faces daunting tasks in Israel

On his first trip abroad since his re-election last November, U.S. President Barack Obama is due to visit Israel, as well as Jordan and the Palestinian territories in the West Bank, next week.

Dan Shapiro, the American ambassador in Tel Aviv, has characterized the trip as an opportunity to deepen mutual understanding.

Obama, he said in a preview, intends to showcase "the depth, breadth and quality" of the United States' strategic partnership with Israel and to discuss issues of common importance ranging from Iran's budding nuclear program to the breakdown of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. But on a more immediate level, the objective of Obama's visit, from March 20 to 22, is to try to smooth over the rough edges of his often contentious personal relationship with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Aaron David Miller, a former U.S. diplomat who served under six secretaries of state in both Democratic and Republican administrations, has described the dynamics of their relationship as "the most dysfunctional" ever between an American president and an Israeli prime minister. They not only "mistrust one another" but exhibit "very little confidence" in each other, he noted.

In Miller's view, their strained relationship is unique in the annals of America's alliance with Israel because it has been left to fester for so long. He points out that previous American and Israeli leaders had sharp disagreements, citing Jimmy Carter and Menachem Begin in the 1980s and George H.W. Bush and Yitzhak Shamir in the 1990s. But they managed to bury their differences in common causes.

Carter and Begin worked together, if not always harmoniously, to ensure that Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty in 1979. Bush and Shamir co-operated in the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq.

But when it comes to Obama and Netanyahu, not even a shared antipathy to Iran's nuclear ambitions has diminished the friction. Nor can Obama forget that Netanyahu appeared to tilt toward Mitt Romney, the Republican Party candidate, in the last presidential election.

Blogging on the Bloomberg website, Jeffery Goldberg, a U.S. writer close to Obama, drew a scathing indictment of Netanyahu's policies. Writing as Obama's mouthpiece, Goldberg observed, "Iran poses a short-term threat to Israel's survival [but] Israel's own behaviour poses a long-term one."

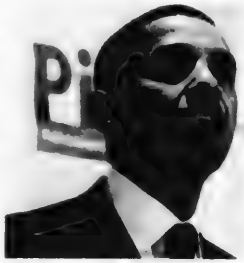
According to Goldberg, Obama – who last visited Israel in 2008 when he was a presidential candidate – regards Netanyahu as "a political coward" who's unwilling "to lead or spend political capital" to advance talks with the Palestinians.

Obama, he adds, is convinced that Netanyahu is "so captive to the settler lobby, and so uninterested in making anything more than the slightest conciliatory gesture toward Palestinian moderates, that an investment of presidential interest in the peace process wouldn't be a wise use of his time."

Goldberg goes on to say that Obama believes that "Israel's settlement policies are foreclosing on the possibility of a two-state solution," which, he thinks, represents "the best chance of preserving [Israel] as "a Jewish-majority democracy." Quoting Obama on the eve of its Jan. 22 general election, Goldberg wrote, "Israel doesn't know what its own best interests are."

In a withering riposte, Netanyahu declared that "only Israeli citizens will be the ones who determine who faithfully represents the vital interests of Israel."

Despite the harsh tone of Obama's critique, Obama, in his recent State of the Union speech, reaffirmed that the United States "will stand steadfast with Israel in pursuit of security and a lasting peace." Leon Panetta, the outgoing U.S. secretary of defence, was just as emphatic, saying that Washington's relationship with Jerusalem is "stronger than any time in history" and grounded in shared values and an "iron-clad commitment" to Israel's existence.



U.S. President Barack Obama

Chuck Hagel, Panetta's successor, was criticized for being soft on Iran and hard on Israel. He has since apologized for his "very poor choice of words" in having referred to a "Jewish lobby" in the United States, pledged to maintain Israel's military superiority and promised to support economic sanctions against Iran.

The new American secretary of state, John Kerry, who will accompany Obama to Israel, has made it clear that the president is going to Jerusalem "to listen" rather than to present a concrete proposal to thaw out the frozen Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Early in his presidency, Obama called for a complete settlement freeze and denounced settlements as "illegitimate." Subsequently, he called for a peace accord based on an Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 lines and mutual Israeli and Palestinian land swaps.

Netanyahu, a supporter of the settlement movement, rejected Obama's plan and continues to build in eastern Jerusalem and expand existing settlements in the West Bank.

In the face of Israel's moves, the Obama administration has stood its ground. "We... oppose unilateral actions on the Israeli side... as they complicate efforts to resume direct, bilateral negotiations and risk prejudging the outcome of those negotiations," the U.S. ambassador to Israel said recently, just weeks before Obama appointed Philip Gordon, a seasoned diplomat, as his new co-ordinator for Middle East affairs.

With respect to Iran, Obama will probably bring a mixed message with him when he arrives in Israel. On the one hand, as Kerry said in February, the United States categorically rejects a nuclear-armed Iran and has warned that "the window for a diplomatic solution cannot remain open forever." But on the other hand, Washington is opposed to a unilateral Israeli strike on Iran.

Last month, in the wake of a comment by Netanyahu setting mid-2013 as a "red line" for halting Iranian uranium enrichment, two top U.S. officials reassured Israel of the Obama administration's determination to prevent Iran from becoming an atomic power.

Rose Gottemoeller, the acting undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, and Wendy Sherman, the undersecretary of state for political affairs and the chief U.S. negotiator in world power talks with Iran, both reiterated Washington's policy on this key issue in visits to Jerusalem.

After hearing an update from Sherman on the latest round of talks, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, Israeli President Shimon Peres expressed satisfaction that the United States would do whatever possible to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Last week, touching on this theme, U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden said that the United States is "not bluffing" in its resolve to prevent Iran from joining the nuclear club.

With a civil war raging in Syria and spilling into adjacent countries, Syria will be another topic Obama and Netanyahu will surely address. Israel and the United States concur that President Bashar Assad must go and that Syrian chemical weapons should not fall into the wrong hands, namely Hezbollah.

Netanyahu will ask Obama to release convicted spy Jonathan Pollard, who has served 28 years of a life sentence for espionage. But Pollard is unlikely to be released, at least within the foreseeable future.

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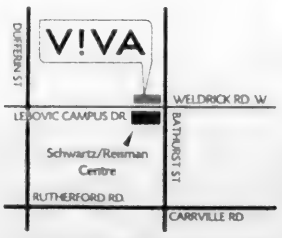

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Toronto man arrested after JCC threatened

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Toronto police charged a man with threatening death and mischief against the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre last week, and the Toronto Police Service hate crimes unit is also investigating an envelope containing a letter and a swastika that was sent to Associated Hebrew Schools the same day as the threat against the JCC.

Constable Victor Kwong told *The CJN* that police were called at 4:15 p.m. on March 5, after the MNJCC received "a succession of e-mails.

"We went on the scene, and it was determined that there were no immediate threats, meaning there was no bomb," Kwong said.

Harold Lee, 36, is scheduled to appear in court in Old City Hall March 12.

Ellen Cole, executive director of the MNJCC, said last week that the centre – which houses the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School in addition to fitness facilities and a variety of programs – has the "appropriate protocols and procedures in place. Everyone was out of the building in less than seven minutes... We were given the all clear, and it's business as usual."

Doron Horowitz, director of national security for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), who serves as a resource to Jewish institutions, doesn't believe the two incidents are related.

Elliott Brodkin, Associated's executive director, told parents and the school's "community" in a March 8 email that the school received a plain white envelope containing "both a suspicious piece of paper as well as a swastika." The letter arrived in the regular mail, he wrote.

"At no point was there any specific threat made against anyone at our school," he told parents.

Brodkin declined to give further details about the letter's content in an interview with *The CJN*.

School receives letter with swastika in unrelated incident

Horowitz called the letter received by Associated "disturbing," but doesn't think the community has cause to be concerned because of it. "At no point in time was [Associated] threatened or targeted," he said.

Horowitz, who works with Jewish schools on an ongoing basis, said he knew of no other related incidents.

Kwong also said there is "nothing to indicate the two incidents might be connected" and that the letter Associated received is being analyzed forensically.

Horowitz said CIJA will continue to provide resources to the community and liaise with law enforcement officials. "We are constantly working with [Jewish institutions] in emergency preparedness."

Police are asking anyone with information regarding the MNJCC threat to call 14 Division at 416-808-1400. Anyone with information regarding the letter to AHS can call 32 Division at 416-808-3200.

CUBA SHIPMENT: UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs have for years co-ordinated an annual fundraising drive to provide kosher-for-Passover food to Cuba's 1,500 Jews. Food is rationed in Cuba, but through an agreement reached more than 60 years ago, the government allows the importation of one shipping container filled with kosher-for-Passover items, and only at this one time each year. Pictured overseeing the shipment from Concord's United Foods International on Feb. 19, are, from left, Matt Sheff, UJA Women's Philanthropy chair Laurie Sheff, David Weinberg and CIJA project co-ordinator Cindy Osheroff. ***[Daniel Koren photo]***

A special monthly message for the Baycrest community

Community Matters

The proud tradition of a community that dreams and builds

For many decades, Baycrest has had the privilege of building special relationships with generations of individual and family supporters.

Each represents a vital link in a chain of caring that stretches back to 1918 when a group of brave and generous women established the Jewish Old Folks Home in a small house in downtown Toronto.

Since those early days, Baycrest has grown into a uniquely comprehensive campus of care serving nearly 2,500 older adults a day.

It is the passion and commitment of our supporters that has helped build Baycrest into a vitally important community asset, always ready to care for the most vulnerable older adults among us.

We have inherited a legacy of dreaming about what might be possible and then creating it, of never settling for the status quo, and of sharing our work with all who can benefit.

As a result, Baycrest is now recognized around the world not only for innovations in seniors' health that began here, but also for research that continues to advance knowledge about how to maintain and strengthen the aging brain.

We believe Baycrest's growth and accomplishments should be a source of pride to Toronto's Jewish community, especially to the generations of families who have supported us with their donations, their time, their energy and their selfless volunteerism.

Baycrest's achievements have helped us extend our reputation for care and innovation well beyond our local community.

We embrace the moral mandate of Tikkun Olam, (תיקון עולם), "repairing a broken world," and join the long-standing tradition of all great Jewish healthcare institutions—to improve the well-being of people in their local communities as well as around the globe.

Here are just a few of our recent achievements that we are so intensely proud to share:

Exemplary care

Caring for patients, residents and families is at the heart of what we do. It was the guiding force that established our organization nearly a century ago. Recently, Baycrest was awarded "exemplary status" by Accreditation Canada, ranking us among the top performers in patient care, safety and corporate operations in the country.

The Ontario government has designated Baycrest as a long-term care "Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation." With provincial support we are testing new, cost-effective models of best practice and care delivery for older adults. The goal is to enhance the care experience for both clients and care providers in Toronto and beyond.

Research with impact

An international expert panel ranked the Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest as the "highest impact" cognitive neurosciences program in the world in the area of human memory and aging.

For example, discoveries by Baycrest scientists have helped to identify healthier diets that can reduce the risk of age-related memory decline.

They have also yielded new insights into how older adults learn and retain new information, paving the way for treatments for mild cognitive impairment. We are among the first in the world to introduce a computer model of a functioning human brain (the "virtual brain" project).

Training the next generation

We look forward to broadening the scope of Baycrest-led training for more medical students and other local and international healthcare professionals in the years to come. We are training the next generation of geriatric care professionals on a global basis in disciplines such as nursing, nutrition, pharmacy and kinesiology—to better communicate and build relationships with cognitively frail adults in hospitals and nursing homes.

Each year, more than 1,100 health care students and professionals from across North America, Western Europe, the Middle East, South America, Australia and China are trained within our campus of care.

Besides bringing a fresh source of revenue for our Toronto home campus, this sharing of knowledge and expertise exemplifies our Jewish values of helping others.

Finding new tools, new revenue sources

Baycrest has launched two exciting spin-out companies—Baycrest Global Solutions (BGS) and Cogniciti Inc.—to market our expertise in comprehensive senior care and to develop products, goods and services aimed at strengthening people's cognitive abilities throughout middle adulthood and into older age.

This is another way we are sharing our expertise with others while creating new sources of revenue for our Toronto home campus so we can continue to deliver high-quality care and programs to our Jewish elderly.

Having the support of our community has never been more critical than it is today. We are now about to unveil our most important Strategic Plan in many years—the one that will lead us to a tremendous milestone: Baycrest's 100th Anniversary in 2018. As our community continues to dream, we will continue to build.

This is the first in a planned series of columns called "Community Matters" that will appear in upcoming issues of the *Canadian Jewish News* so that readers can see first-hand how the legacy of dreaming becomes reality.

We look forward to sharing more details about plans, achievements, and challenges as we actively engage in co-creating with the community, and we welcome your questions and comments.

Please email us at
community@baycrest.org

Garry Foster,
Chair, Baycrest Board of Directors

Dr. William E. Reichman,
Baycrest President and CEO

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Groundbreaking for new JCC delayed

New downtown cultural centre changes plans for Bathurst site

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Plans to break ground for the new facility that's slated to replace the former Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (BJCC) have been delayed again, but the building is still expected to open in 2016, community officials say.

However, the "size and scope" of the new structure, to be located at the Sherman campus on Bathurst Street between Sheppard and Finch avenues, are expected to be different from the original plans because of a recently proposed downtown Jewish cultural centre.

Ted Sokolsky

Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, told *The CJN* that the federation is finalizing a plan to build the downtown centre, which would include a Jewish museum and gallery space for the Koffler Centre of the Arts.

Groundbreaking for the mid-town Prosserman JCC on the Bathurst site is contingent on finalizing plans for downtown, and on raising additional funds, Sokolsky said. He expects ground will be broken before the end of 2014, instead of this year, which was the previous goal.

In 2008, the federation announced that the entire project, including the new JCC, would be ready in November 2011. The BJCC was torn down in late 2009.

The federation has raised $100 million for the new campus, and still has to raise another $35 to 40 million, Sokolsky said. He believes all the funds will be raised before ground is broken, he said.

An original estimate of $150 million for the total cost of completing the campus has been revised, based on the redesign, Sokolsky clarified.

He said the new plans would cost the same as the original ones, but part of the money would be redirected downtown.

The Koffler museum and gallery were originally going to be part of the new Bathurst JCC. The Ontario Jewish Archives would remain in their current location on the Sherman campus.

Sokolsky said the federation has "an opportunity for a downtown space," but that it is too early to release details.

The location "would provide much more traffic and access to the general public, and help drive revenues a lot better," he said.

As a result, the complex of buildings on the Sherman campus could be 12,000 square feet smaller than planned. A new Leah Posluns Theatre would still be built there, as well as Koffler Centre offices and facilities.

Phase 1 of renovations on the Bathurst Street site cost $40 million, including the $10-million Donald Gales Family Pavilion, which houses a daycare, fitness facilities and classes as part of the Prosserman JCC, the entity that will include the new JCC building.

Sokolsky said the federation was looking for space farther south because of a "major expansion" of the Jewish community in that part of the city. The federation already has two venues downtown, the Miles Nadal JCC at Bloor Street and Spadina Avenue, and the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life. However, Sokolsky said, it "became clear that we need to have a greater downtown presence."

The federation began looking for a location about seven months ago, he said. "We're looking to share land with interested institutions." He is hoping to make an announcement about a downtown location before the summer, he said.

Construction for the mid-town Prosserman JCC will take place on what is now an empty field, and there will be no disruption of services for current members, Sokolsky said.

After the BJCC closed in September 2009, the Gales Pavilion opened the following month. There are almost 800 fitness members using the facility, Sokolsky said. A year ago, there were 700, about 80 more than the previous year. Before the BJCC closed, it had more than 1,200 fitness members.

Sokolsky said the Bathurst site, which includes the Lipa Green Centre, is "busier than ever." The centre houses federation offices, two youth organizations, and various agencies, and will undergo a $3-million renovation (the next phase of renovations), beginning next month.

Farther north, the federation's Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan is also growing. Its JCC, the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, which opened in fall 2012, has almost 6,000 members and its daycare centre is full, Sokolsky said. As well, plans to build a theatre on the east end of the building "are moving ahead."

Bialik Hebrew Day School will open a branch at the campus this fall.

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Quadriplegic rabbi reflects on freedom at Pesach

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

For Rabbi Yehuda Simes, an Ottawa teacher and youth leader, Passover is a special time to celebrate freedom. In June 2010, everything he'd thought of as freedom vanished when his family's van rolled off the highway. His pregnant wife and seven of eight children received only minor injuries, but Rabbi Simes was paralyzed from the shoulders down.

After months of rehab, in 2011 he returned to teaching and speaking, despite a laborious daily existence and ongoing pain.

Rabbi Simes' halting, sparing words – at times in a near-whisper – held a full house rapt at a Kashruth Council of Canada (COR)-sponsored pre-Pesach community lecture at Clanton Park Synagogue on March 5.

"In an instant, my entire life, my family's life was turned upside down… In that one single instant everything completely changed.

"We like to say that all nine of our children were together," said Rabbi Simes. "My youngest child was inside my wife's womb, my oldest child was on the phone" from home, talking to his sister in the car at the time of the accident.

His youngest son was born months later,

Rabbi Yehuda Simes

in the hospital where Rabbi Simes was still a patient. His team carefully choreographed every step from ICU to labour room so that he wouldn't miss the birth. "They transferred me onto the stretcher and all of my gear was ready to go.

"As I was wheeled into the room… the baby was born, and of course, who else should get the baby? So they gave me the baby. That's how it goes… it's just a river of tears. It's not exactly the way it was done before… it's different, but the same."

That was also the day Rabbi Simes breathed for the first time without a ventilator. "I should not be here in front of you right now… according to everything they know about my kind of injury."

Rabbi Simes now appreciates every breath. "Breathing is a very big deal."

"I don't look at it as an accident at all," Rabbi Simes said. "It's a sign… it tells me I am in *cherus* [freedom]. It's pure freedom" to still enjoy everything he could before his injuries.

"So I don't drink in the same way I used to drink. I always have to use a straw… and that's extremely positive. Because how ever would I have thought of the great brachah of swallowing? I did it all the time."

Though the trip to speak in Toronto had been gruelling, Rabbi Simes was pleased to see old friends here. An experienced teacher, he joked with the crowd: "You're a great classroom, by the way. You're much too quiet."

Speaking before Rabbi Simes was Rabbi Dovid Heber from the Star-K kosher agency in Baltimore, who reviewed many rules of Pesach, from cleaning and koshering the home to selling chametz.

Consumers can cut high Pesach costs, Rabbi Heber said, with products that don't need a Passover hechsher, such as 100 per cent pure cocoa and frozen fruit with no additives. Unprocessed meat doesn't need a special Pesach symbol, and can be bought on sale at any time. Star-K has also recently unveiled its Star-S (Sephardi) certification, which also helps Ashkenazim who permit kitniyot for infants or sick people.

Rabbi Simes concluded by recalling the moment in the Torah reading for the seventh day of Pesach when the Jews stand at the edge of the Red Sea, yet hesitate. A midrash relates that one of the tribal princes, Nachshon, son of Aminadav, waded in first.

Rabbi Simes said the great Reb Chaim Shmulevitz (1902-1979), was puzzled: "Simple people, throughout our tear drenched history… had the strength to stand up to the challenge in front of them. So how is it that the [desert generation] were not able to have that strength, that conviction?"

The challenge, Rabbi Simes said, is usually to sanctify God's name with a courageous death, but at the Red Sea, the Jews were challenged to sanctify God's name by living – to walk through, as the verse says, "in the midst of the sea on dry land." Only Nachshon "looked it in the face… and said, 'I can do that.'

"It's much more difficult, says Reb Chaim…to live life and not to see the difference between the stormy waters and the dry land."

For kashrut questions, contact COR at 416-635-9550 or the Star-K kosher hotline at 410-484-4110 (Baltimore).

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Christians in Holy Land face different realities

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Christians in Israel and the West Bank face radically different realities, says an Israeli analyst.

While Arab Christians in Israel want to be integrated into Israeli society, their Christian brothers in the West Bank are caught uneasily between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Rabbi David Rosen said.

Rabbi David Rosen

He spoke March 3 at a forum co-sponsored by the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

Rabbi Rosen, born in Britain and based in Jerusalem, is the international director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee.

From 1979 to 1985, he was chief rabbi of Ireland. In 2005, the Vatican made him a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory the Great for his contributions to promoting Catholic-Jewish reconciliation.

Speaking at College Street United Church, Rabbi Rosen said that almost 200,000 Christians live between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

In addition, Israel is home to some 50,000 Christians from the former Soviet Union who immigrated there with their Jewish spouses and relatives.

The Russian Orthodox Church in Israel has benefited from their presence and tries to cater to their needs, Rabbi Rosen said.

The Christian Arab community in Israel is growing despite suffering from a measure of prejudice.

Christian high school students outpace their Muslim and Jewish counterparts in test results and graduation rates, he added.

Israeli Christians also play a significant role in interfaith dialogue.

By contrast, Christians living under the administration of the Palestinian Authority are in a state of numerical decline.

Since they're disproportionately involved in the tourist trade, they're directly affected by the political situation in the West Bank, Rabbi Rosen said.

The second Palestinian uprising, which erupted in 2000, had a negative impact on their livelihood, he pointed out.

Christians in the West Bank also have been affected by the route of Israel's security barrier, which has divided families.

Christianity is historically rooted in the Holy Land, and Christians there are blessed with an enormously rich heritage, Rabbi Rosen pointed out.

But Christians, divided into various sects, squabble endlessly among themselves and have a long history of trying to bring "truth" to the Holy Land.

During a question-and-answer period, Rabbi Rosen was asked about Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

He said they "complicate" efforts by the Palestinian Authority to win statehood.

Quoting the late Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, Rabbi Rosen advised Israel to take "responsible and calculated risks" to advance the currently stalled peace process.

Welcoming Shabbat

Compiled by CJN Staff

About 650 people, or 150 families, gathered at three Toronto-area synagogues for the second annual Family Shabbat Dinner organized by the National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY) and Torah High on March 1.

Some 350 welcomed Shabbat at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto (BAYT) in Thornhill, 240 participated at Torath Emeth (Viewmount), and more than 50 were at Kehilat Shaarei Torah.

Participating Torah High and NCSY teens' families were paired with families from the hosting congregations where introductory Shabbat remarks were followed by dinner and singing in a relaxed atmosphere. Last year, friendships were established and maintained, aimed at enhancing the educational experience and building Jewish unity. Many such relationships were begun again this year.

"Torah High and NCSY Canada took Shabbat to the next level," Rabbi Glenn Black, chief executive officer of Torah High and NCSY Canada, said. "The Jewish values and traditions we teach in the classroom and through our programs are magnified a hundredfold by inspired and committed parents and families. These Jewish teens will be our community's leaders in the future. We need to engage and support them and their families today."

Last year, the inaugural event attracted 250 to the BAYT. Organizers hope to expand the program to five synagogues and 1,000 people next year. The event was sponsored by the Cherniak and Silverstein families.

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Israel must include Arab minorities: conference

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

It's essential to improve the socio-economic status of Israel's Arab minorities and incorporate them more fully into Israeli life, participants at the second Irwin Green Conference in Toronto were told.

"There is a significant deficit of resource allocation, of public attention... There is a profound under-representation, in fields of higher education and in various sectors, of Israel's minorities," said DJ Schneeweiss, the Israeli consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, at the conference organized by the Israeli Arab issues committee of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The theme of the conference, held at the Lipa Green Centre March 3, was "Israel's untapped potential."

"This is a drag on the economy, on our society, a potential time bomb and we have to address these inequalities," Schneeweiss said.

Amal Elsana Ahl'jooj, a Bedouin woman living in Israel, said Israel's minorities must have access to the same education and basic necessities that everyone else has. She's the fifth of 13 children, and she grew up with no water, no schools, no health clinics and no infrastructure.

DJ Schneeweiss

"I didn't choose to be an activist. I had tasks to do," she said.

At age five, she was the family shepherd, but there was one bright side, she said – "I had the great opportunity not to be raised in the kitchen. I was raised in the mountains, by myself."

Her grandmother was the one who encouraged her to change their way of living, Ahl'jooj said. "She taught me you don't have to cry and see yourself as a victim. You have to see yourself as someone who's able to change her own situation, take the lead and do things you believe in."

Even at five years old, she became aware that women were not equal in her society, she said. "Seeing your mother giving your brother a nice piece of chicken and not you, only because you are a girl. And they got a new coat, and you did not, only because you are a girl. This is very painful for a child," she said.

She also noticed very early on that she was a second-class citizen in Israel. "I remember the day when the police forces came to destroy my aunt's house. I asked my father why and he said, 'Because we are Arabs.'"

She said she came to the conference to describe her situation and offer hope.

At 14, she started teaching women in her village how to read and write – her mother was one of her first students. At 17, she established the first Bedouin women's organization dealing with women's rights in a patriarchal society.

One of the biggest challenges she deals with, she said, is that there is "no connection between democracy and minority rights. The average person will travel from his own city to Eilat, passing through the Bedouin villages and not asking himself a single question (about) why these people living without water, without electricity."

In order to change the situation, she founded the Arab Jewish Center for Equality, Empowerment and Cooperation (AJEEC) in 2000, which focuses on strengthening Jewish-Arab relations.

It's a huge challenge – Arab Bedouins and Druze make up only a small percentage of Israel's minorities.

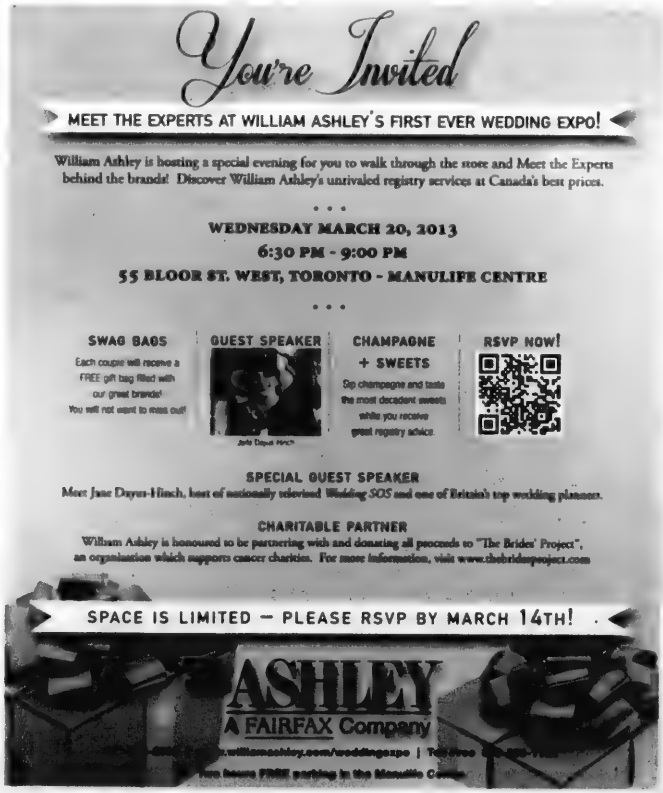
Raya and Maimoon Azmi, a Druze couple who spoke at the conference, believe the Israeli government needs to create more inter-communal co-operation.

"The first time you meet a Druze is in the army," Raya Azmi said. "Why don't (Jewish Israelis) have trips to our villages, and not only to eat pita?"

The conference is named for philanthropist Irwin Green, who believed that more equality can strengthen the future of Israel. In 2000, at age 90, he became aware of Jewish-Arab inequalities and he established a development centre for Arab kids, two computer centres, a soccer field, a community centre and a youth centre, his son, Dan Green said.

"His last project was a vocational school for Arab women," Green said. "He passed away in Israel, a few months before he turned 100.

"He firmly believed in the importance of education (as) the key for people to advance themselves in Israel."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The legacy of Emanuel Ringelblum

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

They are the "documents of a catastrophe" and a vital resource for contemporary historians.

The secret archive of the doomed Warsaw Ghetto, compiled under the direction of Emanuel Ringelblum in the Oneg Shabbat project, is a direct link to the variegated voices of Polish Jews during the Holocaust in Poland.

Composed of diaries, letters, posters, decrees, candy wrappers, milk coupons, concert invitations, commissioned studies and the like, the project was the biggest one of its kind in Nazi-occupied Poland, said American historian Samuel Kassow in a lecture last week sponsored by the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto.

The documents in the archive, which were amassed before the massive July 1942 deportation took place, portray a Jewish community under siege and duress.

Within a month of this catastrophic event, members of Oneg Shabbat buried the first cache of documents so that it would not fall into Nazi hands, said Kassow, a professor of history at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.

Prior to the 1943 Warsaw ghetto revolt, yet more documents were hidden from the prying eyes of the Nazis.

On Sept. 18, 1946, 10 tin boxes containing some of the documents were discovered in the postwar ruins of Warsaw.

In December 1950, Polish construction workers building apartment houses on the site of the Nazi ghetto stumbled upon yet more documents in two aluminum milk cans.

A third cache, believed to be under China's embassy in Warsaw, was never found.

Although the documents unearthed to date represent but a small proportion of the Oneg Shabbat time capsules, they offer important and invaluable insights into life in the Warsaw ghetto.

"Ringelblum saw them as a resource for future historians," said Kassow.

Ringelblum did not want the history of the ghetto to be written by the Nazis, he added.

Kassow described Oneg Shabbat, staffed originally by 60 workers, as a form of resistance to Nazi tyranny. As he put it, "Jews resisted with paper and pen."

From the outset, Oneg Shabbat was imbued with what he called "a national mission."

From 1939 to 1940, Oneg Shabbat's goal was to "collect stuff," or all manner of documentation from the ghetto. Its agenda after that was to collect material of Jewish society under the Nazi yoke.

Eighty topics were chosen and a team leader was assigned to each one, he said.

Oneg Shabbat also gathered information about mass murder in extermination camps in Poland, some of which reached the Polish government-in-exile in Britain, Kassow noted.

Ringelblum, born in what is now Ukraine in 1900, was a historian, teacher and social worker deeply devoted to Yiddish culture.

Politically, he was a Marxist, a left-wing Zionist and a follower of Ber Borochov, one of the founders of the labour Zionist movement.

When World War II broke out, he was in Switzerland. He might have remained there, but chose to return to Poland.

A specialist in Polish Jews and Polish-Jewish relations, he rose to greatness as a historian during the Holocaust, when he directed the Oneg Shabbat project.

Emanuel Ringelblum

Although he was a left-winger, he instructed Oneg Shabbat workers to collect first-hand testimony from Jews from all social and political walks of life.

By 1942, Ringelblum was torn between a duty to protect his wife and son and an obligation to carry on with the project that will always define him.

He could have escaped to Hungary, but decided to stay in Poland, feeling he had an enormous responsibility to carry on with the project, Kassow said.

Ringelblum and his family managed to escape from Warsaw on the eve of the ghetto's destruction, but on March 7, 1944, the Gestapo found them.

Ringelblum was shot three days later, but nearly 70 years on his legacy glows brightly.

His co-workers did not fare well either. Only three of them survived the Holocaust.

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Matchmaking site hopes to pair young Jews

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A new dating site is hoping to help Toronto's young Jews find love from within their own culture and religion.

But JToronto (jtoronto.com) is not like JDate, where users post public profiles and browse the site, reviewing profiles and contacting people who they think would be a match. Instead, this site relies on a matchmaker to pair up men and women.

Many of the people on JDate aren't looking for a serious relationship, and there are many problems with fake profiles, said Rabbi Mendel Zaltzman, an organizer for JToronto and a rabbi for the Russian Jewish Community Centre. Additionally, not everybody wants to go public with their search for love.

JToronto gives them a discreet way to search, he said, since only the matchmakers can see the pool of participants.

The initiative was created to respond to the number of Jews who are marrying non-Jews not because they aren't interested in marrying within the faith, but because they couldn't find suitable Jewish partners.

JToronto was created as a counterpart to JMontreal, which was started by Rabbi Yisroel Bernath, director of Chabad of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

Despite the connection to rabbis, these sites aren't targeting observant Jews. There are no partnerships with synagogues. Instead, the service partners with secular community organizations such as Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) and Hillel. It's also supported by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and counts *The CJN* as a community partner.

"The idea is everyone who looks at it sees that we're a cross-spectrum organization," Rabbi Zaltzman said.

"There are organizations that represent all parts of the community. It's in essence any agency in the city that's working with that age group."

The age group in question is 25 to 40. Almost anything goes within that range, from non-observance through to modern Orthodox – just not haredi, since members of that community tend to use traditional matchmakers, Rabbi Zaltzman said.

Matchmaker Lesley Silver-Winick is originally from Montreal, but lives in Toronto, so she works with both cities' versions of the site. She uses her background in social services and education, as well as personal experience, to help connect users in each city, sometimes pairing up people from both cities' databases if they're interested.

To set people up, she first let's the computer suggest matches. From there, she speaks to each user to make more informed suggestions. For example, the algorithm may not match two people who would be suitable apart from their level of observance, so Silver-Winick would ask them about their willingness to compromise.

"We're trying to find quality matches for the members, so there's a lot of follow-up," she said, adding that she encourages members to at least have a phone conversation or coffee date with potential matches.

She's 52 years old and got married at 40, so she said she understands what it's like to search for a partner. She can especially relate to people in their 30s who may have to consider relationships with people who are divorced with kids, for example.

So far, she has 31 "mutually approved matches" in Toronto, out of the 175 people who have registered since the site went live almost three weeks ago. Out of her JMontreal matches, one couple recently announced their engagement, she said.

Roughly 200 people showed up to the Feb. 28 launch, Rabbi Zaltzman said, so already there's a larger pool than one would find from other methods such as speed-dating events, though he encourages people to try all methods of finding Jewish partners.

"So far, the buzz is out there. There's movement and it's steady," he said, adding that he's hoping the number of registrants will hit 1,000 by the High Holidays.

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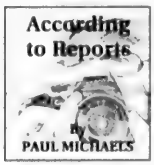
Hezbollah fights to prop up Assad's regime

Dexter Filkins might not have broken any new ground with *After Syria*, the cover story of the Feb. 25 *New Yorker* magazine, but he certainly fills in a lot of details in a riveting manner.

Reporting from Lebanon, Filkins discusses Hezbollah, its domination of the country, and its effort to maintain its stranglehold by fighting in Syria to prop up Assad's regime. After all, Hezbollah depends upon massive amounts of weapons – flown from Iran to Syria, where they are loaded onto trucks bound for Lebanon. Should Assad fall, this vital supply route would be imperilled. To keep it intact is as essential for Hezbollah's sponsor Iran as it is for Hezbollah itself.



Iran's Revolutionary Guard has trained, supplied and financially supported Hezbollah from the movement's inception in 1982. Hezbollah became Iran's "advanced force" (in Filkins' words) to confront Israel. He cites Paul Salem of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut who dramatically remarked: "Hezbollah is an Iranian aircraft carrier parked north of Israel."

But as much as Hezbollah's raison d'être is to do Iran's bidding against Israel, it has to weigh its own future as the major Shia force facing the Sunni surge against Assad next door, and its spillover effect in Lebanon. Filkins spent time in a southern Beirut neighbourhood near Hezbollah headquarters with "Dani," one of the group's commanders. These same headquarters, incidentally, were rebuilt with Iranian money after being destroyed by Israeli aircraft in the 2006 war.

"It was clear," Filkins writes, "that Hezbollah's leaders had concluded that any change in Syria was almost certain to wash across the border, and that they were getting ready. 'If the Sunnis take over Syria,' Dani told me, 'we're going to be fighting them in Beirut.'"

Currently, Sunni and Shia Lebanese are already battling each other – in Syria. Sunni Lebanese who have joined the Free Syrian Army are clashing with Hezbollah fighters across the border in Assad's war-torn state, but try to avoid doing so on the Lebanese side out of concern that events could spiral out of control there. The fear, however, is that the longer the fighting in Syria continues, the greater the likelihood that Lebanon could once again be plunged into civil war.

Filkins provides a glimpse of this drift: "On a recent Friday morning in Sidon, a crowd of 3,000 Sunnis gathered at the Bilal bin Rabah mosque. They had come to hear Sheikh Ahmed al-Assir, one of the country's best-known Sunni preachers. Sidon is a Sunni-majority city in a region dominated by Hezbollah. In recent months, as the Syrian civil war has taken on a sectarian character, Sunni-Shia tensions have risen in Sidon, and Assir's sermons have become inflamed."

Filkins quotes Assir from one of these sermons: "You know, [Hezbollah leader] Hassan Nasrallah says he's not involved in Syria… And he's a liar! They rape women. They are slaughtering our children."

Assir also railed against Hezbollah's oppressive domination in Lebanon, predicting, according to Filkins, that Sunnis will rise up against Hezbollah just as they did against Assad. Others, however, caution that Hezbollah is simply far too strong to be confronted. For instance, Druze leader Walid Jumblatt (who has been in an uneasy alliance with Hezbollah) told Filkins that it would be "suicidal" to take on Hezbollah given its overwhelming strength. (The last time Hezbollah was challenged – in 2008, to give up its private communications network, not its weapons – it reacted by killing dozens of Sunnis and Christians.) Jumblatt also disputed the common assumption that Hezbollah would be weakened were Assad to fall, given that the movement already possesses some 50,000 missiles and is seeking alternative supply routes.

Hassan Nasrallah *[CJN file photo]*

Filkins concludes by noting that, for all its problems (including a possible weakening of its role in the Lebanese Parliament as June elections draw near), Hezbollah remains determined, according to Dani, to prepare for the next round in its war against Israel.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

UJA's Chief, Annual Development, Celebrates a Major Milestone

Lisa Morrison left the U.S. 30 years ago and hasn't looked back

By Daniel Horowitz

After completing a double masters program at the Baltimore Institute for Jewish Communal Service that prepares students to be leaders in the Jewish community, Lisa Morrison left her native U.S. and made the sojourn north.

And it didn't take long for Morrison – a native of Akron, Ohio - to demonstrate her commitment to Jews around the world, and to her new home of Toronto.

Morrison, who came to Toronto in 1982 to begin her career with UJA of Greater Toronto, didn't let a little thing like not yet having her landed immigrant papers get in the way.

While waiting for her paperwork to come through, Morrison decided to visit Refuseniks in the Soviet Union before spending two months on a kibbutz in Israel where she honed her Hebrew skills.

It's that type of decision-making that has seen Morrison, Chief of Annual Development, ascend the UJA ranks quickly, in a career that recently passed the 30-year mark.

Morrison already knew a bit about Toronto, having visited the city with her high school choir.

"I think that the instinctive and passionate Zionism in Toronto is stronger and more all encompassing than anywhere I've ever lived," says Morrison, who was never ambivalent about her Judaism. "In 1975 I was probably the only person in my high school who wore a pin that said, 'Zionism is a badge of honour,' after the UN had declared that Zionism was racism."

But upon arriving in Toronto, she quickly found others who could relate to her passion for Jewish life.

Lisa Morrison

"When I first moved here, I was impressed by how pervasive a strong Jewish identity was among so many who were my age," says Morrison. "As someone who had left home for university at 18, I was also shocked by how many people my age still lived at home. I came to realize that was part of why so many young people here had strong connections to Friday night dinners, holidays and family. I thought to myself, 'what a *haymisha*, truly Jewish community I've come to.'"

The die was cast, and Morrison was a true Torontonian, and she hasn't looked back since.

"I felt like I had found an incredible gem in Toronto," explains Morrison. "I couldn't imagine finding another community with as much Jewish soul and love of Israel as I have found here. I think there are more people here per capita working at living a Jewish life and giving their children a Jewish education than anywhere else."

Knowing how rare a community like Jewish Toronto is, Morrison hopes we never take it for granted.

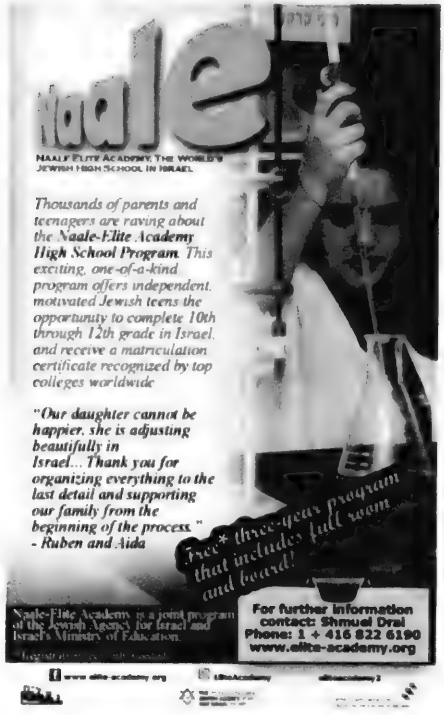
"I am constantly telling people around me that they have no clue what they have in Toronto," she says. "Jews who are born and raised here think that this is the way every Jewish community operates. I think sometimes that you have to come from elsewhere to truly appreciate the Jewish *neshama* of this community."

And, in thirty years as a fundraiser in Toronto, Morrison, who has led some 30 UJA missions to Israel, has seen her share of changes in the city's philanthropic landscape.

"There is huge competition for fundraising dollars in the Jewish community today that didn't exist when I first arrived," she explains. "The fact that UJA has to constantly explain and reinforce why it is different than other fundraising campaigns in this city is an uphill battle that is definitely challenging, but well worth it. The older generation knew that UJA was dealing with the most important existential issues facing the Jewish people and while that continues to be our raison d'être, I think it's harder for the younger generation to understand that, and relate to it, but I'm hopeful that they will."

"UJA Federation and the Toronto Jewish Community are blessed by the fact that Lisa's Jewish professional communal journey brought her here to build a life and a wonderful career," says Ted Sokolsky, President & CEO, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Jewish Toronto Jewish Toronto is published by the community service arm of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto UJA Federation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Passover cleaning, Part 1

Sure it's known as the holiday of national liberation. Just don't try to convince that to anyone who has been spending countless hours cleaning for Passover. But just remember you're not alone – and there are plenty of people who want to share their cleaning tips with you.

You can't get much more user friendly than a web page with a title like: "How To Do Your Pesach Cleaning Happily in Less Than One Day." In it, Rabbi Shlomo Aviner passes along the basics: how to deal with children's clothing, medicines and toiletries, high chairs, cars and, of course, the kitchen. He concludes, "In light of what is written above, it should take about an hour to clean the house, another hour for the dining room, and two to three hours to kasher the kitchen. In short, about one day!" Wow. **[http://bit.ly/passclean1]**

On the other hand, there's Stephanie Savir. I'm sure she means well. She really does. But if you look at her site and haven't started your own cleaning, perhaps you should just file away her advice for next year. Her Ten Tips for Reducing Pesach Pressure include advice for what to do "seven weeks before Passover: review and copy recipes; buy paper goods and cleaning supplies." At six weeks: "Buy yom tov outfits for family; clean bedrooms." At five weeks: "Clean basement and cars." And so on. **[http://bit.ly/passclean2]**

Before he gets into the nitty-gritty, Rabbi Moshe Finkelstein explains why modern Passover causes cleaning angst. In the past, wealthy people who lived in large homes had servants to do their cleaning. Poor people who could not afford servants lived in small homes with one or two rooms. "Today, we seem to be caught in a trap," Rabbi Finkelstein writes. Our homes are larger. Furniture, utensils and clothing are more plentiful. But we don't have the servants to do the cleaning. So the weeks before the holiday become filled with cleaning. **[http://bit.ly/passclean4]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

Whether or not you enjoy cleaning, do take care with those industrial strength cleansers. Yona Amitai, a senior toxicologist at Hadassah University Hospital in Jerusalem, warns that "the number of accidental poisonings of children from cleaning fluid triples during the two or three weeks before Passover." **[http://bit.ly/passclean3]**

If you're feeling overwhelmed cleaning for your army, be thankful you don't have a real one to worry about like the Israel Defence Forces. Just imagine the logistics of locking away a sea of cutting boards, knives, deep fryers, strainers and frying pans before hauling out 110 tons of matzah meal and 25,000 litres of grape juice! **[http://bit.ly/passclean5]**

Finally, in the going-overboard department, here are some home-owners who have way too much time – and aluminum foil – on their hands. In their (tongue-in-cheek) photo essay, they have enveloped everything (!) in tin foil that may have ever had contact with chametz, including their couch and corner tables. But why stop there when you can also foil over your TV, lamps, dresser and for good measure, a teddy bear, toothpaste and toilet, too. **[http://bit.ly/passclean6]**

Well, I guess that's a wrap.

Highway@rogers.com

Pesach customs are key to our heritage

Pesach is not only about food bans and kitchen anxieties. Entire books have been written about the many colourful and interesting customs of different Jewish communities.

The seder itself is marked by many different customs. Iraqi and Kurdish Jews begin the seder with a dramatic dialogue. One of the children goes outside, knocks on the door and then answers the questions of the seder leader: "Where have you come from?" "Egypt." "Where are you going?" "To Jerusalem." "What are your supplies?"

The child answers by reciting the Four Questions, thereby opening the seder.

A similar custom is observed by Yemenite Jews, who perform a symbolic re-enactment of the Exodus. The seder leader gets up from the table, throws the afikoman in its bag over his back like a knapsack, walks around the room leaning on a cane and relates to those assembled how he has just now come out of Egypt and experienced miracles.

Afghan Jews take a thick, footlong scallion. As they come to the singing of *Dayeinu*, each person bangs his onion over the head and arms of his neighbours. Nobody seems to know the origin or rationale of this custom.

Among Sephardi Jews, the blessing on the wine is recited on the first and third cup, whereas Ashkenazim recite it on every cup.

The text of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Haggadot is basically the same, although there are some minor differences. Toward the end of the seder, there is greater freedom and variety among Sephardim. Among some people, the concluding songs may be sung in a variety of languages.

Sephardi Window

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Jews of North African or Asian origin – and some Chassidim whose roots go back to 19th-century Eretz Yisrael – sing *Chad Gadya* in Judaeo-Arabic. Eastern European Jews have been known to sing a Yiddish version of *Echad Mi Yodea* (Who Knows One). German Jews sing *Adir Hu*, the hymn ending in a prayer for the rebuilding of the Temple, in medieval German.

On the last day of Pesach, there are various ways of celebrating and re-enacting the parting of the Red Sea.

In many communities, both Ashkenazi and Sephardi, it's customary to gather toward midnight in the synagogue or in the town square to recite the *Song of the Sea* (Exodus 15), with much singing, dancing and rejoicing.

But the question remains: why should Jews continue to observe these customs? Is there no way that the rabbis can unify Jewish practice on such a basic point?

From a halachic perspective, any custom accepted by a community over a significant period of time carries great weight. Time and again, rabbis defend a seemingly inexplicable practice with the reasoning that "this is a venerable custom, observed by communities since earliest times, and one is not to change it."

I believe that these traditions make us into Am Yisrael. They define our being and link us to our ancestors. Without them, Jews wouldn't be able to keep their beliefs.

Let us all research and keep our family's traditions. They're an integral part of our being.

Rethinking the bar mitzvah

The espoused theory is that a bar or bat mitzvah serves as a ritualized entry into the Jewish community – the point when a child takes on the obligations, challenges and opportunities of Jewish life. For too many, however, the celebration is just the opposite. Bar and bat mitzvahs have become a graduation from Jewish engagement.

Fewer than 50 per cent of Jewish teens are involved in ongoing Jewish experiences. In many communities – both geographically and religiously defined – this number drops to under 10 per cent. Framing its Campaign for Youth Engagement, the Union for Reform Judaism notes that 80 per cent of children who become bnei mitzvah will have no connection to their synagogue by the time they graduate high school.

Class Act

Daniel Held

Jewish teens are involved in non-Jewish extracurricular activities at astounding rates. Nearly 97 per cent of Jewish teens in a recent study were engaged in extracurricular activities, but only seven per cent cite a specifically Jewish activity.

Why is this the case? There's no one reason. Parents do not reinforce the importance of Jewish activities. Jewish teen programs lack both the resources and the momentum to fulfil their mandates. The drive toward university pulls teens into resume-building activities. Teenagers question structures of religious conservatism. The list goes on and on.

Complicit in distancing teens from Jewish engagement is the current structure of bar and bat mitzvahs. In order to have a bar or bat mitzvah, many synagogues require enrolment in day or congregational schools from Grade 4 onward – an incentive that antagonizes children and encourages them to drop out as soon as they have chanted their Torah portion.

In a similar vein, parents and synagogue leaders are so concerned about their child's performance at the bar or bat mitzvah that the curriculum in the years leading up to the event is focused on the skills and knowledge needed for that one day, circumventing more exciting and engaging topics.

So what can be done? The solutions are as varied as the challenges.

In some Reform congregations, confirmation, a group ceremony for high school students, has successfully lengthened teens' engagement in synagogue learning. In other cases, however, confirmation has merely delayed graduation day.

Recently there has been a call to ban bar mitzvahs. Patrick Aleph, the outspoken founder of Punk Torah, argues in a recent *Kveller* article that bar mitzvahs don't accomplish much, are a modern invention that don't promote Jewish continuity, represent a welfare cheque to synagogues, and make adults look like hypocrites.

Banning bar and bat mitzvahs is an unrealistic suggestion. The ceremony does mark an important celebration of Jewish life, carries a significant emotional connection, and plays countless other educational, financial and structural roles in the ecosystem of Jewish living.

At the same time, it's time for change. The Union for Reform Judasim and Hebrew Union College have launched the B'nai Mitzvah Revolution. In partnership with 14 congregations, they're piloting and studying new models for bar and bat mitzvahs that will transform the ceremonies' role in Jewish development.

This kind of experimentation is critical, but it requires the buy-in of synagogues, rabbis, educators, communities, parents and children. Only through such a collaborative effort can bar and bat mitzvahs serve as the bridge rather than the roadblock in a child's movement from pediatric to adult engagement in Jewish life.

Program gives teen girls useful skills

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Ashreinu, a year-round program for Jewish girls, offers a unique opportunity for students at Beth Jacob High School for Girls to learn leadership skills and also provide a service to the greater community, says the organization's director, Rivky Coffer.

Approaching its 20th year of existence, the non-profit organization (campashreinu.ca) was started in 1994 by two Grade 11 students who now live in Israel.

Ashreinu has grown to serve hundreds of girls, mainly public school students but also some Jewish day school students, Coffer said. "It's a beautiful mix."

In addition to programs such as Shabbatons, trips, parties and Sunday school, there are two affiliated summer camps – a day camp and an overnight camp.

The Sunday school offers one-on-one learning with volunteers at whatever level is appropriate.

"It's not just learning alephbet," Coffer said. "If a girl doesn't know how to read, it's reading. Or, if a child is in yeshiva day school, they could be doing their Rashi and Chumash homework, and we help them… almost like private tutoring."

As well, there is a teen mentoring program and a program for alumnae. "We always have to grow with our girls," Coffer said.

Coffer, a native of New York who has been with the organization for 14 years and teaches Grade 8 Judaic studies at Eitz Chaim Day School, said there was "a need for an organization for children from unaffiliated homes, or even girls that are in day schools."

Summer is "a good time to enhance their Jewish pride, and make it more real," she said. "Sometimes kids go to school, and things are in theory, but when you come to camp, Judaism is alive and exciting."

Day camp is held at Beth Jacob, which has an indoor swimming pool.

Some 300 campers attend the day camp, and about 65 girls go to the overnight camp in Muskoka.

Adina Kerzner, a 20-year-old Ashreinu volunteer who has been involved with the organization since Grade 11, said, "I love working with kids, and wanted to get them excited about being Jewish. All that aside, it's a fun place to work. You feel like one big family."

As well, she has gained practical experience and skills. "I used to hate making phone calls," said Kerzner, who is working on a degree in social work at Yeshiva University. "In high school, I was the technical head, arranging transportation and putting events together… You learn how to do things."

Although she signed up because her friends were becoming involved and she wanted to volunteer, her perspective has evolved.

She said that participants and volunteers both "end up learning so much more about themselves and about Judaism." Some of the younger girls have asked her questions about Judaism that she'd never really considered before, she added.

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Toronto lawyer produces film about Herzl

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Toronto lawyer David Matlow has an incredible but unusual passion for the founder of modern political Zionism, Theodor Herzl.

So much so that he has the world's largest private collection of Herzl memorabilia and has now made a documentary film about Herzl's life and times.

My Herzl, a Canada-Israel co-production produced by Matlow and directed by his Israeli brother-in-law, Eli Tal-El, is due to be screened for one night only on April 22 at the Silver City theatre at Yonge and Eglinton in support of the Ann and Max Tannenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

Matlow, 52, has exhibited his Herzl collection, consisting of 2,500 objects from postcards and postage stamps to plates and pen knives, at various venues, including Beth Tzedec Congregation and the Baycrest senior care facility.

And while these exhibits have been informative in educating people about Herzl the man and the visionary, they have had limited exposure.

But since almost everyone likes movies, *My Herzl* is an opportunity to communicate lessons about Herzl and the Zionist movement to a considerably wider audience, said Matlow, a corporate securities and private equity lawyer at Goodmans LLP.

My Herzl, set in locales inextricably associated with Herzl, is based on a trip Matlow organized to Basel, Switzerland, for himself and his family and relatives and friends in August 2010, just months before he turned 50.

Basel was where the first Zionist Congress took place in 1897 and where Herzl – who died at 44 in 1904 after battling heart disease – prophetically predicted the birth of Israel within 50 years.

Matlow asked 27 people to join him in Basel. Apart from his wife, three daughters, sisters and their husbands and children, participants also included his late mother, Esther, a former president of Canadian Hadassah WIZO to whom *My Herzl* is dedicated, and friends such as Dr. Barry Simon and David and Ellen Chaikof and their families.

The group stayed at the Three Kings Hotel, where Herzl slept, and, like Herzl, posed for photographs on the balcony overlooking the scenic Rhine River.

Meanwhile, Tal-El, a professional filmmaker from Jerusalem, travelled with a Dror Habonim youth delegation to Budapest and Paris, cities bound up with Herzl.

For Matlow, the film was a chance to share his passion with people closest to him in a city so vitally important in the annals of Zionism.

He considers Herzl an inspirational figure who tirelessly used his talents to help lay the foundation for the establishment of Israel.

"He did something," said Matlow. "He just didn't talk about it."

In light of Herzl's achievements, he noted, "all dreams are possible."

"During the late 1800s, the notion of a sovereign Jewish state was the most preposterous, most far-fetched and most ridiculous idea anyone ever had," he explained. "Yet it came true because people starting with Herzl believed in the idea, and worked towards that goal."

Herzl also personifies sacrifice, he added.

"Herzl sacrificed his own wealth, health and family to his objective of creating a Jewish state. He causes us to reflect on the sacrifices we might be prepared to make for the things we believe in."

Commenting on Herzl's contemporary relevance, Matlow said, "We should use our skills, talents and energy to complete Herzl's dream – a Jewish state that is safe, secure and living in peace."

The film portrays Herzl as an imperfect man who accomplished great things, he observed.

"Herzl was human, but we all have the potential to do great things. Are we doing all we can for what we believe in? Learning about Herzl allows us to reflect on this question about ourselves."

The Hebrew-language poster for *My Herzl*.

My Herzl, a blend of history and travelogue, features the observations of, among others, Robert Wistrich, a Hebrew University historian and specialist in antisemitism.

Wistrich describes Herzl – a Budapest-born assimilationist disillusioned by the Dreyfus Affair in France – as a person who transformed himself in the face of anti-Jewish animus in 19th-century Europe.

Wistrich suggests that Palestine, an Ottoman backwater even as late as the early 20th century, was a bleak and forbidding land, "not the kind of place you'd expect millions of Jews" to immigrate.

My Herzl, which is being submitted to Jewish movie festivals around the world by Ruth Diskin Films in Jerusalem, offers sharply divergent views of Herzl. Matlow regards him glowingly, while Tal-El initially sees him as a washed up icon.

In passing, the film scolds Israel for having treated Herzl as a myth rather than as a man with a family for far too long.

Although *My Herzl* may expose many more Torontonians to a slice of Zionist lore, Matlow intends to continue bringing his Herzl collection to new venues. From April 12 to 30, it will be exhibited at Congregation Machzikei Hadas in Ottawa.

CARING TO THE CORE: Aaron's Apple, a charity started by Aaron Maresky and his parents, Mandy and Neil, helps families pay for their chronically ill children's medical expenses. It recently held its second annual Caring to the Core gala fundraiser, co-chaired by Mandy Maresky and Janet Klugsberg, which featured a live band, a silent auction and raffle prizes, and attracted more than 500 participants. For more information on Aaron's Apple, go to www.aaronsapple.com. Seen from left are Mandy, Aaron and Neil Maresky.

Singles Events

is an advertising feature of *The Canadian Jewish News*

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PASSOVER PLAYERS
From left, Madelyn Cale, Laya Tarek, Sophie Jacobs, Maya Donsky and Hudson Fenwick of Temple Sinai Nursery School are happy to be following Miriam (teacher Ronit Talmi, left) and Moses (teacher Maxine Stuhler) out of Egypt to the Promised Land.

100 DAYS
Bobbins Hebrew Academy kindergarten students – including Liam Klein, left, and Gabriel Pinhasov – love counting and finally counted all the way up to the 100th day of school. They celebrated by eating 100 things; counting to 100 by 1s, 2s, 5s and 10s; moving their bodies 100 different ways; drawing what they will look like when they are 100 years old and writing their numbers to 100.

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Mazel Tov
מזל טוב

Mazel tov to Nathan & Carole Greenberg who recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. With love, Paul and Liane.

Happy 80th birthday to Shirley Milner, a truly amazing lady and inspiration to all!
We love you! From you children, grandchildren and great-grandchild.

Mazel tov to Chanie Antfleck & Daniel Mandelbaum on their engagement! With love: Alan & Ruth Antfleck, Sam & Esther Mandelbaum, and their entire families.

Cookie & Sheldon Gigan, Steve & Marlene Mauer are thrilled to announce the engagement of their daughter Laura to Ryan son of Valarie & Stephen Albright.

Miriam Malc & Dan Frolic welcome Charlie Sam, born Jan. 28. Grandparents, Anne Malc & Jack Malc, Irene & Bernie Frolic.

Mazel tov Rabbi Mattisyahu & Chana Rivkah Friedman on the birth of their daughter. Grandparents, Jeffrey & Laila Friedman, Rabbi Avner & Ayala Moshiach.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Festival Schedule Available in the April 4th CJN
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Deadline reminder: Deadlines will change because of Passover. March 15 is the deadline for the issue of March 28. March 19 is the deadline for the issue of April 4. March 28 is the deadline for the issue of April 11. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 14

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

Dr. Joseph Minkowitz discusses "Is There Any Room Left for Art in the Science of Medicine – Making Sense of Scientific Literature," Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 8 p.m.

TOUR TO ISRAEL

An information night about Beth Emeth's trip to Israel (Oct. 23-Nov. 4) will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the synagogue.

THE VILNA GAON

Aaron Nussbaum discusses the Vilna Gaon, Beth David Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

THE LION SEEKER

Young Professionals at Beth Tzedec present the book launch of *The Lion Seeker*, by **Kenneth Bonert**, 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 234.

Sunday, March 17

SINGLES IN THE PARK

Singles in the Park presents "The Fascinating Criminal Case of Conrad Black: An Insider's Perspective," presented by **Steven Skurka**, 7 p.m., Earl Bales Community Centre. RSVP required, 416-631-0005 or email debbygo@rogers.com. $12.

PESACH STORYTELLING

Cheryl Thornton tells stories for children age 2 to 5 at Beth David Synagogue, 10 a.m. Register at www.bethdavid.com. Adults $5, children free.

THE LAST TRAIN

Rona Arato launches her new book, *The Last Train, A Holocaust Story*, 2 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. The presentation includes photos taken by U.S. soldiers at the moment of liberation. Call 416-221-3433 to register. Free.

Monday, March 18

JUDAISM: WHAT'S NEXT?

The Chai Centre presents a lecture on "Judaism: What's Next?" 8:30 p.m., 1089 Spadina Rd. info@thechaicentre.com. $18.

BOOK AND FILM CLUB

Dr. Harriet Morris reviews *Suddenly, a Knock on the Door* by **Etgar Keret**, Beth Tzedec. Dessert 1 p.m., review 1:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Tuesday, March 19

FILM REVIEW

Heather Kassel reviews the film *A Separation*, 8 p.m., Adath Israel Synagogue. $10/$15.

Wednesday, March 20

WARSAW UPRISING

Prof. Samuel Kassow discusses the three archives created by people who lived in the Warsaw Ghetto, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec.

KENSINGTON MARKET

Kensington Market Historical Society presents authors **Jean Cochrane** and **Rosemary Donegan** discussing Kensington Market and Spadina Avenue, 6 p.m., Lillian H. Smith Library, 239 College St. www.kmhs.ca.

Continued on page 27

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Continued from page 26

NEW TO TWO

Shaar Shalom Synagogue offers a morning of games, songs and crafts for children up to age 2, 10-11:30 a.m. Call 905-889-4975 to register.

Other News

SEDERS & PRE-PESACH PREP

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a pre-Passover Shabbat dinner March 22. Deadline for tickets March 15. Call 416-221-3433.

Beth Sholom Synagogue hosts a pre-Passover dinner March 22 with children's entertainment. Call 647-873-1238 or naomi@bethsholom.net. The synagogue holds a chocolate seder March 23, 10:30 a.m. Reservations required.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds a chocolate seder, March 24, 1:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Temple Har Zion holds a seder, March 26. Deadline to register, March 19. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 232, or thzpassoverseder@gmail.com.

Chabad of Markham holds a seder, March 25. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or info@chabadmarkham.org.

Am Shalom Congregation, Barrie, hosts a seder, March 26. Registration required. 705-792-3949.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a seder for teens and adults, March 25. RSVP 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Chabad of Markham hosts a seder March 25. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or info@chabadmarkham.org.

The Chai Centre is holding seders March 25 and 26. RSVP 416-271-0659 or email info@thechaicentre.com.

The Morris Winchevsky School and **The United Jewish Poeple's Order** host a progressive third seder, March 30, in solidarity with the Idle No More movement. Deadline for tickets is March 15. Call 416-789-5502 or info@winchevskycentre.org.

HAVDALAH ON ICE

Temple Har Zion hosts Havdalah on Ice, March 23, Elvis Stojko Arena. RSVP by March 21, thzskates@gmail.com.

THEATRE TRIPS

Beth Emeth Synagogue is offering theatre trips to Stratford and Shaw festivals this summer. To book, call 416-633-3838 or theatre@beby.org.

TORAH TOTS & KINDERCAMP

Registration is now open for Torah Tots, which is offering a full daycare program and Kindercamp, for children ages 2 to 6. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 227 for daycare or ext. 221 for camp or www.kindercamp.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Meals on Wheels needs volunteers to deliver meals to seniors. Call **Karen Sacke**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

LONERS IN THE BIBLE

Mitch Parker teaches a course on Loners and Outsiders in the Tanach, Thursdays at 7:15 p.m., starting April 18, Holy Blossom Temple. Sponsored by the Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning. Advance registration required, 416-789-7400.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

When You're About to Separate – What To Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation, March 19, 9:30 a.m.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2-12. Starts March 21, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors holds a seder, March 26, Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. Tickets on sale at the Betel Centre.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Bingo, April 9, 12:30 p.m.; Casino Rama, April 17; Sunday Dance, April 21, 7 p.m.; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. March 19, the film *A Place to Save your Life*, about Jews in Shanghai, will be shown at 10 a.m.; March 21, "Healthy Eating, Part II," 1:30 p.m.; An archeology class, "The History of Ancient Israel," taught by **David Lipovitch** begins Thursdays, April 4, 1 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starting in May. Become a more informed patient, a better caregiver or a more competent guardian of your well-being. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. **Osnat Lipa** discusses "Impressionist Art and Artists," March 14, 1:30 p.m. Series on influential Jewish artists and their art starts April 16.

Day Centre for Seniors provides a secure Jewish environment for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

A Support Group for Russian-Speaking Seniors. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale. Registration now open for spring courses.

Sarah's Key will be shown March 18, 1 p.m. Book review of *Foreign Bodies*, March 19, 1 p.m.

Film lectures on Produced and Abandoned Films, with **Kevin Courrier**, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.

The Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp will run a Passover camp, March 25, 28, 29 and April 3. Depot bus service, daily indoor swim and camp programming. Call **Lauren Grundland**, ext. 4039, or lauren@centrecamp.ca. Register directly at centrecamp.ca.

Social art program with **Kathy Chelin**, Mondays, 2 p.m.; folkdance with **Teme**, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; recorder with **Judy Miskin**, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Shalom Singers with **Esther Ghan Firestone**, Thursdays, 10 a.m.; duplicate bridge with **Samy**, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; current events with **Sam Helfenbaum**, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers. March 18, 7 p.m.

Registration for spring classes, March 20 for MNJCC members and March 28 for non-members.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

The Women's Chorus with conductor **Gillian Steyck** meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. No auditions needed.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets April 10, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

3: New Visions from Applied Photography by Sheridan College graduates is in the gallery until March 17.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Spring into fitness with a special group exercise schedule and guest instructors, March 17.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3037.

StrollerFit classes for mothers and babies start April 11. Call **Tonya**, ext. 3028.

Registration now open for the centre's big band, starts April 10. Call **Staci**, ext. 3037.

PJ Library time with a Yiddish twist, May 5, 3:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 24

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Min Baker	Feb 13/13	55 Ameer Avenue
Donna Dale	Feb 12/13	2220 Lakeshore Road W.
Eli Fagen	Feb 13/13	110 Promenade Circle
Clara Stein	Feb 13/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Nancy Hersh	Feb 12/13	155 Kendal Avenue
Sharryn Ross Phillips	Feb 15/13	6200 Bathurst Street
Sylvia Weber	Feb 16/13	2121 Bathurst Street
Sammy Miller	Feb 16/13	19 Northern Heights Dr.
Shirley Gold	Feb 15/13	7440 Bathurst Street
Dr. Bruce Pomeranz	Feb 15/13	158 Lyndhurst Avenue
Shirley Katz	Feb 16/13	6 Portsmith Road
Anna Laksman	Feb 17/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Bella Schneiderman	Feb 17/13	25 Brunswick Avenue
Judy Gelman	Feb 18/13	3600 Yonge Street
Leo Snowbell	Feb 18/13	19 Honeywood Road
Stephen Wiskin	Feb 19/13	8 Lowbank Court
Marshall Balsam	Feb 20/13	640 Grace Street
James Zinman	Feb 21/13	33 Knotty Pine Trail
Dr. Jeffrey Sher	Feb 22/13	180 Flamingo Road
Nadine Tytel	Feb 23/13	18 Lower Village Gate
Theodora (Teddie) Fralei	Feb 23/13	21 Proudbank Millway
Max "Mordechai" Moseta	Feb 24/13	44 Purdon Drive
Linda Sherman	Feb 23/13	60 Knollview Crescent
Faye Tishler	Feb 24/13	45 Brunswick Avenue
Ralph Brooks	Feb 24/13	55 Ameer Ave.
Lily (Lakie) Stern	Feb 19/13	100 Canyon Avenue
Les Crangle	Feb 24/13	645 Castlefield Avenue
Morris Dublin	Feb 24/13	16 De Quincy Blvd.
Rose Birnbaum	Feb 25/13	205 Cummer Avenue
Jack Bluestein	Feb 25/13	2 Markdale Avenue
Agnes Katz	Feb 25/13	4979 Bathurst Street
Maria Malinsky	Feb 27/13	1 Royal Parkside Drive

HEBREW DASIC

Sylvia Bell	Feb 16/13	179 Queensdale Avenue
Marvin Picov	Feb 22/13	72 Quaker Village Drive

Geraldine Baylee Ezrin ז"ל, age 86, died in Tarzana, California in the presence of her extended family on February 27, 2013, after a lengthy illness. She is survived by her husband, her brother, 7 children, 12 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

She was born in Toronto, Canada, where she met Calvin, the love of her life, as a teenager and with whom she had partnered for the rest of her days. She was a talented, artistic, creative, beautiful woman and soul. Her musical abilities were transmitted to all of her children. Many generations resided in her home, including her mother of beloved memory, her children, grandchildren and countless others needing a place to rest and be nurtured.

Donations may be made to the Mr. Holland's Opus foundation (www.mhopus.org) fulfilling her dream of supporting music instruction for children.

LIBBY FEINBERG DWOR ז"ל
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During this time of sorrow, we have gained a further appreciation for how much our family and friends mean to us. We wish to express our sincere thanks for your love, kindness and prayers. Your expressions of sympathy will always be remembered.

THE FAMILIES OF

JUDITH SIRKIN VALANOS	BOCA RATON, FLA.
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MARK S. DWOR	VANCOUVER, B.C.
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of the Bathurst/Steeles Clinic for the dedicated and diligent care he provided our parents over the years. No words are sufficient to convey our gratitude.

We would also like to thank

HANY GOBRIAL

of M&D Sheppard Pharmacy for his kindness and caring to our parents. They truly enjoyed the time they spent with him and his family.

Thank you again.

Dr. George & Rachel Mason
Rabbi Joseph & Susan Schonberger

To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling. To place any other related notice, please call 10 DAYS prior to publication date.

416-391-1836

Wolfie's owner devoted to family

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Wolfe (Wolfie) Zimmerman, the longtime owner of Wolfie's deli on Sheppard Avenue West, who died March 2 at age 91, is remembered for his devotion to his family.

His daughter, Gila Gelberman, said in an interview that nothing beyond his family was of importance to him. "If every child had a father like him, there would be no problems in the world."

Wolfe Zimmerman at his deli

Born in Poland, Zimmerman, one of eight siblings, survived 13 labour camps, and was liberated from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945. His mother and five siblings were murdered.

He met and married his wife, Rose – she died 17 years ago – in a displaced persons' camp. They moved to Israel, and in 1959, came to Canada, where he became a house painter.

Gelberman said that her father died two days after his wife's yahrzeit, "probably because he tried to make it the same day. He wanted to make it easier for us by having only one yahrtzeit."

Her father knew that she had been planning to travel to Israel to spend Passover with her children, she said. "I think he wanted us to go. He died [several] weeks before Pesach, so we could still go. He knew we would never have left him."

Zimmerman opened Wolfie's with his children 37 years ago, and worked until age 83, when his doctor told him to stop, she said.

"He never complained, nothing was ever wrong. On his last day he thanked God for his life, and said he was coming."

David Gelberman, his son-in-law, who worked with Zimmerman since they opened Wolfie's, said that Zimmerman had a charisma that made people feel at home the minute they walked into the deli. "His [love of people] was his best feature.

"What kind of man was he? I'm going to say *Kaddish* twice a day for my father-in-law. That's the kind of man I think he was."

In addition to Gila and David Gelberman, Zimmerman leaves his daughter Toby Richards, four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Cemeteries merged

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Two of Montreal's oldest Jewish cemeteries have merged into one legal entity.

Back River Memorial Gardens and Baron de Hirsch Cemetery are now Baron de Hirsch-Back River Cemeteries Inc., under a single administration.

The merger makes official a de facto relationship the two cemeteries have had for some years. Baron de Hirsch was professionally managing Back River, while two separate boards of directors and corporations were maintained.

For complete story, go to cjnews.com

שישאר בינינו

גידי קורן וחברים

הסרט האמריקאי שהציל את ישראל

בשבוע שעבר הגיע לאקרנים בטורונטו הסרט "שומרי הסף" שייצג את ישראל באוסקר כמועמד לסרט הדוקומנטרי של השנה. זוהי סדרת ראיונות עם חמשת ראשי שב"כ, ובה הם משתפים בכנות מוחלטת מה היו שיטות העבודה שלהם. המסקנה הגורפת שלהם: ישראל איננה מעוניינת בשלום עם שכניה. מועמד ישראלי נוסף לאוסקר הדוקומנטרי היה הסרט "חמש מצלמות" שבו תיעד פלשתינאי את התלאות והעינויים שעבר לכאורה מידי כוחות הביטחון הישראלי. שני הסרטים מציגים את ישראל באור שלילי, כמדינת צבא בלתי דמוקרטית. זכייה של אחד משני סרטים אלה בפרס היתה גורמת לישראל נזק עצום כי שניהם סרטים חזקים כל אחד בדרכו. למזלנו הציגה ארה"ב כמועמד את הסרט SEARCHING FOR SUGARMAN שמספר סיפור אנושי, נפלא ומרגש על זמר נשכח ועל חזרתו לתודעה. נורא בא לי לספר לכם יותר על הסרט הזה אבל הגעתי למסקנה שכל צורה שבה אספר לכם עליו-עלולה לקלקל לכם את החוויה. הסרט הזה זכה באוסקר והבטיח ששני הסרטים הישראלים יישארו על המדף ולא ייראו על ידי רוב האנשים בעולם החפשי.

מה שכן, שני סרטים אלה, למרות המסר הקשה שלהם- הינם ההוכחה הכי ניצחת עד כמה ישראל היא דמוקרטית, בזה שהיא מאפשרת לראשי השב"כ לדבר חפשי ובזה שהיא מממנת סרטים לפי טיבם ולא לפי האידיאולוגיה שלהם.

אבל שישאר בינינו.

תיאטרון המפגש-"לילה במאי"

ההפקה החמישית של תיאטרון המפגש הישראלי, שנתמך על ידי המדרשה הציונית של טורונטו, הוקדשה להצגתו של הסופר א.ב.יהושע שעוסקת בסיפורה של משפחה ירושלמית בימים שלפני מלחמת ששת הימים. אני חייב להתחיל ולאמר שלא הצלחתי להתחבר להצגה הזאת והיא נראתה לי, כמי שהיה שם, לא מציאותית ומאד פלצנית. מוטב היה לו הסופר הידוע היה ממשיך לכתוב ספרים ולא מחזות. אבל מה שהרבה יותר חשוב- היו ההפקה המושקעת של תמי ברמן, הבמוי של יעל פיינגולד והמשחק הטוב של שבעת השחקנים. דתי פרידמן וטטיאנה סטולניץ הם שחקנים מקצועיים שתענוג לראות על במה. אורלי בוצר, אסא ושחר גרוס ולידם ניר צור עשו עבודה יפה מאד, ושוש קביסה נגעה מאד ללב כאשה זקנה על סף טירוף, כשהיא בעצם הנורמאלית היחידה על הבמה.

אולי ההישג הממשי ביותר היא העובדה שגליה סרנר, מנהלת האגף הישראלי בUJA הצליחה לשכנע את ההנהגה שם לתמוך כספית בתיאטרון שלנו.

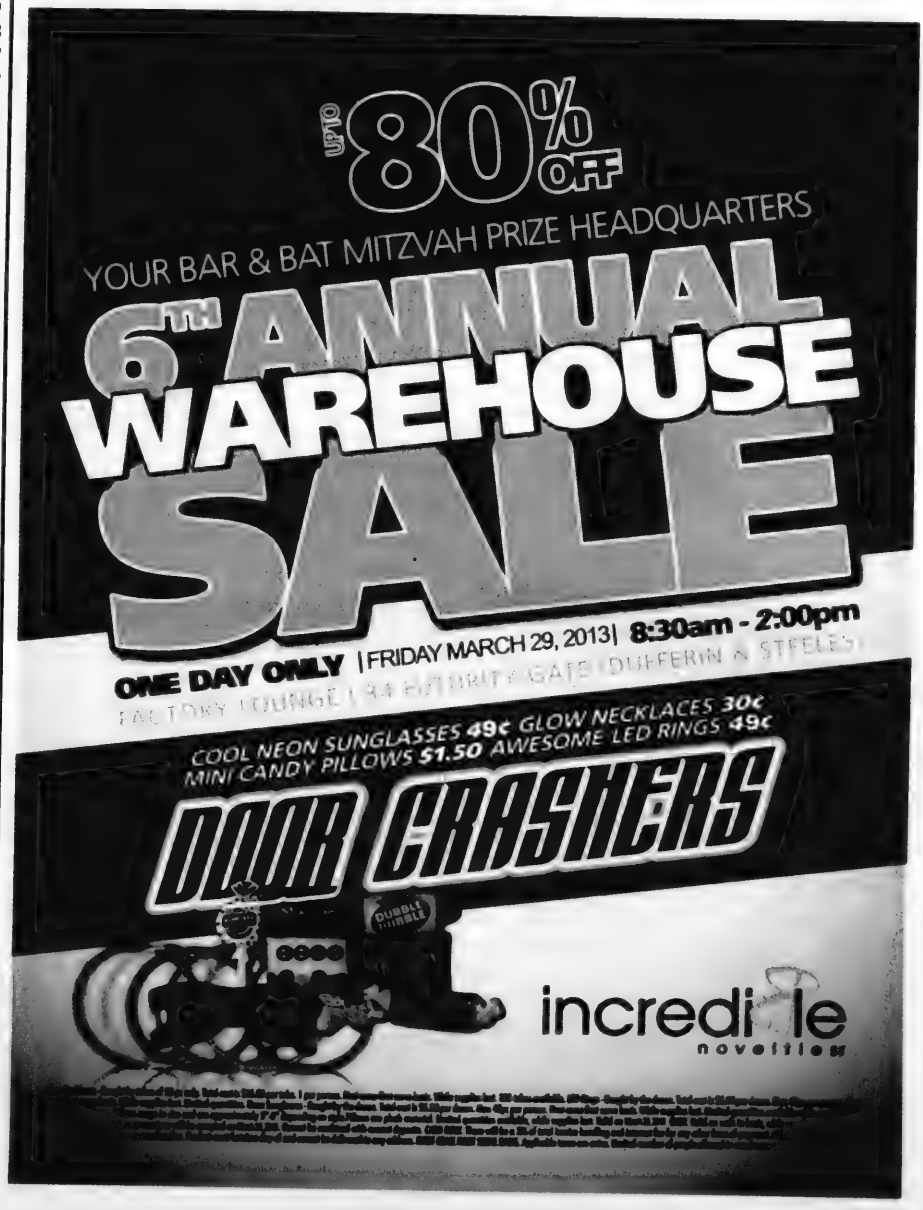
ובאותו עניין-את הערב פתחה יעל קרול, יו"ר הוועדה לקידום העניין הישראלי במדרשה, שלקחה על עצמה למצוא דרכים חדשות להכליל את הישראלים בטורונטו. יעל התחילה במספר יוזמות חדשות להביא את עשרות אלפי הישראלים שכאן להשתלב בקהילה שלנו. וכדבריה: יש הרבה מקום פנוי להתנדבות ופעילות. רק צריך לרצות. רק שיישאר בינינו.

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikoren.com

MASK MAKERS

Seniors from the Freeman Family Day Centre at Baycrest Health Sciences unveiled colorful sculpted facemasks of themselves on March 6. The mask-making was a joint project with Grade 9 students from the Arts Westmount program at Westmount Collegiate Institute in Thornhill. Here, Day Centre member Eva Dykstein proudly holds her pink mask with her project partners Maya Romi, left, and Olivia Kulbak, both 14.

[Kelly Connelly/Baycrest photo]



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Union move upsets many workers

Continued from page 3

Postal worker Fred Toulch, however, believes the union's anti-Israel stance and the article are not in line with members' views. "The people I've spoken to are certainly not in favour of it, including non-Jewish postal workers. Most are upset that not enough is being done for postal workers," he said.

"I've spoken to a few letter carriers and they're not happy that the union has taken this position on international affairs. This is not just over this article. It's going on now for some time."

Toulch said the postal workers he's talked to ask, "Why are they involved in this? This is not what they want to have done with union dues."

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), said CUPW's anti-Israel positions "don't represent the mainstream of their own membership."

He said union members he's spoken to oppose it and would like CUPW to focus on issues concerning their employment and job security.

"I think the membership expects the leadership would be focused exclusively on securing their positions, ensuring with management they don't come under pressure to reduce the work force," he said.

Fogel said that CUPW, along with some other unions, churches and academic groups, are directed by "small groups that have a radical agenda. They co-opt the control process to drive their agenda, mostly without the knowledge and understanding of the membership they represent."

"They're undermining their own credibility and diminishing the capacity to be effective representatives of their membership," he said.

Other Jewish organizations also took aim at CUPW. The Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC) condemned "the racist anti-Israel propaganda perpetuated by the CUPW" and B'nai Brith Canada CEO Frank Diamant said that it's "a distortion of the CUPW core mandate to use union resources in this fashion to demonize and delegitimize the Jewish state, while ignoring real human rights violations across the globe."

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Ottawa shul sells building — again

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Once again, it appears that Congregation Beth Shalom's property in downtown Ottawa has been sold.

The 81,000-square-foot building had been conditionally sold in late 2011 to developer Claridge Homes for $15 million, with a possibility the price could be up to $9 million higher if the city gave permission to increase the site's density.

But on the final date for waiving conditions contained in the agreement, Claridge advised the shul that it would not proceed with the purchase, leaving the Conservative Beth Shalom to put the property back on the market.

Ian Sherman, president of the congregation, told *The CJN* at that time that there had been "a significant degree of interest from multiple parties," and that he was sure the building would be sold.

An agreement has now been entered into, conditionally, with a subsidiary of Trinity Developments Group for the same financial terms as the previous agreement with Claridge. Trinity's 90-day conditional period will expire May 8 and, if all goes well, the closing date for the sale is scheduled for Dec. 31.

"The Dec. 31 closing date on this transaction has certainly caused some anxiety amongst our executive committee, our board of governors, our clergy and staff and our valued members, and I am fully empathetic to that," Sherman said.

"Nonetheless, I have always been an individual who sees beyond the challenges, and I look at the many opportunities that can lie ahead for Congregation Beth Shalom if, and when, we do this right."

The main challenge facing the congregation is to find its future location. Various options continue to be examined, including a relocation to the existing Jewish community "campus" along with the Soloway Jewish Community Centre, Hillel Lodge and the Ottawa Jewish Commnity School, or a possible amalgamation with Agudath Israel Congregation, another Conservative synagogue in the capital.

"My objective for our shul is that we recognize our ability to be communal leaders and respond to our current opportunity to not only continue as a vibrant shul in Ottawa but at the same time to reshape our community in a fiscally prudent and responsible manner. Personal motivations of the short term must be set aside in favour of the longer-term security of our shul and appropriate community building," Sherman said.

The downtown building, which housed a Jewish community centre and other Jewish communal offices in addition to the synagogue before the new suburban Jewish community campus was completed in 1998, had in recent years been renting space to a number of charitable groups.

Many have already vacated or are planning to vacate the building, and the 350-family congregation can't afford to maintain the premises. The demographics of the community have also changed, with most families having moved to the suburbs, all of which prompted the shul's decision to sell and move.

German museum hands painting to Concordia

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A German museum has restituted a valuable Nazi-looted painting to the estate of the late Max Stern, who owned the Dominion Gallery in Montreal for many years.

The late 15th-century work had been in the possession of the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart since 1948. The Jewish Stern, who had owned an art gallery in Dusseldorf, sold the painting under duress from the Nazis in 1938. He did so from London, England, where he had fled the year before, said Clarence Epstein, who heads Concordia University's Max Stern Art Restitution Project, in a telephone interview from Berlin.

This 15th-century painting by the Master of Flémalle was restituted by a German museum to the estate of Max Stern, who had been forced to sell it by the Nazis on the eve of World War II.

Epstein received *Virgin and Child*, attributed to the Master of Flémalle, an unknown Flemish artist considered a leading exponent of the early Northern Renaissance, in a ceremony at the Canadian Embassy in Berlin on March 5.

In attendance were representatives of the state-owned museum, which is the first German cultural institution to return a Stern artwork in the 10-year history of the project, as well as of the State of Bavaria-Wurttemberg and the Canadian government, including Jason Kenney, minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism.

This is the 10th artwork recovered by the project since 2006, and the second from Germany. A painting was earlier handed over by a casino in that country.

Epstein said the evidence is that Stern liquidated this painting and several others to help raise the 25,000 Reichsmarks needed to obtain an exit visa for his mother.

Although no bill of sale has been found, it is believed the painting was sold at well below its value. Some 200 paintings of Stern's were auctioned off previously in Cologne in 1937 for bargain-basement prices under orders from the Nazi regime, just before Stern left the country.

While some gaps in its provenance remain, Epstein said it is known that the painting passed through two hands before 1948. Frankfurt art dealer Alexander Haas sold it to a Dr. Scheufelen, an important collector, during World War II. Scheufelen willed about 125 works to the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, including *Virgin and Child*.

Epstein would not comment on the painting's value today, only that it's "insured for a considerable amount."

Stern, who died childless in 1987, left the bulk of his estate to Concordia, as well as McGill University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Concordia, which has been working in collaboration with the New York State-based Holocaust Claims Processing Office, corresponded with the State of Baden-Wurttemberg for about five years, Epstein said.

"They felt that the information we had was not complete," he said. "Then one of our researchers found a key document in Germany, which placed Stern and the painting in that era."

The painting will not be coming to Montreal immediately, nor has it been decided whether it will be loaned to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, as earlier recovered works have been, said Epstein.

In the meantime, it's expected the painting will be entrusted to experts, probably in London or New York, for analysis of its physical condition and scholarly perusal.

In the past, Epstein has been critical of the response the restitution project has received in Germany, but he said, "We had a good relationship with the Staatsgalerie researchers and Baden-Wurttemberg officials. They were very professional. I was impressed with their transparency and willingness to collaborate."

It is believed that a significant number of the approximately 400 works Stern was forced to sell are in Germany today, including in public institutions.

Concordia president Alan Shepard commented that "the most immediate challenge lies in encouraging a number of other museums currently in possession of Stern paintings to follow the lead of the Staatsgalerie."

The handover at the embassy took place within the context of another exchange: Canada's assumption of the chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

The IHRA (formerly the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research) is an intergovernmental body initiated by then-Swedish prime minister Goran Persson in 1998. Currently, 31 countries are members.

Former Toronto Liberal MP Mario Silva, who is the new IHRA chair, was also present in Berlin.

An IHRA conference will be held in Toronto in October.

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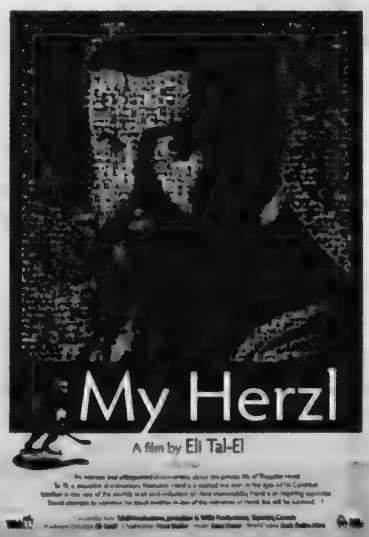

IAW at Carleton quieter this year, students say

Sammy Hudes
Special to The CJN

OTTAWA — As many anticipated, Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) at Carleton University ran its course more quietly this year than in the past, and unlike its predecessors, this year's edition wasn't endorsed by the school's undergraduate student union.

The Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA) executive chose not to help anti-Israel activists campaign for IAW, unlike in previous years, according to CUSA president Alexander Golovko.

Golovko said he was bothered to see an IAW sign hanging in the window of CUSA's office in the University Centre last year and wanted to make sure neither pro- nor anti-Israel activists had an "unequal advantage" this time around.

"CUSA spaces have been utilized to promote one side's story, and I think that is very inadequate, seeing as how the student association represents 23,000 students," said Golovko, who campaigned last year on "student issues, student unity" and "the spirit of democracy," and was endorsed by Hillel Ottawa.

IAW ran March 4 to 8 at Carleton, as well as on other North American campuses, and was organized by Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA), a Carleton club. It featured workshops, film screenings and panel discussions on what SAIA described as apartheid in both Israel and Canada, according to SAIA activist Rana Hamadeh.

It also included workshops on the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel and companies invested in Israel's economy, she said.

Speaking before the week's activities, Emile Scheffel, Israel advocacy co-ordinator at Hillel Ottawa, said he wasn't expecting IAW to be as loud as it has been in the past on campus.

Student table at Carleton's Israeli Apartheid Week. (*Sammy Hudes photo*)

"We expect the attendance at events to be the smallest we've seen in a couple of years, and we don't expect it to make as much of an impact on campus, frankly," Scheffel said.

He attributed this prediction to poor publicity by IAW organizers and a lack of interest among the student body in participating in the "division and toxicity" seen in previous years at Carleton.

"It's just the national trend," Scheffel said.

"There's just been minimal buzz and very little advertising of [SAIA's] events… Most of them are evening events rather than daytime events, so we think that most of the people who do come out to them will be people who are already of that certain persuasion," he said. "[They're] basically preaching to the choir."

SAIA and Ottawa's Israel Awareness Committee (IAC) set up information tables alongside one another throughout the week in Carleton's University Centre. The IAC booth included a poster outlining the similarities between Canadian and Israeli democracy.

But Hamadeh and SAIA contend that the two countries are also similar in that Canada's treatment of its aboriginal peoples was a model for the apartheid system in South Africa, which Hamadeh claimed in turn inspired what she and her group calls "Israeli apartheid."

Golovko said CUSA's executive board reached out to both sides of the issue at the start of the year "in the hope to sit down and discuss the question [of] how a student association can ensure that while dialogue takes place, it takes place in a constructive manner and a respectful fashion."

However, Golovko said CUSA still hasn't been able to bring the IAC and SAIA together.

"The IAC has been very open to dialogue and discussion with our organization in the past year, and for that we are very grateful," Golovko said, adding that SAIA never responded to CUSA's requests.

"We're still hoping for the activists of SAIA to be able to sit down in a similar fashion and discuss what are some of their needs and perhaps facilitate the dialogue."

But Hamadeh said SAIA's purpose isn't to negotiate, which is why the group hasn't responded to CUSA's invitation.

"We have a stated mandate, which is to divest. We're not here to discuss one-state or two-state solutions," she said.

The primary goal of IAW is to support the BDS campaign, which seeks "to reach a place where we can have real peace negotiations," Hamadeh said.

"Currently, Palestine is under occupation," she said. "They do not have negotiating power. They are not at an equal level with Israel."

Scheffel reiterated his belief that students are getting tired of this point of view.

"I think people are going to start really rejecting the toxic, divisive politics that IAW represents," he said.

For more on IAW, go to cjnews.com

Canadian politicians slam Israel 'hatefest'

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Several Canadian politicians have spoken about Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), criticizing the annual anti-Israel campaign on campuses as intolerant and hateful.

York Centre Conservative MP Mark Adler shared his perspective in a statement that urged students to think twice before joining in the week's activities. He also brought the issue up in the House of Commons.

"Israeli Apartheid Week is a deceitful and malicious attempt to delegitimize Israel under the cloak of academic freedom. This discriminatory event singles out the Jewish state and calls into question its basic right to exist when, in fact, Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East," he said. "I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in condemning Israeli Apartheid Week's antisemitic hatefest and offer support to those who stand with Israel."

The minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, Jason Kenney, released a statement that said although he supports the right of everyone to freely and publicly express their views, including criticism of government policies and practices, he was concerned with the "reckless and overheated rhetoric" associated with campus anti-Israel activities.

He said organizers and participants have a "regrettable history of promoting and holding events in ways that disregard the security and rights of Jewish faculty and students, censor other points of view, and limit academic discourse.

"The disproportionate vitriol directed against the democratic State of Israel during Israeli Apartheid Week stands in stark and ironic contrast to the silence of IAW organizers on the ongoing atrocities committed by the Syrian regime against its own citizens, and on the rampant brutalities and denial of rights in non-democratic countries in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world," he said.

Interim Liberal Leader Bob Rae said the week is counterproductive in achieving social justice, and also pointed out that IAW focuses solely on Israel, attempting to delegitimize the state while ignoring the human rights crises in surrounding countries.

Mark Adler

"When all who desire peace in the region should be supporting and encouraging respectful dialogue between parties, this week sets out to do the opposite," he wrote, calling the name of the campaign deeply prejudicial.

"Canadian universities and academic institutions have a long history of providing a space to engage in enlightened discourse on issues of justice and equality. For this reason, it is all the more difficult to comprehend a focus that ignores terrible atrocities presently taking place in the region," he wrote.

"Demonizing one people and one country does not encourage reconciliation, co-operation or respectful discourse about peace and democratization in the Middle East. A constructive approach to the Israeli-Palestinian issue would be more effective if it persuaded governments and civil society to work with both parties to reach a negotiated resolution based on dialogue and understanding."

Leukemia fundraiser organized by kids

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

A recent event for kids, organized by kids, raised $18,000 in support of Imagine a Cure for Leukemia.

Some 500 campers from several summer camps and their families attended the fundraiser Camp Imagine on March 3, at the venue Six Degrees in Toronto.

Campers who are in grades 1 to 8 and their families participated in various activities, including basketball challenges and crafts, at the afternoon event.

Camp Imagine was the brainchild of 10-year-old Bayley Abrams. Nara Abrams, Bayley's mother, is the founder and president of Imagine a Cure for Leukemia.

"Bayley is an amazing child with big ideas. She also has a great group of friends who wanted to help," Abrams said. "For the past few years, Bayley has asked her friends to donate to the charity in lieu of birthday gifts. This year, however, she said she wanted to do more, and the Camp Imagine project was born."

Bayley and 17 of her friends ages eight through 13 were on the Camp Imagine volunteer committee. They met for several months to plan the event, to write donation request letters and to approach donors.

Seventeen camps participated. They are Walden, Robin Hood, Manitou, Timberlane, Bayview Glen, Westcoast Connection, Active Kids Zone, the Jack & Pat Kay Centre, Adventure Valley, Elite Basketball, Wahonowin, Zodiac, Winnebago, Crestwood Valley, Tamakwa, Tamarack and White Pine.

The Camp Imagine volunteer committee *[Sylman Photography]*

Each camp had its own booth at the event featuring an activity for children, and there was also a tuck shop with snacks, a raffle, a camp social hosted by Sole Power Productions and a live performance by rising star Sydney Bernkopf. The venue, food and entertainment were all donated.

One of the activities at Camp Imagine was at the letter-writing station. "When children go to overnight camp they write letters to their families," Bayley said. "I thought it would be very special to write a letter to kids who are ill at the SickKids Hospital."

The afternoon concluded with campers gathering for a bonfire where the official Camp Imagine song was showcased. The song was written by 10-year-old Jayden Shnier, who is on the Camp Imagine volunteer committee.

Mark Diamond, owner and director of Camp Manitou, said that "to create a 'camp for the day' in the city for such an important and significant cause is simply brilliant. To have an event for kids, run by kids, to help find a cure for a disease that, unfortunately, in some way, touches us all, allows us to empower our youth in the best possible way."

Abrams said her late mom, Miriam Segal, was her inspiration. "I was touched by her optimism when she was diagnosed with leukemia. Every time we have an event, we honour people we know that are fighting this disease, and in the memory of my mom and grandfather.

"We raised $80,000 at our first gala back in 2006, and our fundraising initiatives have since expanded. To date we have raised $800,000 for leukemia research."

Abrams added that the group's goal for Camp Imagine was not just to raise funds but also to encourage kids to get involved with philanthropy and to continue raising awareness of leukemia. "It was inspiring to watch the future generation," she said.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada says that this year 5,600 Canadians will be diagnosed with leukemia and 2,600 will die from it. Leukemia is the most common pediatric cancer affecting those age 19 and under.

"The funds raised by Camp Imagine will be used to fund lifesaving cancer research. We want cures today, not someday. That's the goal. The commitment from Imagine a Cure for Leukemia has truly brought us closer to a world without cancer," said Andrea Swinton, executive director of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada, Ontario region.

For more information, go to www.imagineacureforleukemia.com.

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Home workers and volunteers

Helping people live until they die

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Doctors and nurses who work in hospitals and hospices are crucial members of the teams that help terminally ill patients live out their lives in relative comfort and dignity.

Social workers are also an important part of palliative care in these settings, for both patients and their families.

But often overlooked are the trained volunteers and paid workers who go out into the community to look after people who choose to remain at home for the length of their illnesses.

Arshag Tokmanian

Virginia Clark Weir is a clinical nurse who works out of the Freeman Centre for Palliative Care at North York General Hospital. The 13-year-old centre mostly provides medical and social work services to patients in their homes (but it also does so on a more limited, acute in-patient basis).

"Our role is to help people live until they die. We help them take control of their own lives," Clark Weir said.

"We visited one gentleman for 2-1/2 years. He had complications, but with our involvement, together with his family's support, we were able to help him a great deal," she said.

"We can't predict when [there is going to be a crisis], but we can always be called upon. We're also there for the caregivers. It is often a devastating experience for them, and we try to focus on them as well.

"We try to help each patient and caregiver with the most ideal way to manage care."

About 95 per cent of the centre's patients want to remain at home, she said, but there are six beds in the hospital's palliative care unit that are reserved for dying patients or those who need to have their treatment reassessed.

"We do have the ability to transfer patients from their home on an urgent basis. If patients are under the Freeman Centre umbrella, seamless care is carried on."

Clark Weir said she finds her work rewarding and challenging.

"We work with patients and families who are moving through uncharted territories, and they feel very vulnerable. We can take them to the next step, and teach them about their new normal. This takes away the fear, and they don't feel alone.

Palliative Care

Third of a 3-part series

"I [in turn] have learned a great deal from some very courageous people. It is humbling to be involved with them."

Arshag Tokmanian, 78, whose wife, Shoushan, was a patient of the Freeman Centre – she died about 1-1/2 years ago – said that when he brought his wife home after a two-month stay in the hospital, they received home care from the Freeman Centre.

"They not only helped her, they helped me. Their philosophy is to support the caregiver as well. They talked to me and helped boost my morale."

When Clark Weir determined that caring for his wife was beyond his capacity, Tokmanian said, Shoushan was transferred back to the hospital.

"I was so satisfied and touched by the whole process that I have become a volunteer for the hospital. I'm happy to be able to tell them 'Thank you' in my own way," he said.

Beverley Schachter and Lisa Kronenberg, are social workers who work in Jewish Family & Child's Jewish hospice program, the only culturally specific hospice program in the Toronto area. The inter-agency program is also served by Circle of Care, which recruits and trains the volunteers who do hospice home visits.

JF&CS provides case management for Jewish clients, while Circle of Care provides volunteers, as well as case management for non-Jewish clients.

Through JF&CS, Schachter said, caregivers are linked to an array of services, including spiritual care with Rabbi Ronald Weiss, JF&CS' director of chaplaincy services. "We help build a safety net, which could include six or seven organizations, plus the volunteers from Circle of Care," she said.

"At a time like this, caregivers' resources become stretched. We provide care for them as well. Our huge counselling piece gives respite to the caregivers."

She said that while UJA Federation of Greater Toronto funds the bulk of the hospice program, United Way funds the counselling.

Kronenberg said the program supports the needs of young people and older people. "An illness robs people of their control. We try to help them get back that control and to validate all their accomplishments."

Lysa Springer, manager of volunteer programs at Circle of Care, says the agency's volunteer hospice care efforts aim to help keep clients at home. "Our volunteers provide a specialized service."

They undergo 32 hours of training, she said, covering such topics as communication, grief and bereavement, and care for the caregiver. "Before a volunteer visits a patient, we ensure that they are empowered, and have the tools they need. Ongoing training is also mandatory."

Springer said volunteers also provide relief for caregivers, and may do some shopping, as well as accompany patients and caregivers to appointments or do some light laundry. "Volunteers are there up to four hours a week."

Elizabeth Mintoft-Cohen volunteers with the program because she has always liked working with people in challenging situations.

"I like being able to advocate for them. Caring for family members can be difficult, and when caregivers feel it is becoming too much for them, I let them know they are not failures. I am there to support their decisions."

During one particularly poignant visit, she said, Rabbi Weiss dropped in with electric Shabbat candles. "Lighting the candles with the patient made her feel so good. It helped her get through a rough day."

Alan Shimmerman began volunteering, he said, after he was approached by another male volunteer. "He gave me so many reasons why I should do it, and I went for it.

"It has been an incredible experience for me. I went through the program, and I was enlightened by each topic. One topic that moved me was 'loss.' I thought about what the client was losing , and I thought that I could add something to the client's life.

"I knew I had made a difference when one of my clients called and said that his friend had arrived from out of town, and he wanted me to meet him."

Elizabeth Mintoft-Cohen, left, Lysa Springer and Alan Shimmerman

Shimmerman said that it's difficult to describe how special his volunteer work is.

"We have had laughs and fun times. I am there for the person in a different way than everyone else. I'm not their caregiver or their family," he said.

"It is an honour for me to [share their lives] and make their journey an easier one."

Sonia W.'s mother received home palliative care through a hospice program for six months before Sonia would even talk about it.

"I couldn't admit it to myself or to anyone else, because if I said it out loud, it meant my mother was dying."

Ironically, her mother, who died a year ago, thrived as a result of visits by the volunteer. "She looked forward to them and would talk about it from the moment she woke up."

It was the volunteer who finally convinced Sonia to embrace the palliative care philosophy, said Sonia, who lived with her mother throughout her illness.

"She made me realize that my mother was so much more comfortable at home than in an acute care ward of a hospital. We didn't have to spend hours on end in the emergency rooms waiting to be seen," Sonia said.

"[The volunteer] also became my friend. I could talk to her without feeling I was being a burden, because that is exactly why she was there."

Sonia said that it didn't take her long to realize that the volunteers are "special people. They came in and made us feel that we were not alone. Sometimes I would take a short nap while they visited. She convinced me that I needed to take care of myself. I was of no use to my mother if I wasn't well."

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Guatemalan Jews join Reform movement

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

When Rabbi Elyse Goldstein made her first trip to Guatemala in 2009, she and her travelling companions were hesitant about spending Shabbat with Casa Hillel, a small liberal Jewish community they found on the Internet.

"We were all intrigued by this fledgling Jewish organization, but frankly, we were a little nervous," recalled the rabbi. "We had heard through the grapevine that this congregation wasn't Jewish and perhaps even messianic. Nothing was further from the truth. They were very sincere and struggling to become Reform Jews."

Fast forward four years to February 2013, and their struggle ended when Rabbi Goldstein and two other rabbis officiated at the formal conversion of the Casa Hillel congregants.

"Nothing could emotionally prepare me for this transformative weekend," Rabbi Goldstein said.

She will be giving a slide-show presentation on this unique community at 7:30 p.m. on March 17, at the Wolfond Centre in Toronto. This event is co-sponsored by City Shul, the new Reform congregation founded by Rabbi Goldstein, and the diversity committee of Congregation Darchei Noam.

Rabbi Goldstein was accompanied on the conversion mission by Rabbi Ruth Abusch-Magder, executive director of Be' chol Lashon, a California-based organization that promotes Jewish diversity worldwide, and Rabbi Claudio Kogan, a Spanish-speaking rabbi and mohel from Argentina who is now based in Texas.

Rabbi Goldstein said that a private donor financed their trip. They made up the three-member beit din that oversaw the conversion of 19 people – 12 men and seven women.

She pointed out that these congregants did not get any special treatment. "They took a written exam, the same one everyone takes when they convert."

Rabbi Claudio Kogan, centre, assists Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, left, as she blesses newly converted Guatemalan congregant Dina Hernandez.

The congregation has formally adopted the name Adat Israel: Asociación Judía Reformista de Guatemala. "Our application to the World Union for Progressive Judaism was accepted, giving us recognition as Guatemala's official Reform congregation," Rabbi Goldstein said.

And she will continue to be the congregational rabbi. It's a volunteer position she took on shortly after her first encounter with the community back in 2009.

Since then, Rabbi Goldstein has visited the community eight times for prayer and study, but she calls herself a "long-distance rabbi," because much of her teaching has been done on Skype. She also arranged for the group to study on Skype with a Spanish-speaking rabbi.

By the end of 2012, many of the congregants were ready for their conversion and a February date was set for what the rabbi described as an intensive weekend of ceremonial events.

"Following the written exam, the congregants learned to chant Torah," Rabbi Goldstein said. "Three of them did it for the first time ever at the Shabbat morning service."

The group studied together until *Havdalah* and later, each person went before the beit din to be questioned "on their sincerity and their knowledge." She stressed that the beit din did not pass everyone. "Some people were not ready. Those that didn't pass are willing to wait another year."

The following morning, Rabbi Kogan performed the *hatafat dam brit* on the 12 male congregants, a procedure that was strictly ceremonial, because the men had already had hospital circumcisions. Afterward, the members went to the mikvah. Rabbi Goldstein said that the congregation did not have ready access to a community mikvah, so everyone drove to a nearby natural mountain thermal pool.

That same evening the whole community went back to the shul, where three couples were married under a chupah.

The highlight of the weekend was the pre-mikvah service, says Rabbi Goldstein. "That morning, the congregants stood as all Jews stood at Sinai and received the Torah. With a sefer Torah dressed in Guatemalan fabric in front of the room, and the three rabbis as witness, they sang *Shema Yisrael*…

"They sang *Ozi v' zimrat Yah* with full hearts and tears streaming down their eyes. All I can say is, the Jewish People are blessed with groups like these. They speak the language of Divine calling. It's a language I understand fluently."

For more information about the slide show, go to www.cityshul.com.

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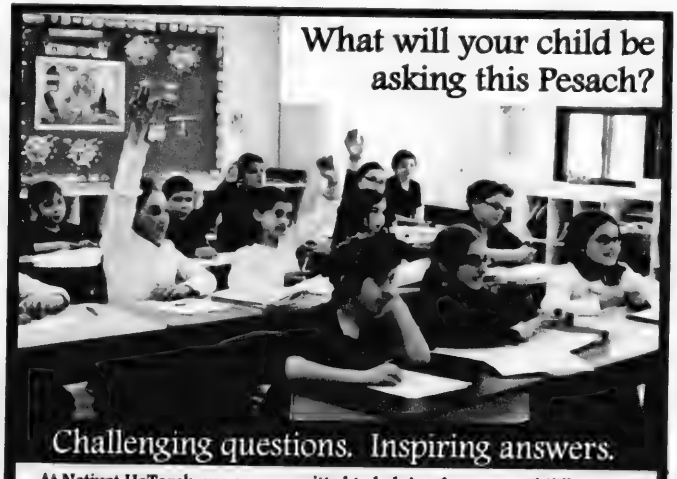

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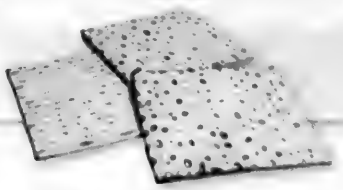


Passover Food Ideas

Make your dinner sweeter with matzah

Judy Bart Kancigor
Special to The CJN

Poor us. No bread for a week.

During Passover we eat matzah, the poor bread that sustained our ancestors in the desert, and we call it the "bread of affliction" to remember that once we were slaves in Egypt. But miraculously God led us into freedom, enabling us to create a glorious celebration around it, using our ingenuity, skill, traditions and collective memory. To focus on what we do without for those eight days is to see the glass half empty.

We Jews sure love a challenge, and imaginative Jewish cooks through the ages, like a million Iron Chefs all working with the same surprise ingredient, have moulded, crumbled, whipped, layered, fried, baked, infused and combined matzah and its ground-up cousins with an astonishing variety of other ingredients to produce a tempting feast. The fact that we base a glorious celebration on the "bread of affliction" illustrates that we have the freedom to do so.

Matzah is one of the few "Jewish foods" that we actually invented. (Cholent is another.) Strict rabbinical rules govern every aspect of its production. I asked David Rossi, vice-president of marketing for RAB Food Group, owners of the Manischewitz brand, to explain the Passover manufacturing process.

"From the time water touches the flour and gets mixed, then sheeted, made thinner and thinner, to the end of baking in the oven, can be no longer than 18 minutes," he said. "If there is a mechanical failure or some issue or error where the matzah did not get through that run in 18 minutes, then the whole run must be thrown away."

Before the company can begin production for Passover, the entire facility must be thoroughly cleaned and inspected – a procedure that makes my grandmother's fastidious weeklong scouring seem like a light dusting.

"The process takes four to seven weeks," Rossi noted. "All the belts, lines, motors and ovens are cleaned and kashered to meet strict rabbinical standards for Passover."

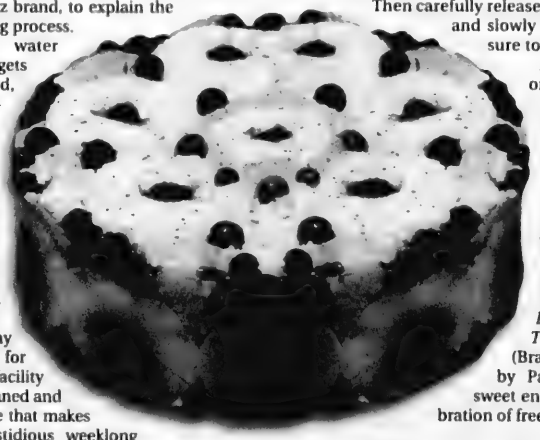
Turning out hundreds of Passover items is no overnighter. "We begin making Passover products in September until early March for the following year," he said. "Because the plant is kashered at tremendous expense, we produce Passover products until we've run all the requirements for the year. Then, in March, we start making non-Passover products."

Apple-Apricot Matzah Schalat (the word derives from cholent and has nothing to do with the "charlotte" pudding of French cuisine) is my family's favourite kugel, awaited eagerly each year. Sure, you can bake it in a 13 x 9-inch pan, as the recipe states, but if you really want to impress, try my knock-their-socks-off presentation using a springform pan.

I've been making this kugel for as long as I can remember. Several years ago, Natalie Haughton, food editor of the *Los Angeles Daily News*, came to my home with a photographer to interview me for a Passover feature story. She suggested that instead of using a 13x9-in. pan, I bake my schalat in a springform pan, and the result is amazing: pineapple rings with strawberry centres encircle this fruity kugel, studded with blueberries and mandarin oranges for a rainbow of colour too pretty to cut.

If you want to try it, here's how: generously grease the bottom and sides of a 10-in. springform pan. (If you have only a 9-in. springform pan, you will have some batter left over, which you can bake separately in a small dish.) Dry the pineapple, berries and mandarin oranges well with paper towels so they will stick. Press pineapple rings carefully onto the greased sides of the pan. Press strawberries into the centre of each pineapple ring, facing the tips outward. Press mandarin oranges and blueberries artfully into the spaces between the pineapple rings. If any of the fruit refuses to stick, use a bit more shortening as "glue."

Slowly pour the matzah mixture into the pan, being careful not to disturb the fruit sticking to the sides. Decorate the top with more fruit. Dot it with the slivers of margarine and sprinkle with cinnamon. You may have to bake it a little longer, about 1-1/4 hours, until the centre is firm. Allow the schalat to rest, covered, for 10 minutes. Then carefully release the spring mechanism and slowly lift the sides away. Be sure to take a bow!



Any lingering thoughts on the restrictions of Passover are quickly dispelled by dessert. Every family has its favourite sponge cake, homemade macaroons and other tasty recipes, but sometimes the simplest is the best – Marble Chocolate Matzah from *The Kosher Baker: Over 160 Dairy-free Recipes from Traditional to Trendy* (Brandeis University Press) by Paula Shoyer brings a sweet ending to our sweet celebration of freedom. Chag Samayach!

APPLE-APRICOT MATZAH SCHALAT

nondairy margarine or butter, for greasing the pan
1 cup (packed) dried apricots, snipped, or golden raisins, or a combination
2 cans (20 oz. each) pineapple rings, drained, juice reserved
9 boards matzah
6 medium-size apples, peeled and thinly sliced
9 large eggs, separated
1 1/2 cups sugar
grated zest of 1 lemon
juice of 1 lemon (about 3 tbsp.)
1 tbsp. ground cinnamon, plus extra for sprinkling
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla (see note)
1/2 tsp. salt
6 tbsp. (3/4 stick) nondairy margarine or butter, melted and cooled
2 cups fresh strawberries
about 1 cup fresh blueberries
1 can (11 oz.) mandarin oranges
3 tbsp. nondairy margarine or butter, slivered

Preheat the oven to 350. Generously grease a 13x9-in. baking pan

Combine snipped apricots and/or raisins and reserved pineapple juice in small bowl, and set aside.

Crumble matzah into a very large bowl, add cold water to cover, and soak a few seconds just to soften. Drain thoroughly, wipe bowl dry, and return matzah to bowl. Toss in apple slices.

Beat egg whites on medium-high speed until soft peaks form. Gradually add 3/4 cup sugar until stiff peaks form. Transfer whites to clean bowl and set aside.

Beat egg yolks and remaining 3/4 cup of the sugar (no need to wash bowl) with electric mixer on medium-high speed until thick and lemon-coloured, scraping bowl as necessary. Beat in lemon zest and juice, cinnamon, vanilla and salt. Stir in cooled melted margarine.

Stir egg yolk mixture into matzah. Drain apricots and add to matzah. Combine well. Stir one fourth of egg whites into matzah mixture to lighten. Fold in remaining whites in three additions until incorporated.

Pour matzah mixture into prepared pan. Decorate top with pineapple rings, strawberries, blueberries and mandarin oranges in a pretty design. Dot with slivers of margarine; sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake, uncovered until firm, about 1 hour. Cut into squares and serve hot. Serves about 18

Source: *Cooking Jewish* (Workman) by Judy Bart Kancigor

MARBLE CHOCOLATE MATZAH

Paula Shoyer elevates an old favourite to its crunchiest, most elegant best.

1/3 cup slivered almonds, toasted and chopped
10 oz. pareve dark bittersweet chocolate, chopped or broken into 1-in pieces
1/3 cup pareve white chocolate chips
3 large or 4 small pieces of matzah

Melt dark chocolate and white chocolate in separate bowls over simmering water. Mix nuts into melted dark chocolate.

Line 1 large or 2 smaller cookie sheets with waxed paper and place matzahs on top. Spread warm dark chocolate and nut mixture all over matzah slices to cover entirely on one side.

Drop clumps of warm melted white chocolate randomly on top of dark chocolate. Use toothpick to swirl chocolates to create a marble effect. Refrigerate to set 1 hour and then break into pieces to serve. Serves 12.

Adapted from *The Kosher Baker* (Brandeis University Press) by Paula Shoyer

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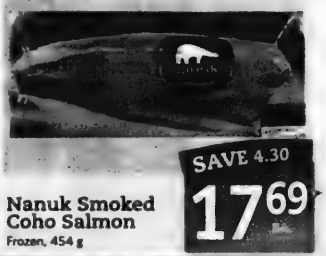

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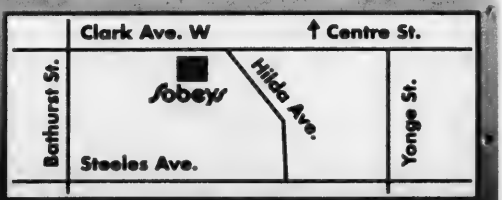

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As easy as pie

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

"It could be argued that there is an element of entertainment in every pie, as every pie is inherently a surprise by virtue of its crust," Janet Clarkson writes in *Pie: A Global History*.

This Passover, pie is the new cupcake. You can't have your fingers in too many pies. Pies bring back nostalgic memories of time spent with family and friends while paying homage to the seasons. Pies can be prepared either sweet or savoury, with an endless variety of fillings and toppings.

Baking pies is a much less fussy endeavour than baking and assembling cupcakes. And a pie provides more of a homey feel to any meal in a way that cupcakes just can't. Remember, promises and pie crusts are made to be broken.

In addition, Passover pies are some of the best around. Although the ingredients in Passover pies are nothing unusual, they yield high quality and addictive pies. They also make everything better.

LEMON PIE WIH CANDIED LEMON SLICES

Candied Lemon Slices
1 large lemon
1/4 to 1/3 cup sugar

Preheat the oven to 275. Cover a baking sheet with parchment paper. Slice lemon crosswise into slices approximately one-eighth of an inch thick. Place the lemon slices flat on top of the parchment in a single layer. Sprinkle sugar evenly over the surface of the lemon slices.

Bake lemon slices for 50 to 60 minutes, or until the slices appear to be nearly dried and the candy glaze has hardened. Remove baking sheet from the oven and then use an offset spatula to gently loosen them from the parchment. Cool candied lemon slices completely before using as garnish. If made ahead, keep refrigerated.

Sweet Pie Crust
2-1/2 cups finely ground walnuts
1/2 cup matzah meal
1/3 cup plus 1 tbsp. margarine or butter
1/4 cup sugar
2 tbsp. lemon zest

Preheat oven to 350. Combine all ingredients. Mixture should hold together. In a 9-inch Pyrex pie plate, pat the mixture into bottom of the dish and up around the sides. With two fingers, pinch the edges evenly around edge of the dish, making a pattern. Bake for 20-25 minutes. Watch it carefully so it will not brown too much, as nuts burn very quickly. Remove from oven and allow to cool to room temperature before filling.

Filling
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
2 tbsp. lemon zest
1/2 cup sugar
3 egg yolks
1/8 tsp. salt
1/3 cup margarine, melted
1 cup whipping cream

In a heavy saucepan, combine lemon juice, zest, sugar, yolks, salt and margarine. On medium heat, stir mixture with a whisk continually until mixture reaches a boil and thickens. Remove from heat and cool.

Whip cream to soft peaks and gently fold into the cooled lemon mixture. Spread over pie crust. Garnish with candied lemon slices. Keep refrigerated.

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Choose 1: Garlic mashed potatoes with caramelized onions, vegetable farfel or herb roasted mini potatoes.
Choose 1: Green beans with caramelized onions and toasted almonds or candied roasted root vegetables topped with toasted pecans.
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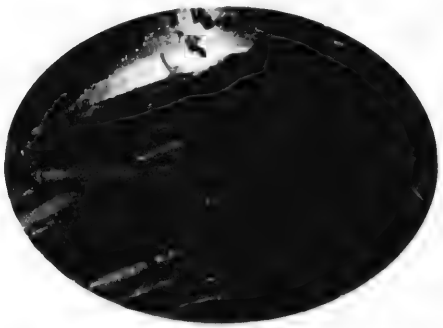
Delicious midweek meal

Mollie Katzen
JNS.org

While planning what to cook to feed the whole family on Passover's big seder night, it's easy to forget to plan your meals for the rest of the holiday week. Suddenly, lo and behold, you find yourself staring at the wide-open cupboard with nothing but matzah staring back at you.

But not to worry! With the right preparation, you can still eat a decent meal.

ASPARAGUS-FETA FRITTATA



Asparagus are the emblematic spring vegetable, and Passover is the spring holiday. Eggs are another seasonal symbol, so combine them all and get a tasty meal from the delicious mix.

2 to 3 tbsp. olive oil
1 cup finely minced onion
4 medium stalks asparagus, trimmed of the tough ends, peeled if desired, and sliced into thin (1/8-in.) diagonal coins
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. dried tarragon
1 tsp. minced garlic
8 large eggs
freshly ground black pepper
4 oz. feta cheese

Place a 10-in. skillet with an ovenproof handle over medium heat for about 2 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, wait about 10 seconds, then swirl to coat the pan. Add the onion and sauté for about 5 minutes, or until softened. Stir in the asparagus, salt, tarragon and garlic, cook for about 3 minutes or until the asparagus are tender-crisp and remove from the heat.

Break the eggs into a large bowl and beat well with a whisk. Add the sautéed vegetables, grind in some black pepper, crumble in the cheese and stir until blended. Clean and dry the skillet and return it to the stove over medium heat. Preheat the broiler.

When the skillet is hot again, add the remaining 1 to 2 tbsp. olive oil, wait about 30 seconds, and swirl to coat the pan. Pour in the vegetable-egg mixture and let it cook undisturbed over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the eggs are set on the bottom.

Transfer the skillet to the preheated broiler, and broil for about 3 minutes, or until the frittata is firm in the centre. Remove the pan from the broiler and run a rubber spatula around the edge to loosen the frittata. Slide or invert it onto a large, round plate, and serve hot, warm or at room temperature, cut into wedges. Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

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Lots of variety available at Pesach

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

When I was a child, my mother served sponge cake for breakfast during Passover. It's one of my fondest childhood memories of the holiday. My mother didn't allow us to eat much sugar, so eating cake for breakfast was the ultimate treat. The marble sponge cake was my favourite.

Of course, when I was growing up, Passover food options were pretty limited. Nowadays there are an incredible number of specialty items available for the holiday.

I love trolling the supermarket aisles and checking out all the latest Passover foods. There are sauces and dressings of all kinds and desserts galore. The stores even carry balsamic vinegar and olive oil from Italy.

You can get at least 10-different types of matzah – organic, whole wheat, multigrain. There's even gluten-free matzah. It's kosher for Passover, but it can't be used for sacramental purposes, because according to Halachah, matzah must be made from one or more of five grains – wheat, rye, oats, barley and spelt, all of which contain gluten.

This year, I decided to try some new recipes based on Passover products I found on the store shelves. I have always been curious about the sweet and sour chicken and duck sauces. They have different names, depending on the brands, but these sauces are all basically the same. They're made from peaches, apricots, sugar, vinegar and spices.

The sauces can have varying degrees of spiciness and are usually used for chicken. But I decided to try one of the sweet and sour sauces on brisket. I also added onion soup, cooking wine, ketchup and jam, all products with kosher for Passover hechshers. My brisket recipe got thumbs up from my kids, so I will be making it for the second seder.

My family also liked a teriyaki chicken recipe made with imitation kosher for Passover teriyaki sauce. It's not really festive enough for a seder. But it's quick and simple to make and perfect for chol hamoed.

BRISKET WITH SWEET AND SOUR SAUCE

5 to 6 lb. beef brisket
2 cups sweet and sour chicken or duck sauce
1/2 cup red cooking wine
1 cup water
1 package dry onion soup mix
1/2 cup ketchup
1/2 cup apricot jam
Preheat oven to 325.

Place brisket fat side up in a large roasting pan. In a large bowl combine sweet and sour sauce, wine, water and soup mix and mix well. Pour sauce over brisket. In a small bowl make a paste of the ketchup and jam and spread it on the top of the brisket. Cover roast with aluminum foil so the sides of the pan are well-sealed. Cook in preheated oven for four hours or until the roast is tender.

Separate the brisket from the sauce and refrigerate overnight. Skim any fat in sauce. Cut the roast against the grain in thin slices. Return meat to roasting pan. Pour the sauce over the meat and cover with foil. Place in oven at 350 for 40 minutes. Serve warm. Makes 5-6 servings.

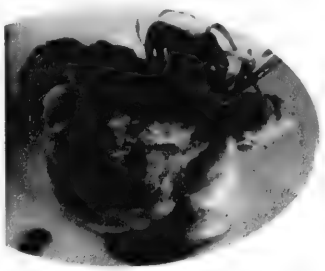

Photo from *Passover Made Easy*

TERIYAKI GINGER CHICKEN

3/4 lb. chicken breast cutlets
2 tbsp. olive oil
3 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
1-2 tbsp. grated fresh ginger
sea salt to taste (optional)
4 tbsp. kosher for Passover imitation teriyaki sauce
2 green onions, sliced, for garnish (optional)

Cut chicken cutlets in half so they are about 2 inches wide and set aside. Pour olive oil and 2 tbsp. teriyaki sauce in a large frying pan on medium heat. Add garlic and cook for 3 minutes. Add ginger. Cook another minute.

Add chicken, cook for 4 minutes on 1 side and flip. Season with salt. Add remainder of teriyaki sauce. Cook another four minutes or until chicken breast is no longer pink inside. To serve, place chicken on a plate. Pour remainder of sauce over the top, but discard the ginger and garlic. Garnish chicken with green onions. Makes 4 servings.

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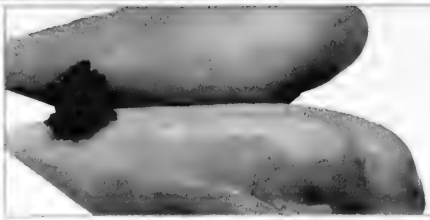

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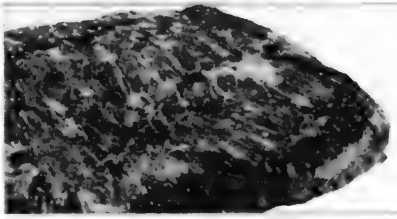

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Potatoes are not the only side dish

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

With a little creativity and a few basic ingredients, you can prepare all sorts of scrumptious side dishes for Passover that will be impressive enough to take centre stage. But don't just limit yourself to potatoes – there's a whole wide world of colourful vegetables to choose from.

The fresh vegetable section in most supermarkets is overflowing with an amazing rainbow of produce, from A to Z, from asparagus to zucchini. Fresh veggies are nutritious, packed with vitamins and offer up fabulous flavour. As an added bonus, homemade side dishes are much more affordable than packaged mixes and prepared side dishes, especially if you're cooking for a crowd. The trick is to choose recipes that require simple preparation.

Here are some recipes for scrumptious side dishes that were shared by several of my foodie-friends – I call them my "pan pals." Even though we live in different cities, we're connected to each other by our love of good food. Their recipes are uncomplicated to prepare, taste terrific and will definitely impress the guests at your Passover table. Enjoy!

• • •

Leah Schapira, the author of *Fresh & Easy Kosher Cooking*, is the founder of CookKosher.com, a wonderful online recipe exchange. Leah teamed up with food editor Victoria Dwek to create *Passover Made Easy* (Artscroll/Shaar Press), which was published just in time for Passover. This creative cookbook delivers 60 triple-tested recipes for every day of the holiday week, with a full-colour photo for each recipe.

"For a recipe to earn a spot, we really had to love it," said Leah. And it had to be easy enough too."

Victoria added: "For every recipe that made it into this book, there were three that didn't."

Leah wrote: "This kugel recipe was inspired by CookKosher.com... it redeemed spaghetti squash for her. She had tried a few recipes using this unique squash before but had never really loved how they came out. She almost gave up before this kugel emerged from the oven. Spaghetti Squash Kugel is cool because it looks like noodle kugel, but is actually very low in calories. You can make it even lighter by replacing some of the yolks with whites."

SPAGHETTI SQUASH KUGEL

Adapted from *Passover Made Easy* by Leah Schapira and Victoria Dwek

1 spaghetti squash
1 tbsp. oil
2 onions, finely diced
1 garlic clove, minced
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. coarse black pepper

Preheat oven to 350. Wash spaghetti squash and place into a loaf pan. Bake for 1 hour. Remove from oven and let cool. Raise oven heat to 400. (For microwave instructions, see "Nuke it," below.)

Slice squash in half and remove seeds. Using a fork, scrape the strands of squash into a large bowl.

Heat oil in a sauté pan over medium heat. Add onions and garlic. Sauté until onions are soft, 5-7 minutes. Add onions to spaghetti squash. Add eggs, salt and pepper. Pour mixture into a 9x13-in. baking pan. Bake until kugel is crispy on top, about 1 hour. Makes 6 (or more) servings.

Nuke It! For quicker preparation, microwave a whole spaghetti squash for 1 minute to soften. Slice in half and remove seeds. Place cut side down in a dish with 1/2 inch of water. Microwave it for 8-10 minutes. Continue with Step 2.

Tidbit: Even though we often bake it in square pans nowadays, the word "kugel" may stem from the Hebrew "k'iygul" (as a circle), referring to its traditionally round shape.

• • •

Cookbook author Pam Reiss works in the family business, Desserts Plus, a kosher catering and food store in Winnipeg. *Passover – a Kosher Collection*, is the second in the series of Kosher Collection cookbooks. Her website is www.pamelareiss.com.

"Passover cooking can be stressful," Pam says. "For some families Passover is about the recipes that have been passed down for generations, while others like to experiment with new dishes. There are wonderful memories linked to all of the traditional recipes that my grandmothers and parents have passed down to me. My desire for traditional foods is in constant battle with the enjoyment I get from trying new things. A good compromise is to stick with traditional foods for the seders and try new recipes during chol hamoed."

Pam continues: "If I had to choose (and it would be hard to decide), I think this might be my favourite kugel. Button and crimini mushrooms often get the short end of the stick, but I love them and this kugel shows them off."

PASSOVER MUSHROOM AND ONION FARFEL KUGEL

Adapted from *Passover – A Kosher Collection* by Pam Reiss

4 tbsp. olive oil
1 lb. yellow onions, peeled and diced small (2 medium)
2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1 1/2 lb. (button or crimini mushrooms, sliced
1 1/2 cups water
8 oz. package farfel (4 cups)
6 large eggs, lightly beaten

Preheat the oven to 375. Place a large frying pan or a pot over medium-high heat and add the olive oil. Add the onions, salt and pepper and cook, stirring, for 8-10 minutes or until soft and golden brown.

Add the mushrooms and cook another 6-8 minutes, or until they've all cooked and have shrunk by about half. We're not trying to brown the mushrooms at all, just cook them.

Add the water and bring to a simmer. Cook for 1 minute.

Put the farfel in a large mixing bowl. Pour the mushroom/onion mixture over the farfel and stir to mix. Let rest for about half an hour or until cooled completely and most of the liquid has been absorbed.

Once cooled, add the eggs and stir to combine. Pour the batter into a greased 8x11-in. pan. Bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown and firm. Makes 8 servings.

• • •

Esther Deutsch is the author of *Chic Made Simple: Fresh Fast Fabulous Kosher Cuisine*. She is a New York-based food stylist, columnist and recipe developer, and the food editor of *Ami* magazine. Esther has a theory that if your food looks irresistible, it tastes irresistible. She is a self-taught cook who has never taken a single culinary class. Esther's recipes are super easy to prepare, but always delicious, impressive and imaginative. If she can do it, anyone can – effortlessly.

Esther writes: "This original Pesach creation is my mother's. It's been given out to many, who have made it a year-round addition to their menus. For a savoury variation, substitute the sweet potatoes with sautéed mushrooms and onions, or for an innovative twist on shepherd's pie, with sautéed minced meat and onions."

POTATO KUGEL AND SWEET POTATO ROULADE

Adapted from *Chic Made Simple* by Esther Deutsch

Sweet Potato Mash:
3 sweet potatoes, peels intact
1 medium onion, diced
3 tbsp. oil
kosher salt

Potato Kugel Mixture:
5 large potatoes, peeled and grated
3 eggs
2 tbsp. oil
1 tbsp. kosher salt
white pepper

Continued on page 44

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Cook creatively

Continued from page 42

To prepare sweet potato mash: Preheat oven to 350. Roast sweet potatoes, uncovered, until soft, about 1 1/2 hours.

Meanwhile, in a skillet, heat 3 tbsp. of oil. Sauté onion in oil over medium heat, until soft and translucent, about 8 minutes. Remove sweet potatoes from the oven and slice them in half. Scoop out the flesh, discard peels, and mash. Combine mashed sweet potatoes with sautéed onions and season with kosher salt.

To prepare potato kugel mixture: In a bowl, combine grated potatoes, eggs, oil, salt and white pepper. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and spread potato mixture evenly over parchment paper. Bake, uncovered, until top of mixture is firm, about 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Roll potato kugel, jelly-roll style, together with parchment paper. Allow to cool completely.

To assemble, unroll potato kugel. Spread mashed sweet potato evenly over kugel. Roll again, this time pulling away parchment paper to form a potato kugel roll (unrolling and rerolling is essential – it helps to maintain the shape of the roll. Serve warm. Makes 8 servings

• • •

Barbara Rolek is the guide for eastern European food on www.about.com and we've become "virtual friends" even though we've never met. So what's a nice Catholic girl doing writing about Jewish food? Well, she comes by it honestly. She explains, "I am Jewish by osmosis and proud of it! I inherited the gene from my mother, who cleaned houses and served meals for some of the Jewish ladies in our ethnically diverse neighbourhood and developed an affinity for Jewish cuisine. That's where my mom learned about matzah ball soup so rich with schmaltz, it tasted like bubbie's. To this day, I'm the best matzah-ball maker in the family, my brother's rugelach are to die for and my sister takes top honours for her cheese blintzes."

This carrot ring recipe is made with grated carrots and is "grate" for Passover! It makes a great side dish for beef brisket or apricot-baked chicken.

PASSOVER CARROT RING

Prep time 30 minutes, cooking time 35 minutes

1 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 cups oil
4 large eggs, separated (use 5 eggs if you omit baking soda)
3 cups shredded carrots
2 cups matzah meal
1 tsp. Passover baking soda (optional)
1 tsp. salt
3 tbsp. cold water
2 tsp. lemon juice

Heat oven to 300. Lightly coat a medium ring mould with cooking spray.

In a large bowl, cream brown sugar and oil. Beat in egg yolks and carrots.

In a separate bowl, whisk together matzah meal, baking soda (if using) and salt. Add to carrot mixture, mixing well. Add water and lemon juice and combine thoroughly.

In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until stiff but not dry, and stir 1/3 of the whites into the carrot mixture to lighten it. Then, fold in remaining whites, trying not to deflate the volume. Pour mixture into prepared mould. Bake 15 minutes at 300. Raise heat to 375 and bake an additional 20 minutes. Let cool 15 minutes before unmoulding. Makes 8 servings.

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Under the supervision of TK

CJN staff share their recipes

A call was put out to *CJN* cooks to submit some of their favourite Passover recipes. Some recipes are original, and others have been adapted from other sources.

Submitted by Gloria Clamen:

CARROT KUGEL MUFFINS

6 carrots
1/2 cup orange juice
2 eggs
3/4 cup oil
1 cup cake meal
pinch salt
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 tsp. Passover baking powder

Grease muffin tins very, very well with cooking spray (batter tends to stick).

Preheat oven to 350. In a food processor, grate peeled carrots. Add rest of ingredients one at a time. Process just until well combined. Bake for 30-35 min. until set. Take out of oven and let rest until slightly cool. Carefully take out of muffin tins by running a knife around edge of each muffin; turn muffin tin upside down onto cooling rack. Freezes well or serve same day.

For seder, triple the recipe. They're gone before you know it!

GRANNY MEHR'S TZIMMES

Source: Kinnereth Cookbook, *(Hadassah-WIZO) Toronto*

This recipe is a guest and family favourite, and earns rave reviews. It's delicious. Don't let the multiple steps discourage you. The end result is well worth it. It keeps for several days and can be a meal in itself, as well as a side dish, and improves with age

3 lbs. flanken
2 onions, sliced
5 lb.carrots
5 sweet potatoes
1-1/2 cups brown sugar
1 tbsp. salt
8 large potatoes, peeled
2 eggs
salt to taste
2 tbsp. oil

Preheat oven to 350. In a large roasting pan, place flanken and onions and pour in some water, just to cover. Bake for 1 hour.

Peel carrots. In food processor with thin slicing blade, or by hand, slice carrots; pour over flanken and onions. Cook covered for 1 hour.

Add peeled, quartered sweet potatoes, salt and brown sugar. Bake another hour (This can be done in advance and refrigerated).

Continue with final recipe step, or next day, in 350-degree oven reheat tzimmes while preparing potato topping.

(This part is like making potato latke batter). Peel and grate potatoes in food processor. Drain starch. Add salt, eggs and oil. Spoon over tzimmes and bake for 1-1/2 hrs. until well browned. Simply add a little water each time before reheating. Serves 12.

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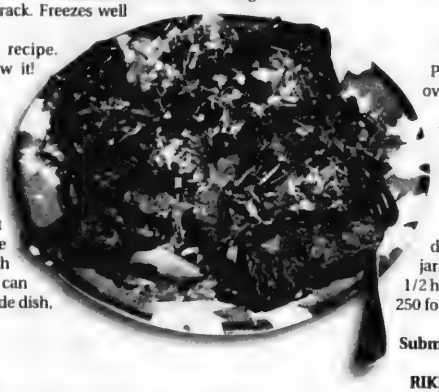


FLANKEN

Place flanken strips in a Dutch oven (covered roasting pan).

Slice potatoes and place on top of flanken. A little sweet red wine is optional and a little onion soup powder and/or pepper sprinkled over the flanken is optional.

Pour generous amount of duck sauce over (it calls for 1/2 jar, but I used less). Bake at 350 for 1/2 hour covered. Continue baking at 250 for 2 hours.

• • •

Submitted by Rikee Madoff:

RIKEE'S CAULIFLOWER KUGEL (QUICHE)

Boil 1 head of cauliflower until it gets soft. Mash it (it mashes easily with a fork).

Add two eggs, 1/4 cup mayonnaise, 1-2 tbsp. onion soup powder, and bake at 350 for 40 minutes. Light and yummy.

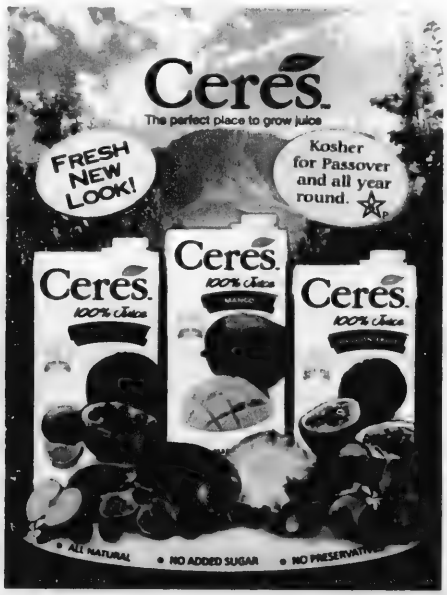
VALERIE'S PESACH LEMON MERINGUE

5 egg yolks
1 1/4 cups sugar
2 cups pareve whipping cream
3/4 cup lemon juice
lemon zest, optional
5 egg whites
1/4 cup sugar

In a small bowl, using an electric or hand-held mixer, beat yolks until thick and creamy. Add sugar. Continue beating until light yellow.

In another bowl, whip cream. Add lemon juice and zest. Fold whipped cream mixture into yolk mixture. Pour into a 9-10-inch spring-form pan. Cover. Freeze at least 5 hours.

Preheat broil element. In large bowl, beat egg whites with sugar until stiff peaks form. Remove cake from freezer and spread egg white mixture over the top of the lemon mousse. Place on top rack of oven. Broil for 1 minute. Watch very closely since it burns quite fast. Cover. Return to freezer. Serve frozen. Serves 6-8. Prep time: 15 minutes.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From our kitchen to yours

Continued from page 46

Submitted by Grace Zweig:

TILAPIA

This is a simple and delicious recipe. It can be doubled or tripled. Best eaten same day it is cooked.

2 tilapia fillets cut in half
2 pieces lox
1 leek
white cooking wine
1 tbsp. dill
1 tbsp. chopped garlic cloves
1 tbsp. oil butter or margarine

Wash leak well, cutting lengthwise. Chop only the white section. Fry cut up garlic in little oil while making sure it does not burn. Now fry the leek with the garlic. Take baking dish and put leeks and garlic on bottom.

Cut tilapia fillets in half lengthwise. Butter the side of the fish that will remain on the outside when baking (for dairy dish). For pareve, use margarine.

Place one slice of lox over tilapia and roll up securing with a toothpick. Once all the tilapia has been rolled, place over leeks.

Sprinkle some drops of white cooking wine on top of fish and garnish with chopped dill. Other cooking spices may also be used. Bake at 350 for 30-40 minutes.

• • •

Submitted by Ella Burakowski:

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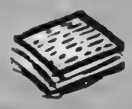

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SPICY CARROT AND ROASTED CAULIFLOWER SOUP

Please note that some of the spices included in this recipe are kitniyot and therefore acceptable for Sephardim only at Passover. You can use whatever spices you wish to give this soup its own unique taste.

2 onions, chopped
4 cloves of garlic, chopped
3 tbsp. olive oil
8 cups of vegetable or chicken broth
3 bags of baby carrots
1 cauliflower, separated into small florets
1 tsp. fresh ginger chopped
1/2-1 tsp. salt (or to taste)
1 tsp. sugar (or to taste)
freshly ground pepper
1-2 tsp. garam masala
1/4-1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1 1/2 tbsp. curry
1/2 tbsp. hot curry
1 tsp. cumin
cayenne pepper (if you want it extra hot)

Preheat oven to 400. In bowl toss cauliflower florets with 2 tbsp. of olive oil and garam masala. Spread on greased cookie sheet and roast cauliflower for 1/2 hour or until soft.

Add 1 tbsp. oil to large pot, sauté onion, garlic and ginger till softened.

Add broth and carrots. Bring to boil. Simmer until the carrots are soft.

Add half the roasted cauliflower. Using immersion blender, blend the soup until smooth. Add seasoning and adjust flavours. Add remaining roasted florets.

Note: This recipe can be made with sweet potatoes instead of carrots.

• • •

Submitted by Frances Kraft:

'BEST' PASSOVER MANDELBROIT

6 eggs
1 1/2 cups sugar
1 cup oil
1 1/2 tbsp. vanilla
1 cup cake meal
1 cup potato starch
3/4 c. chocolate chips (or chopped nuts)

Mix ingredients together. Spread onto a greased 10x15-in. jelly roll pan. (Batter is poured.) Bake at 350 for 35 minutes. Cool 10 minutes.

Cut into diagonal slices. Place cut side up on a cookie sheet. Sprinkle sides with cinnamon sugar. Bake at 350 for 5 to 10 minutes. Turn to other side, sprinkle with more cinnamon sugar. Bake again for 5-10 minutes. Turn to other side, sprinkle with more cinnamon sugar. Bake again for 5-10 minutes.

• • •

Submitted by Lila Sarick

CHAROSET

This makes a very sticky charoset. We shape it into a pyramid and decorate it with rows of almonds. One year we got fancy and a friend helped us make a sphinx!

2 small apples
1 orange
8 oz. pitted dates
3 oz. dried apricots
1 cup walnut pieces
2 tsp. cinnamon
whole almonds to decorate the outside of the pyramid

Peel and quarter the apples. Peel and separate orange into pieces. Combine all ingredients in food processor and process until you have a thick mixture. Shape and decorate!

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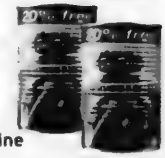

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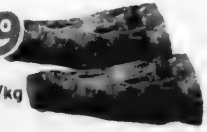

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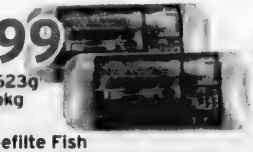

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Desserts so good you won't even miss the flour

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

There are so many interesting food blogs out there, one could spend all day perusing them, reading about people's lives and what they do for pleasure, what their families are like and, of course, what they eat.

What does all this have to do with Passover? Well, I was reading a particular blog the other day titled Jew In The City, written by a young Jewish woman who has left her Conservative upbringing behind for a more Orthodox lifestyle. She writes that sometimes she misses the food that she grew up with.

It got me thinking. Surely, just because beef or chicken is on the seder menu, does that mean I must forego a luscious creamy dessert? With the availability of high quality non-dairy whip topping and ice cream makers, the sky is the limit, regardless of the main course. You'll never miss the cream in the caramel sauce that accompanies the chocolate soufflé cake, and the lemon and white chocolate mousse parfaits are both sweet and puckeringly tart at the same time. The pear sorbet is so creamy and luxe, you'll swear there was a fillip of cream in it too.

CHOCOLATE PECAN SOUFFLÉ CAKE WITH CARAMEL PECAN SAUCE

Because non-dairy liquid topping is used for the caramel sauce, it will be a bit runnier than conventional caramel sauce.

1 lb. bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1 cup margarine or butter
8 eggs, separated
1 cup granulated sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 cup finely chopped pecans
Sauce:
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup pecan halves
2/3 cup non-dairy liquid whip topping

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly grease bottom and sides of 10-in. springform pan. Line bottom with round of parchment paper. Set aside.

Melt chocolate and margarine in stainless steel bowl set over pot of barely simmering water, stirring occasionally. Let cool for 5 minutes.

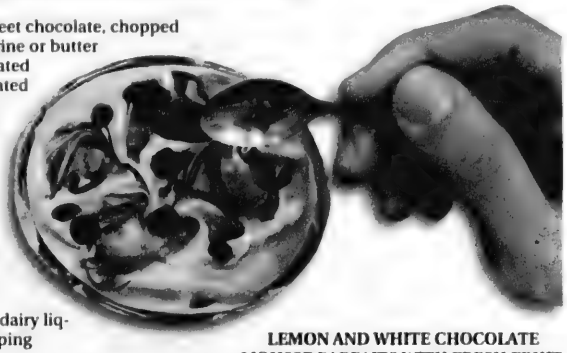
In bowl of electric mixer, beat egg yolks with 1/2 cup of the sugar until very pale and thick. Set aside.

In separate clean bowl, whip egg whites with salt until soft peaks are formed. Gradually beat in sugar until stiff but not dry peaks are formed.

Fold one-third of egg yolk mixture into chocolate. Fold in remaining egg yolks in two additions along with vanilla. Fold one-quarter of egg whites into chocolate mixture. In two more additions, fold in remaining egg whites. Fold in pecans.

Transfer mixture to prepared pan. Bake in centre of preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes or until cake tester comes out with very moist crumbs still clinging to it. Cool in pan on rack. Remove springform and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or for up to 24 hours.

Sauce: Combine sugar and 1/4 cup water in heavy bottomed saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat to medium-high and cook, without stirring, for about 5 minutes or until mixture turns a deep amber colour. Immediately stir in pecans. Stir in whip topping until mixture has stopped bubbling and pecans are well coated. Cook for 5 minutes. Transfer to serving bowl and let cool. Slice cake and serve with caramel sauce. Makes 12 to 16 servings.



LEMON AND WHITE CHOCOLATE MOUSSE PARFAITS WITH FRESH FRUIT

A little of this goes a long way due to its richness.

1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 tbsp. finely grated lemon zest
5 egg yolks
5 oz. high quality white chocolate, chopped
2-1/3 cups non-dairy liquid whip topping
6 cups fresh fruit, blueberries, raspberries and sliced fresh strawberries

In stainless steel bowl, whisk together sugar, lemon juice and zest and egg yolks. Place over saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking often, until thickened, 5 to 10 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly.

In separate stainless steel bowl, combine white chocolate and 2 tbsp. of whip topping. Place over saucepan of simmering water. Cook, stirring often, until chocolate is melted and smooth. Cool slightly.

Beat remaining whip topping until firm peaks form. Fold half into lemon mixture and half into white chocolate mixture.

Spoon 1/4 cup of lemon mousse into bottom of 12 parfait glasses. Top with single layer of fruit. Spoon 1/4 cup of white chocolate mousse over fruit. Top white chocolate mousse with fruit. Top with 1/4 cup more lemon mousse and more fruit. Cover parfait glasses with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or for up to 24 hours. Serve with additional fresh fruit. Makes 12 servings.

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Israel increases Golan-area forces

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel's military has increased its forces on the northern border with Syria following advances by Syrian rebels in the Golan Heights region.

The rebels reportedly began entering the demilitarized zone between Syria and Israel on Saturday and threatened to retake the Golan. Most of Syrian President Hafez Assad's troops have left the area, *Ynet* reported.

Ynet said that the Israeli troops sent to the Golan are intended to back up the elite forces and operational artillery units patrolling the area.

Rebels shot firearms near the Israeli border in the demilitarized zone.

"We are now in front of the occupied Golan, the blessed land sold by Hafez Assad," a rebel says in a video clip posted online Saturday night, according to *Ynet*.

"For 40 years, not a single gunshot has been fired on this land. For 40 years, not a single gunshot has been fired towards Israel," the rebel said. "We will free the Golan and it will return to the free Syrian people, with the help of Allah."

Also Saturday, the rebels released into Jordan 21 Filipino United Nations peacekeeping troops whom they had held for four days. The day before the release, several peacekeeping troops left their posts on the border and crossed into Israel.

In this recent file photo, Israeli Chief of Staff Benny Gantz, third from left, visits a specialized military unit on the Golan Heights. *(Flash90 photo)*

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Jews have left Venezuela in droves

Continued from page 1

But even with Chavez gone, felled by an undisclosed cancer at age 58 just weeks into his fourth term, Venezuelan Jews aren't quite ready to exhale.

For one thing, Chavez leaves behind a country racked by violent crime and mired in economic turmoil. For another, Chavez played such a commanding role in Venezuelan life and politics that nobody is quite sure what will happen to the country.

Perhaps most notably for Venezuela's Jews, far fewer of them are still around to find out.

Over the past 14 years, Jews have been leaving the country in droves. When Chavez was elected in 1999, more than 20,000 Jews lived in Venezuela. Today, the community is estimated to have fallen to less than half that number. During the more challenging years of Chavez rule, Jewish organizations even developed a plan in concert with local Jews for the evacuation of the country's Jewish community should the need arise. The plan is still on the shelf.

Jews were not the only ones to take flight from the Chavez regime. Hundreds of thousands of upper- and middle-class Venezuelans left during the Chavez years, seeking to escape Venezuela's anti-business climate, the government's nationalization of private companies, economic crises and a soaring crime rate. Jews left for many of the same reasons, with antisemitism by all accounts taking a back seat to concerns for economic and physical security.

With Chavez gone, an opportunity for change has come. But it's far from clear that the situation will improve for the Jews of Venezuela, at least in the short term.

Venezuela's constitution appears to require that new elections be held within 30 days. In his final months, Chavez made clear his preference that his vice-president, Nicolas Maduro, take over Chavez's so-called Bolivarian revolution. The likeliest opponent to Maduro, who has echoed Chavez's anti-western rhetoric, is Henrique Capriles Radonski, who lost to Chavez by an 11-point margin in elections held last October.

Capriles, who identifies as a Catholic, also happens to be the grandson of Holocaust survivors – a fact Chavez exploited in launching antisemitic attacks against him.

During the 2012 presidential campaign, state-run media urged Venezuelans to reject "international Zionism" and vote against Capriles, describing him as having "a platform opposed to our national and independent interests." Chavez also said the Mossad, Israel's secret service, was out to kill him and accused Israel of financing Venezuela's opposition. Government media described Capriles as "Jewish-Zionist bourgeoisie."

The Anti-Defamation League and the Simon Wiesenthal Center condemned Chavez for his rhetoric.

The campaign was typical Chavez, only the latest in a long series of episodes that left Jews feeling deeply unsettled in a country that before Chavez had remarkably little antisemitism.

> *Chavez nurtured an ever-closer relationship with Iran*

The first signs of trouble under Chavez came during the years of the second intifadah, when the government sponsored rallies in support of the Palestinian cause. After one such rally in May 2004, the Sephardic Tiferet Israel Synagogue in Caracas was attacked.

But it wasn't until November of that year that Venezuelan Jews felt directly targeted by the government, when security forces carried out an armed raid on a Jewish school in Caracas, Hebraica, after the police reportedly received an anonymous call. The incident was described in a report by Tel Aviv University's Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism as "perhaps the most serious incident ever to have taken place in the history of the Jewish community" in Venezuela.

Chavez kept up his anti-Israel and anti-western rhetoric throughout the 2000s, calling then-U.S. president George W. Bush a devil during a 2006 speech at the United Nations and linking Israeli and American "terrorist" policies. During the 2006 Lebanon War, Chavez accused Israel of perpetrating a "new Holocaust" and using Nazi-like methods to kill Lebanese and Palestinians.

Meanwhile, Chavez nurtured an ever-closer relationship with Iran. The seemingly incongruous friendship between Chavez, a secular socialist, and Ahmadinejad, president of an Islamic theocracy, was built around shared hostility to the United States, the West and Israel. The two leaders sharply increased bilateral trade, inaugurated weekly flights between Caracas and Tehran, and frequently visited each other. As the size of the Iranian diplomatic presence in Venezuela grew, western security experts accused Venezuela of providing Iran with a Latin American base for illicit activities, including arms trading.

Venezuela's final break with Israel came in 2009, during the three-week Israel-Hamas war in Gaza that began in late December 2008. Chavez severed diplomatic ties with the Jewish state, expelling the Israeli ambassador in Caracas and accusing Israel of committing genocide against the Palestinians. Chavez also insisted that the Jews of Venezuela rebuke Israel for its actions.

Chavez's constant linkage of Venezuelan Jewry with Israel seemed to give presidential sanction to antisemitism, even if Chavez himself said he "respected and loved" Jews.

Antisemitic graffiti appeared in Caracas, equating the Jewish Star of David with the swastika. Broadcasters on state radio recommended the antisemitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as an insightful read. Jewish institutions and houses of worship in Venezuela were attacked.

"People are being taught to hate," then-Venezuelan chief rabbi Pynchas Brener told *JTA* in early 2009. "Venezuela has never seen anything like this before."

Coalition will likely have 70 members

Continued from page 1

Turning to the incoming members of his presumptive cabinet, Netanyahu added, "I expect the ministers of the next government to take a cue from your dedication… Your work can serve as an example for the next government."

After a night-long meeting that ended Sunday morning, representatives of Likud-Beiteinu, Yesh Atid and Jewish Home indicated that they hope to be able to form a new government as early as March 12. The sides reportedly came together on issues surrounding the assignment of ministerial portfolios (although some differences still remain), the particulars of a universal draft bill, and an understanding about the baseline policies of the new governing coalition.

Benjamin Netanyahu

One of the final sticking points appeared to be a disagreement between the largely secular Yesh Atid and Jewish Home regarding an initiative to provide public transportation on Saturday. Another issue that was holding up a deal was the demand by Jewish Home's Naftali Bennett for the public diplomacy ministry in addition to the position of industry, trade and labour minister.

Shas party leader Eli Yishai wrote on Facebook Saturday night that a coalition agreement without his haredi party was a fait accompli, and that his party's exclusion from the government was a bitter moment for the State of Israel.

The coalition will likely comprise Netanyahu's Likud-Beiteinu (31 seats), Yesh Atid (19), Jewish Home (12), Hatnua (6) and Kadima (2), for a total of 70. Labor would lead the opposition, in which the two haredi parties, Shas and United Torah Judaism, would also sit, sources said.

The sources added that Yesh Atid's Yair Lapid, who had hoped to become foreign minister, will serve as finance minister. The Foreign Ministry post will be kept open for former foreign minister Avigdor Liberman, who resigned in December to fight corruption charges and hopes to return quickly to the post after clearing his name.

The defence minister will likely be former IDF chief of the general staff Moshe Ya'alon (Likud); Housing could well go to Jewish Home's Uri Ariel, while the same party's Eli Ben Dahan could take Religious Affairs; and Kadima leader Shaul Mofaz could become minister of welfare. Other ministerial positions have yet to be finalized.

The emerging compromise on haredi military service will see 1,500 to 2,000 scholars exempted from service each year — a far higher number than the 400 limit Yesh Atid had sought. In another reported compromise, haredi men will be called for service at age 22, not 18.

Some younger Likud Knesset members were reported to be upset with Netanyahu for apparently overlooking their ranks in the selection of cabinet ministers.

Timesofisrael.com

Officials walk out of IAEA talks

JTA

WASHINGTON — Canadian, U.S. and Australian officials walked out of a meeting of the UN nuclear watchdog agency when the Iranian envoy accused Israel of genocide.

The delegates all stormed out of a meeting at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna on March 6, after Ali Asghar Soltaneh, Iran's ambassador to the agency, made the accusation, Reuters reported.

Shawn Caza, Canada's counsellor and deputy permanent representative to the IAEA, stormed out of the meeting along with Joseph MacManus, the U.S. ambassador to the agency.

Rick Roth, a spokesperson for Foreign Affairs Canada, said Caza walked out "on principle."

"Canadian diplomats will not sit idly by while countries like Iran make hateful and antisemitic remarks. Our diplomats today showed Canada's principled foreign policy in action," Roth wrote in an email to *The CJN*.

MacManus had earlier accused Iran of "deception, defiance and delay" in its dealing with the agency.

The meeting came weeks ahead of a renewed effort at talks in Istanbul by major powers, led by the United States, to negotiate terms with Iran to make its nuclear program more transparent. Western powers and Israel believe Iran is close to being able to manufacture a nuclear weapon. Iran denies this, and Soltaneh repeated these denials calling the accusations "baseless."

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf

A pact of pariahs between Hungary and Iran

Cnaan Liphshiz
JTA

BUDAPEST, Hungary — The potholed streets leading to Tiszavasvari's rusty train station offer no clue that this sleepy town of 12,000 in eastern Hungary is considered the "capital of Jobbik," the country's ultra-nationalist, anti-Jewish party whose name means "better."

The first sign appears near the office of the mayor, Erik Fulop, the first of five Jobbik politicians elected to run a Hungarian municipality. Shortly after taking office in 2010, Fulop set up a twinning arrangement between Tiszavasvari and the Iranian city of Ardabil, and a sign in Hungarian and Farsi near the office celebrates those ties.

Observers say the announcement of the twinning arrangement was the first international event held in Hungary under Jobbik's auspices and a mark of a growing partnership aimed at breaking through the isolation that both the party and the Iranian government are labouring under – Iran for its suspected nuclear-weapons program and support for terrorism, Jobbik for its hyper-nationalism and antisemitism.

Tiszavasvari's official website states that "the embargo on Iran is merely a way for world powers to monopolize trade with Iran," and expresses hope that the town "may lead the way to reversing this process." Jobbik's leader, Gabor Vona, has hosted a number of Iranian delegations there since the start of the twinning arrangement.

"The Persian people and their leaders are considered pariahs in the eyes of the West, which serves Israeli interests," said Marton Gyongyosi, Jobbik's foreign policy chief, at a pro-Iran demonstration organized by the party in December at the U.S. Embassy in Budapest. "This is why we have solidarity with the peaceful nation of Iran and turn to her with an open heart."

Jobbik's meteoric rise since its founding in 2003 has long been a source of consternation to Hungary's Jewish communal leaders, some of whom fear its growth is a driving factor behind Jewish emigration from the central European country. Currently, the third-largest faction in parliament, Jobbik increased its share of the popular vote nearly eightfold in the four years before 2010 and currently holds 47 of 386 parliamentary seats.

Less well-known is the party's intensifying partnership with Iran. Following Fulop's decision to twin with Ardabil, another Jobbik mayor, Juhasz Oszkar of Gyogyospata, also twinned with an Iranian municipality. Top Jobbik figures joined Hungarian businessmen on a trip to Iran to help deepen commercial ties between the countries. And Jobbik is one of only two parties represented in parliament's Hungarian-Iranian friendship committee.

> ***'It is antisemitism that binds the Hungarian ultranationalists with the ayatollahs of Tehran in a nexus of hate'***

"It is antisemitism that binds the Hungarian ultranationalists with the ayatollahs of Tehran in a nexus of hate," Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League, wrote in 2011. "That is all they have in common."

In truth, Jobbik's affinity toward Iran goes much deeper. The party is intensely opposed to globalization and the unification of Europe, lacks for international partners due to its radical rhetoric and sees in Iran not only one of the few governments willing to engage with it, but one with a shared commitment to resisting western hegemony.

Jobbik officials did not reply to repeated requests for an interview, but party sources did speak to investigative journalist Ferenc Szlazsanszky, who believes the party is determined to nurture relations with any country capable of helping Hungary end its "enslavement" by the European Union and the United States.

Insignia of the Jobbik Party

According to Szlazsanszky, a writer with the Hungarian weekly *Hetek*, the "driving force" behind Jobbik's pro-Iranian stance is Gyongyosi, the foreign policy chief, who drew a volley of international criticism in November when he called for the registration of Hungarian Jews, citing their potential as a security risk. He said later he was referring to Hungarian Israelis.

The son of a diplomat, Gyongyosi lived as a boy in several Muslim countries, and his ties in the East were a major factor in shaping the party's pro-Muslim stance, Szlazsanszky wrote in November.

"It is unacceptable that the once-flourishing trade between Iran and Hungary sank to almost zero. This is what Jobbik intends to change," Gyongyosi said in a recent interview in *Barikad!*, a Jobbik-affiliated weekly. "For Iran, Hungary is the West, and for Hungary, Iran is the gate to the East."

Jobbik's general antagonism toward Israel has blossomed in recent months into a fully-fledged campaign. Gyongyosi has announced a national tour of lectures on the "Zionist threat to world peace." In parallel, anti-Jewish or anti-Israel articles now take up more than 30 per cent of the content on the party's English-language website.

"It is no coincidence that Jobbik is intensifying its anti-Israel propaganda the more it tightens its ties with Iran," said Joel Rubinfeld, co-chairman of the Brussels-based European Jewish Parliament, who recently returned from a round of talks in Hungary. "The time correlation is one of the ways in which we see the Iranian fingerprint on Jobbik."

As with Iran's alliances with other rogue regimes, like Syria and Venezuela, the country's partnership with Jobbik may be one of simple convenience. Neither have many friends from which to choose.

CHW

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Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW)
Notice is hereby given that the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of the above organization will be held on
Sunday, April 14, 2013 (9 a.m. to 12 noon)
Cantlie Suites Hotel - 1100 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec

Agenda will include:
Audited Financial Statement
National President's Report
National Executive Director's Report
Board of Directors since the last Annual Meeting
Such other business as may properly come before the Meeting

Annual and Life Members are invited to attend.

Marla Dan, CHW National President

Claims Conference ועידת התביעות
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

Holocaust-Era Assets in Former East Germany

The Claims Conference has established a Late Applicants Fund ("LAF") of €50 million in order to accept applications from the following heirs of a former Jewish owner ("persecutee") of property/assets in the former East Germany for which the Claims Conference received proceeds as Successor Organization under the German Property Law of 1990:

(a) The immediate testamentary heir of the persecutee; (b) Children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren of the persecutee; (c) Siblings of the persecutee; (d) Children of siblings listed under (c); (e) Spouses of persons listed under (b), (c) and (d).

Applications can be filed directly with the Claims Conference for no fee. There is no need for applicants to pay a fee to any party. The LAF will accept applications through December 31, 2014.

After the application deadline, the Claims Conference shall determine the payment that each eligible heir will receive. This determination will be based on a number of factors detailed on the Claims Conference website.

The Claims Conference has published on its website, www.claimscon.org, a list of the properties/assets received by the Claims Conference as of the date of publication, and such assets for which claims by the Claims Conference are still pending under the German Property Restitution Law, including the name of the former owners and/or businesses, as well as the addresses of the properties/assets.

The detailed rules of the LAF, applications, and other information are also on the Claims Conference website, www.claimscon.org.

All communications regarding the Late Applicants Fund should be submitted to:
Claims Conference Successor Organization,
Sophienstrasse 26, D-60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
Fax: ++49-69-97-07-08-11. Email: claims-conference-laf@claimscon.org

To aid applicants who do not have complete information, the Claims Conference has a Department for Property Identification. If you believe that you or your relatives may have owned Jewish property in the former East Germany, please include as much information as possible in your application and the Department will endeavor to identify such property. Please write to the above address. There is no charge for this service as well.

The Claims Conference has appointed an Ombudsman. To contact the Office of the Ombudsman, please email Ombudsman@claimscon.org or write to The Ombudsman, PO Box 585, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113, USA

Economist upbeat about Israel's economic status

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Prior to the global financial crisis that struck in 2008, Israel's economy was humming along nicely, posting enviable growth rates of six per cent per year.

When the crisis hit, "everybody suffered," including Israel. But unlike many other developed nations, it bounced back quickly. "Israel is showing a significant degree of resilience," said Tel Aviv University (TAU) economist Leo Leiderman.

Speaking to financial advisers and supporters of TAU at the downtown offices of Dundee Securities, Leiderman said Israel's GDP is expected to eclipse those of Canada and the United States in 2013. Israel's economy is expected to expand by 3.3 per cent, Canada's by 1.8 per cent and that of the United States by 2.1 per cent. Major European economies, like those in Spain and Italy, are expected to contract in 2013, Spain's by 1.6 per cent. Israel's potential is for even greater growth, but its economy is heavily correlated to the world economy and its prospects are hamstrung by the reliance on global conditions, Leiderman said.

Speaking on the outlook for Israel and global markets, Leiderman said one of the reasons Israel avoided some of the worst repercussions of the downturn was its diversified export market: 30 per cent of its goods and services go to the United States, 20 per cent to Asian countries, 29 per cent to the European Union and 21 per cent is sent elsewhere.

"The negative shock can be spread evenly – that has been a plus for us," he said.

What's more, Israel had already gone through some of the adjustments developed economies are currently experiencing. In the 1980s it, too, struggled with an oversized public debt – 200 per cent of GDP back then, only 75 per cent of GDP today.

"Things have flipped over. On important fundamentals in a macro [economic] perspective, to how government finances have been managed in a sound way, to the debt to GDP ratio, Israel's numbers are stable or declining," he said.

As a result, and despite the country's well-known security concerns, Israel is seen as a relatively safe venue for investment. "Country risk" can be demonstrated by the premium governments must offer for their "paper" – government bonds. Venezuela, for instance, must offer 6.74 per cent more than the 10-year U.S. treasury rate of 1.8 per cent. Israel, which has never defaulted on a loan, sells its bonds at 175 basis points (1.75 per cent) above the same treasury yield. And for the first time ever, "Israel issued paper for 30 years, 145 basis points above U.S. treasuries – a very low cost of funding," he said.

By international standards, Israel's public debt "remains sound," he added.

Turning to the Israeli stock market, Leiderman said it has been "quite correlated" to the global market, but has "decoupled" over geopolitical concerns, not over economic ones. In 2012, the Israeli market dipped when reports surfaced that the country was considering a unilateral attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. It bounced back afterwards.

Leiderman, who also serves as chief economic advisor for Bank Hapoalim, characterized market returns in 2013 as "not bad." In the year to date, investors earned 3.8 per cent from the Israeli market, better than that negative 1.2 per cent in Canada, but not as strong as the 5.2 per cent returned by the Dow Jones index.

Turning to the Israeli social scene, Leiderman noted that Israelis were part of a wider international protest movement, though protests there were entirely peaceful without any violence or even broken windows.

Demonstrations centred on the cost of living, particularly housing costs, which are "too high."

A four-room apartment (three bedrooms) can run more than $600,000 in Tel Aviv and $460,000 in Jerusalem, he said. It costs an average Israeli eight years of salary to purchase a new home. In Canada the equivalent figure is 3.7 years of salary.

Leo Leiderman

"Clearly there is a problem," he said. "The solution is to make more supply available," in part by streamlining the bureaucratic process that hamstrings the release of land and the start of construction.

On the employment front, Israel's labour participation ratio is comparable to that of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 74.2 per cent for Israel versus 70.8 per cent for the OECD.

Two segments of the Israeli population are under-employed, however. Only 45 per cent of Orthodox men and 26.7 per cent of Arab women are employed. But there are changes afoot. Jerusalem's "Silicon Valley" is hiring more Orthodox men, largely part time and "with good results."

One of the country's advantages over other developed economies is its relatively young population, Leiderman said. Only 16.4 per cent are over 65, compared to the working age population of 15 to 64. In Canada and the United States, the number is closer to 20 per cent seniors, and by contrast, 47 per cent of the Swiss population is elderly and 30.9 per cent of Germany's.

At the low end of the scale, 12 per cent of China's population and 7.7 per cent of India's are considered elderly.

Israel should see substantial benefits from the exploitation of natural gas resources, which is "a very positive development."

In a few years, Israel should be self-sufficient in the resource, saving the country $2.5 billion in imports. "This should boost growth by some one per cent and bring the current account (exports less imports) back to surplus," he stated.

Turning to Israel's renowned high-tech sector, Leiderman pointed out that the country "is still a place good for looking for new ideas." He referred to Brainsway, as an example. It's a company that has developed a "helmet for the treatment of chronic depression," which may even be used to help smokers quit, he said.

Putting it all together, Leiderman suggested that "people in Israel are quite happy and satisfied with their lives."

An OECD study surveyed populations in a number of countries and found that Israelis rated their satisfaction index higher than seven on a scale of zero to 10. That was comparable to the response of Canadians.

Asked by *The CJN* to square that finding with the protests that hit Israel, Leiderman said the demonstrations were "a generational issue. The proportion of young people protesting is higher than their share of the general population."

"We can't avoid the reality that in countries, in recent years, the growth has not been equally distributed. For those working in high-tech industries and multinationals, their income has gone up by much more than those in the middle class and in the domestic services industry."

The solution, he continued, was to invest in education, particularly "in the periphery of Israel" – the far north and south – "to make sure the schools there and the teachers get more than the average support, so these children have equal opportunity."

Leiderman's speaking tour was sponsored by TAU, the country's largest research university. TAU leads Israel in patents among Israeli academic institutions and is 22nd in the world.

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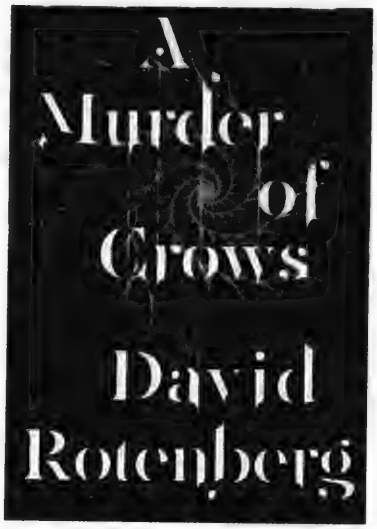
Thrilling action in second Junction Chronicles mystery

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

A *Murder of Crows* (Simon and Schuster) is Toronto mystery writer David Rotenberg's second book in the Junction Chronicles series.

Decker Roberts is a "synaesthete," someone who holds a unique mental power – in his case the ability to tell when people are speaking the truth.



Since readers last saw him in the previous book, *Placebo Effect*, Roberts has been keeping a low profile after his run-in with America's National Security Agency.

But the NSA, headed by Leonard Harrison, a "Tommy Lee Jones without the snark," and special agent Yslan Hicks, a young blond woman with almost translucent eyes, is keeping track of Roberts and other synaesthetes like him.

Roberts can tell whether people are speaking the truth by a series of squiggly lines that appear in his line of vision when someone is talking. In the past, he has used this gift for profit, consulting with big corporations for large fees.

But since the events of the previous book, he's been keeping a low profile and trying to find his estranged adult son, Seth, who has cancer.

Most of the book's action takes place in the United States, not in the Junction area of Toronto that gives the series its name, where Roberts is from.

The action in the first part of the book is fast and thrilling. Rotenberg deftly builds up the tension, letting the reader knows that something big is going to happen.

That something is a mass killing at a prestigious American college.

A disgruntled professor at Ancaster College, one of the best universities in America, plans on making a big splash on graduation day by detonating an explosive that will kill more than 200 students and faculty. He enlists the help of a school janitor, Walter Jones, who also seems to have deep issues.

The best parts of this book are those related to the janitor. In Richard Harris (*Silence of the Lambs*) style, Rotenberg gets us inside the mind of the psychopath. We find out about the people who've hurt him in the past and why he agrees to help the professor.

After the explosion, the NSA tracks Roberts down and forces him to use his skill to help them with the interrogation of witnesses.

At the college, Roberts discovers that NSA has been tracking other people like him and that the organization has also been using another synaesthe – a woman named Viola Tripping who can read the final thoughts of a person just before he or she dies – to help them solve this crime.

NSA agent Hicks takes the two of them to the crime scene so Tripping can read the victims' final thoughts and Decker can tell if they were lying or not.

This part of the novel was thrilling, and I could see how this subject can make an exciting TV series (there was some talk about this a few years ago), but then the story slows down drastically.

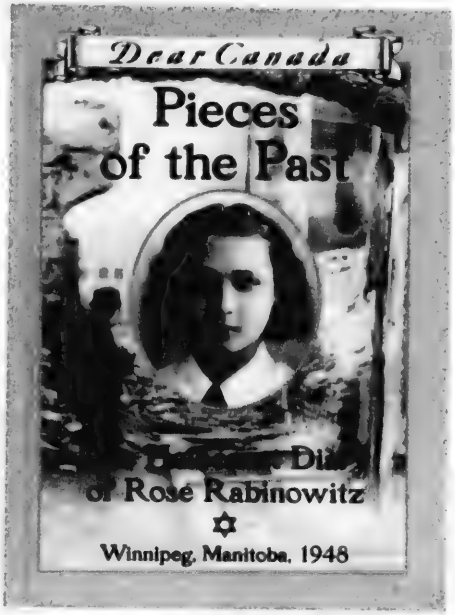
Although the NSA was using the synaesthetes to track down the killer or killers, there is never a sense of urgency, of racing against the clock. There is no reason to believe the killer or killers will strike again.

A lot of fuss is made made about the U.S. president travelling to Ancaster College to speak at the memorial service, but nothing really comes of it, and we are left with an unsatisfying Edgar Allen Poe-style climax involving a premature burial.

The subplot about Decker's friend, Eddie, a computer maven, who plans to incriminate a lawyer named Ira Charendoff, is complex, as is the account of events revolving around Decker's son, Seth, and there is a totally unnecessary bit in Africa.

Rotenberg plans to continue the series, so one imagines some of these plot lines will be picked up later.

Fans of the genre will find a lot to like in this book.



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In Short:

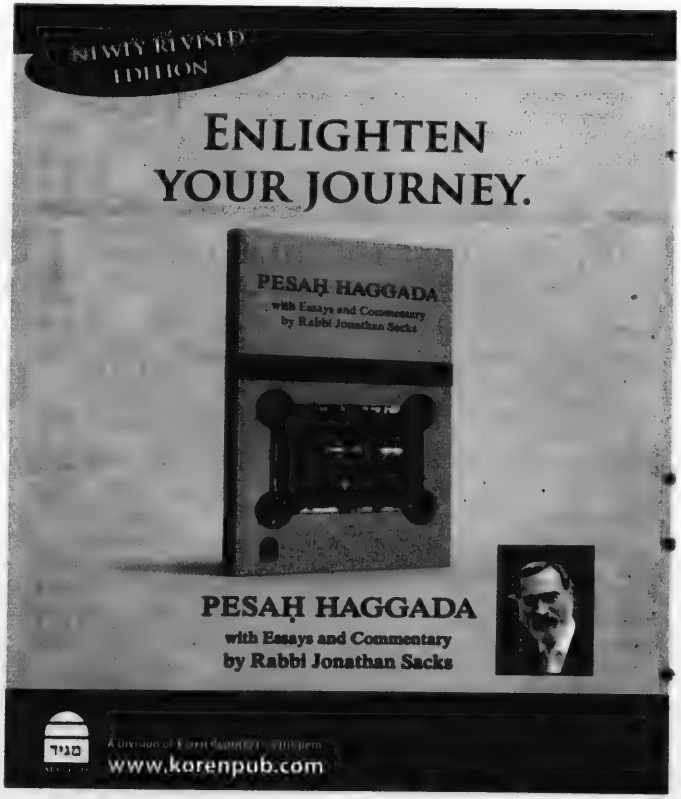
• New from children/young adult author Carol Matas is *Pieces of the Past: The Holocaust Diary of Rose Rabinowitz* (Scholastic).

This is similar to the Winnipeg author's other books in Scholastic's "Dear Canada" series, which includes the award-winning *Turned Away* and *Footsteps in the Snow*.

Like them, *Pieces of the Past* is a fictional diary account of a young girl. Rose, as she begins her diary, is living in Winnipeg in 1948. She is encouraged by her new guardian, Saul, to write down an account of her time in wartime Poland and the Holocaust.

As she digs deeper into her past, she is haunted by the most terrifying memory of all. Will she find the courage to bear witness to her mother's ultimate sacrifice?

Intended for younger readers, the book also includes a short Holocaust history at the end, as well as photos and maps, to help children understand the period.



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KOFFLER DIRECTOR LORI STARR TO HEAD JEWISH MUSEUM IN SAN FRANCISCO

Toronto's Koffler Centre of the Arts has begun a search for a new head after its current executive director, **Lori Starr**, announced she has accepted a position as

Lori Starr

executive director of the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, beginning in June.

Starr had "a remarkable tenure of seven years" at the Koffler in which she transformed it into "a thriving, multidisciplinary cultural institution that now programs across the Greater Toronto Area to audiences of over 100,000 a year," the Koffler's board of directors said in a press release.

Starr had also served as vice-president for culture for the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and was an adviser to the International Jewish Presenters Network and the Harold Green Jewish Theatre.

"Lori Starr made an enormous contribution to Toronto while she led the Koffler," said **Matthew Teitelbaum**, director of the Art Gallery of Ontario. "She moved inventive and galvanizing programming into the community, while positioning important issues of our time into the public realm for active discussion. She did so with style, intelligence and true commitment. She made our community stronger. I know she will have an important and sustaining impact on San Francisco. The cliché is true. Our loss is San Francisco's gain."

Before coming to the Koffler, Starr served in a similar capacity at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. She was also a Rockefeller Fellow in Museum Education and Community Arts at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

"I have learned so much from my work here," said Starr. "I am going to miss Toronto's vibrant arts scene and all the friends and colleagues I have gotten to know and admire."

• • •

Poetry & Music: Toronto native **Aubrey L. Glazer**, a rabbi, scholar, artist and translator based in New York, has explored the flourishing, contemporary, cutting-edge poetry scene in Israel and produced some fresh translations for a new book, *Mystical Vertigo: Kabbalistic Hebrew Poetry Dancing Cross the Divide of Jewish Thinking.*

A book launch of *Mystical Vertigo* features readings by Glazer and performances by the band **Jaffa Road** and musicians **Aaron Bensoussan** and **Ernie Tollar**. A post-show reception features Passover-friendly sweets and drink specials. $10 at the door. The Rivoli, 334 Queen St. W. Thursday, March 28, 7:30 doors open for 8 p.m.

• • •

Names in the News: Heritage Toronto and the Toronto Legacy Project were to unveil a plaque March 11 in the University of Toronto Faculty of Music in honour of composer **John Weinzweig** on what would have been his 100th birthday.

• • •

Names in the News II: The band **Jaffa Road** was recently nominated for a Juno Award for its latest CD, *Where the Light Gets In*, in the category of world music. The band was previously nominated for a Juno in the same category in 2010. *Where the Lights Gets In* is available on iTunes and Bandcamp. The Juno Awards ceremony takes place April 21.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• **Adam Nayman** discusses "Crime and Punishment: *Fargo* and *The Big Lebowski*" in the next instalment of his ongoing series on the films of the **Coen brothers**. $12 drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Monday, March 18, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents **Osnat Lipa** discussing "Impressionist Art and Artists." $4. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, March 14, 1:30 p.m. Registration starts March 28 for "Influential Jewish Artists & Their Art," which unfolds April 16, 23 and 30.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *What? Where? When? Why? How?* is a show by Toronto artist **Bradley Hart** of works made of discarded materials from his studio and wasted paint from past series. Gallery nine5, 24 Spring St., New York City until March 29. Currently on view, the exhibition officially opens March 20, 6 to 9 p.m. www.gallerynine5.com

An unusual past has influenced Polish-born painter

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Peter Barelkowski's oil paintings, spare in style and bold in colour, convey melancholic themes such as sadness, isolation and alienation.

Peter Barelkowski

In short, as he said in an interview last week, they portray what he described as a "landscape of human suffering."

Barelkowski, whose works are exhibited at Gallery 133 (1260 Castlefield Ave.) and found in private collections around the world, seems to be inspired by the dark undercurrents of life.

Born in Poznan, Poland, and a jeweller by trade, he turned to painting in the early 1970s and opened his first studio in 1975.

He left Poland in 1981 and immigrated to Britain. In 1982, he and his wife settled in Canada, where he studied at the Ontario College of Art from 1985 to 1988.

Although he earned a living as a jeweller, he always painted, drawing on his own experiences.

Now 60, Barelkowski has a most unusual pedigree. Brought up as a Catholic by his highly assimilated Jewish parents, he did not learn he was Jewish until he was 18.

The news was broken to him by his maternal grandmother.

"It was a shock," he recalled as he sat amid his paintings. "I didn't even ask my mother about it. My past suddenly fell apart and disappeared."

He learned that his grandfather, a prosperous food wholesaler who owned numerous properties, had gravitated toward Christianity and that his parents had masqueraded as Christians during the Nazi occupation of Poland.

In postwar Poznan, Barelkowski's parents chose not to "advertise their Jewishness," he observed.

"We were trying to survive."

Nor did they talk to him about the war period, when Jews in Poland were murdered on an industrial scale.

Barelkowski's emotions were also roiled by painful personal circumstances.

His parents' divorce saddened and angered him. His relationship with his alcoholic father was strained and distant.

And Barelkowski had to cope with his own demons: depression and alcoholism (which he managed to kick seven years ago).

Although he does not say so in as many words, these jolts and convulsions affected him as a person and as an artist.

He emigrated because he felt no real connection to Poland. "I just didn't feel at home," said Barelkowski, a sombre and serious man.

In retrospect, he is glad to have discovered his Jewish identity.

"I feel Jewish. I always had a longing for the Jewish People. I never really clicked with anyone else. Something was missing."

For the past few years, his paintings have been exhibited in a succession of galleries and venues, mainly in Toronto but also in New York City.

"I want to continue to do what what I love," Barelkowski said, cracking a slight smile.

Play connects black and Jewish communities

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

The Whipping Man is a universal tale of loyalty, deception and deliverance, co-presented by Harold Green Jewish Theatre and Obsidian Theatre Company.

Philip Akin

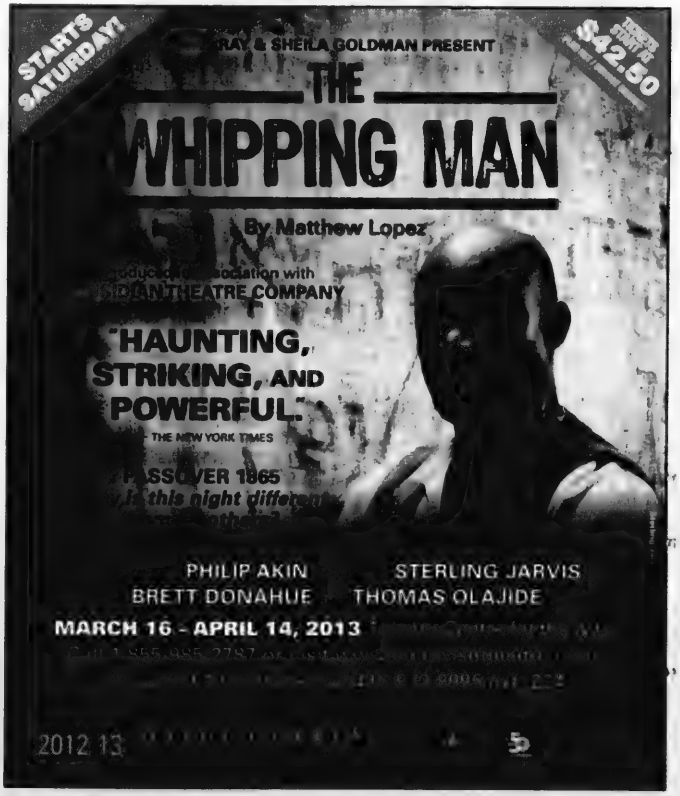
Directed by Obsidian's artistic director Philip Akin and starring Sterling Jarvis, Brett Donahue and Thomas Olajide, *The Whipping Man* opens at the Studio Theatre, Toronto Centre for the Arts, on March 16 and runs until April 14.

"It is a great team of actors," Akin says. "They are some of the hardest working and most open because I try to do some different things. The Studio is very intimate, and I think the play is going to be hugely powerful in that space. It will be fabulous."

The story takes place over Passover in 1865, just after America's Civil War. Jewish Confederate officer Caleb DeLeon comes home to Virginia only to find his house in ruins, his family missing and only two former slaves remain. The slaves, Simon and John, find themselves forced to take care of the badly wounded Caleb.

"It opens up this massive question about slavery and freedom," Akin says. He points out that at the time rabbis were divided over the slavery issue.

Continued on page 58



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Poet, 92, inspired by Mideast conflict

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

David Zaretsky wants the world to hear his poems.

"If I don't get publicity, the world is going to be the loser for it," says the 92-year-old Toronto native who written 3,680 poems in 15 books of poetry compiled in binders. He published one of the books in 1999.

"I'm 92 years old. I've been divorced for 30 years. I have to do everything at home myself. I have to make my food and clean my apartment. If it wasn't for poetry, I'd probably be dead," he says.

He began writing poems in the form of lyrics for local musicians, but at his daughter's suggestion, he made the switch to poetry.

His work covers a plethora of topics, but one of his major inspirations is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Although some of his opinions may be controversial, he's not afraid to share them with the world, performing this poetry at schools and other venues, such as Baycrest and the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living.

"[My poems] have to be evocative, metrical-versed, beautiful sounding, meaningful, controversial and very enjoyable to read, otherwise they don't go into my books," he says.

When he recites his work – which he's very keen to do – it sounds as if he's performing.

David Zaretsky

He says reciting his poetry is what helps him when he can't sleep at night, and it keeps him happy.

"I never get depressed," he says. "If I get depressed, I pick up a book and start reading any of my books and I get exhilarated."

Given that he spent only a year in high school and has never collaborated with anybody in his work, he says he's sure somebody "up there" is helping him.

"Nobody can recite like me, nobody can read like me and nobody can write like me," he says, "and I can prove it."

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Play a perfect fit for both companies

Continued from page 57

"In Leviticus, it says you can have bondsmen and bondsmaids. But the hook in this play is that these slaves were raised to be Jewish, and in my understanding, once you are a Jew, you are a Jew, no matter where you came from. And, if that's the case, how can you be a slave," he says. "So that's the main conundrum – the cost of freedom for both groups."

Akin believes that in any play the audience should be active participants and come away with questions. "The best thing about any play that I have ever directed is that people are discussing or disagreeing afterwards about it.

"It is not about that I want them to come away thinking thus or so, because everyone is going to bring who they are to the play, and who they are is going to resonate to the play in a particular way. And that's going to be what they take from this and I can't control that, and I don't want to control that."

Akin was born in Jamaica but is Canadian because his father and grandfather held Canadian citizenship. Akin says his family is one-third black, one-third Scottish and one-third Jewish on his mother's side.

"The motto of Jamaica is 'out of many, one people,' and that is true of me and that is true of most people in the islands. There is a huge blend of who we are. In my rougher moments I say, 'I'm black, I have a kilt and I've had a bris – what else do we need?'"

Akin is a founding member of Obsidian Theatre, Canada's leading black theatre company, and has served as its artistic director since 2006. He says teaming up with the Harold Green Jewish Theatre (HGJTC) involved a little serendipity when he happen to meet HGJTC board member Michael Rubinoff who told him about the play and mentioned he also told HGJTC about it. After reading the play, both companies saw it as a perfect fit.

Akin says all the productions of the play in America that he's aware of, have been co-productions between black and Jewish organizations. "I have always believed that when our two communities actually work together we achieved really great things and when we haven't there have been some issues," he says. "This is a wonderful play to build those connections back again."

Akin's other directing efforts include *Ruined, Toronto the Good, El Paso, Intimate Apparel, Black Medea, Born Ready* and *Pusha Man*. He's also acted in productions of *Othello* and *Of Mice and Men* at the Stratford Festival.

In 2011, Akin received the Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award; the Bra D'Or Award from the Playwright's Guild of Canada and was the *Toronto Sun's* Performance Artist of the Year. In 2010, he received the Silver Ticket Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Arts presented by the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts. In addition, he's the vice-president of the board for the Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre.

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Maccabi Canada to field cricket team at summer games

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There are some sports in the Maccabiah pantheon that Canadians excel at – think hockey, softball, baseball, even judo and tennis.

But what about cricket? The confusing, can't make heads-or-tails contest in which a "square cut" at an "overpitched googly" can get you "stumped," just before the batsman is "dismissed"?

Yes, that game.

Well, "bumper"!

It turns out Canada does indeed have plans to field a cricket team at this summer's Maccabiah Games in Israel. The team consists largely of immigrants from India, South Africa and other hot climate countries, who brought their cricket skills with them.

Emmanuel Joseph is coaching the team, which will join Great Britain, Israel, South Africa and Australia in vying for a medal. A native of Mumbai, India, Joseph played on the Indian team at the 1985 and 1989 Maccabiah Games. He wants the younger generation of local cricketers to experience what he did – participation in the "Jewish Olympics."

"The Maccabiah Games has always been my dream," he said. "I know what it is to be Jewish and [compete] at the Maccabiah Games. I know what it means, and it's the dream of the boys as well. It's been my dream since 1993."

That was the year Joseph immigrated to Canada. Moving to a country where cricket is pretty much an exotic foreign sport didn't mean he had to give it up. Soon after his arrival, he played at the Toronto Cricket Club, where he attempted to put together a Jewish team that he hoped would compete in the 1993 Games.

Though that effort didn't pan out, he took the long view and kept the idea in the back of his mind.

About 2-1/2 years ago, Joseph brought together some of the local Jewish players into a team called the Pioneer Cricket Club.

"The guys got together and said, 'We've got a lot of Jewish players here, why don't we put together a team,'" Joseph recounted.

The name was chosen because, "I felt we were pioneers to do something big, to represent Canada for the first time at the Maccabiah Games," he explained.

The town of Stouffville provided them a "home field" on Bethesda Road, and during the winter months, the team practises indoors

The 13 guys on the team play in the Markham League in mostly friendly matches and they work out regularly.

When he approached Maccabi Canada president Tom Bacher with the suggestion that the organization should sanction a cricket team to the 2013 Games, he was given a green light – with the proviso that the group raise the $8,300 a player needed to send them to Israel.

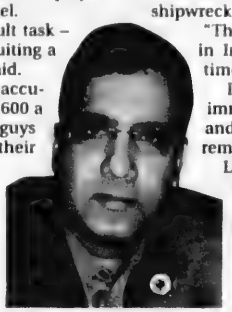
That has proven a difficult task – far more difficult than recruiting a competitive team, Joseph said.

Right now, the team has accumulated something like $3,600 a player, and that includes guys taking out loans and using their credit cards.

They've held a few fundraisers, but Joseph admits they're new to that endeavour and are learning about it on the fly.

"It's a concern right now, but the athletes are working hard right now," he said. "This is a dream come true for the athletes. This is going to be big for them personally, for Canada, and for the Bene Israel community."

The Bene Israel, or sons of Israel, is the name for the Jews of India. The people trace their origins to members of a tribe of Israel who washed up on the shore of the Kokan region in an ancient shipwreck.



Emmanuel Joseph

"The Bene Israel have been in India for a very, very long time," Joseph said.

In recent years, many have immigrated to North America and Israel, but 15,000 to 20,000 remain in India, he said.

Like others in the subcontinent, the Bene Israel took to cricket, and the local squad has plenty of skill to represent Canada ably, he said.

For more information, Joseph can be reached at Emmanuel.joseph@sympatico.ca.

Israeli windsurfer wins World Championship

JTA

NEW YORK — Israeli windsurfer Lee Korzits won the RS-X World Windsurfing Championships for the fourth time.

The gold medal last week in Buzios, Brazil, was the third consecutive world title for Korzits, who won her first gold medal in the 2003 World Mistral Championships.

Korzits failed to medal at last summer's London Olympics, finishing sixth after starting the final heat in second place.

In 2009, Korzits suffered a near-fatal surfing accident while working on the Professional Windsurfers Association's tour in Hawaii. Doctors told Korzits she would never surf again, but she rededicated herself to the sport.

Maccabi USA gets $1 million from former athlete

Gil Shefler
JTA

NEW YORK — Shoe designer Stuart Weitzman, a former member of the U.S. Maccabiah Games table tennis team, has donated $1 million to Maccabi USA.

The money will go to help fund the American team's participation in the Maccabiah Games in Israel in July as well as other commitments.

Weitzman, who founded Stuart Weitzman Shoes, a high-end footwear company, said his participation in the 2009 Games as a member of the U.S. team was "one of the greatest experiences" of his life.

"After experiencing the Games myself, I saw how Maccabi USA changes the lives of the athletes by enhancing their connection to their Jewish culture and heritage," Weitzman said in a statement.

The Maccabiah Games is an Olympics-style competition held every four years in Israel.

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The Canadian Jewish news

Temple Mount clashes

Israeli police entered Jerusalem's Temple Mount on March 8 to disperse hundreds of Palestinians throwing rocks and two Molotov cocktails at officers. Police spokesperson Mickey Rosenfeld said Palestinian worshippers rioted after Muslim prayers at the holy site in the Old City. Four people were arrested. Nine officers and 35 Palestinians were injured. Rosenfeld said police dispersed the crowd with stun grenades. In past weeks, tempers have been flaring throughout the West Bank, with many clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces and swirling talk of a "third intifadah." On March 6 police closed the Temple Mount Plaza after a group of Muslim women confronted Jewish women there. The Muslims blocked the Jews from visiting the site by surrounding them and shouting at them, according to reports. Police intervened and dispersed the women who returned a short time later with male Muslim worshippers who began to demonstrate against the police.

Plague of locusts

A swarm of one million locusts crossed into Israel from Egypt last week. The locusts remained concentrated in areas of southern Israel near the border, but sightings were reported throughout the country, including Tel Aviv and the Carmel region of northern Israel. Residents in the Negev area sealed their homes against the horde of invading pests. The Israeli Ministry of Agriculture sprayed the invaders with pesticides. The locust attack came three weeks before the start of Passover, which recalls a destructive plague of locusts that the Bible says was sent by God to free the Jewish slaves. Southerly winds last Friday, however blew a new swarm of locusts into Israel's Negev Desert, raising fresh concern of damage to crops over the weekend. A black cloud of more than 30 million locusts – some estimates ranged as high as 120 million – swarmed over parts of Egypt on March 2, causing millions of dollars worth of damage, according to Egyptian Agricultural Minister Salah Abad Almoman.

Peacekeepers flee to Israel

Eight Filipino United Nations observers abandoned their post on the Israel-Syria border March 8 and crossed into Israel to escape fighting between anti-regime rebels and the Syria army. The peacekeepers belonged to the same unit from which 21 troops were abducted by rebel forces two days earlier near the village of Jamla. The eight observers crossed the border near an Israeli army position and had first co-ordinated their arrival with the IDF. Israeli troops and UN personnel greeted them. The Filipino peacekeepers will be transferred to a UN base inside Israel. The Philippine government said March 8 that Syrian rebels had failed to release the 21 abducted peacekeepers. UN forces have patrolled a ceasefire line between Israel and Syria for nearly four decades.

Obama's visit not delayed

U.S. and Israeli officials said U.S. President Barack Obama would not delay his trip to Israel in the event that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is unable to form a government. A senior administration said the president hopes to address young Israelis on his upcoming visit to Israel. "The president's speech is an opportunity for him to speak directly with the Israeli people, in particular to young people, about the broad nature of the U.S.-Israeli relationship," the official told *JTA*. The official would not confirm reports in Israeli media that Obama's team had opted against a Knesset address and instead is seeking to organize an address to university students at Jerusalem's convention centre.

Files from JTA and The Times of Israel

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Train 'nut' builds life-sized VIA Rail coach

Jason Shron and his train (Cara Stern photos)

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Jason Shron's passion for trains is infectious. Sitting next to him on VIA Rail seats, listening to the recorded sounds of the train chugging along on the tracks, it's almost too easy to forget that the coach we've boarded isn't actually moving; it's in his basement.

After more than four years of work, the 38-year-old self-described train-obsessed nutcase has a slice of a train from around 1980 in his basement, built using parts he's acquired over the years from actual VIA Rail trains.

"If I'm obsessed with something, I want to surround myself with it," he said. Even that seems like an understatement coming from this father of three, who spends his days in his favourite seat – a second-row aisle seat – working as Canada's largest manufacturer of model trains.

Shron has been in love with trains his whole life – his earliest memory is being on board at two years old, which was his age when his family was moving to Toronto from Montreal. Throughout his life, he would take the train between the cities, visiting relatives. By the time he was four, he was irrevocably obsessed with trains.

He was just 12 when he became set on building the life-size installation in his home, and even wrote to VIA Rail to ask what it would take to acquire original seats (and VIA Rail responded apologizing that they could not sell any to him). He struck it lucky when, in 1998, he got his first seats from the junk pile at VIA's maintenance centre, and later he purchased more.

The hardest part was finding the pieces that aren't typically sold off, such as the garbage bin. In order to get these parts, Shron decided to buy an actual coach. Surprisingly, he said it didn't cost him very much. Once he removed the parts he didn't need, such as the tires, he made double what he paid for it. Apart from the actual coach, the whole project cost him around $10,000.

People who aren't train enthusiasts might wonder why he's so in love with trains that he's willing to devote his career and his basement to them.

"It's a snapshot of Canada," he said. "You take the train across Canada and sit on the coach, and people get on in the middle of nowhere and they have such different lives than a Thornhill Jew. You're sharing that life together for the few hours you're on the train."

But he didn't always know he'd spend his life designing model trains. He devoted years to studying art history, and was working toward a PhD in that subject in England when he decided he was unhappy with his career path.

"Because of the way academia works... if there's no money to expand the department, you have to wait for someone to retire," he said. "But I remember thinking, if I've got the ability to do something really well, I want to succeed or fail based on my ability or hard work."

He decided to take his chances forming his own business, and in this case, the gamble paid off, but it was due to a lot of hard work, he said. With a team, he designs the model trains, and then has two factories in China make the products.

It's not a cheap hobby – a train car would cost around $80, a locomotive would be around $350 and a complete train might be $1,500, he said, adding that those are retail prices, so as the manufacturer, he doesn't see all of that money.

However, sales passed the $1-million mark a few years ago, and although his American sales dropped during the recession, his Canadian sales remained steady.

Although his wife, published author Sidura Ludwig, is very supportive of his passion and appreciates that he loves trains, she isn't a train nut herself, which Shron said is a good thing.

"If she was obsessed with trains, we'd be off the rails," he joked. "She balances my absurdity and my nuttiness."

Now that he's conquered the train in his basement, he's continuing work on another lifelong dream – to recreate the journeys of youth. This huge project will feature a model of Toronto's Union Station with a route that goes as far as Brockville, Ont. That's as much of the route to Montreal that he can fit in what's left of his basement.

For the next 30 years, he'll be chugging away on that project. It's not moveable, so he intends to live in that Thornhill, Ont., house for the rest of his life.

"I'll move out of here when I'm drooling in a bib, and I won't care they're tearing apart my trains," he said.

For now, he'll sit in his favourite seat and ponder the stories these chairs hold about the people they carried throughout their 40-year history in service.

For more information, including a video tour of the train in the basement, visit kingstonsub.com.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

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4 cups of organic grape juice

Two of my daughters spent a year in Israel studying at Midreshet Habanot – Ein Hanetziv. Little did I know until recently that this kibbutz in the heart of Emek Beit She'an is a neighbour to another kibbutz that has a focus on organic food, Sde Eliyahu.

Sde Eliyahu is a religious kibbutz that is accepting of all people and is one of the few kibbutzim that have not been privatized. For those of us who have memories of working on a kibbutz when we were younger and the kibbutz movement in Israel was strong, it is heartening to know that there is a kibbutz where members still meet three times a day in the communal dining hall, serve themselves and take their used dishes and utensils back to the wash-up stand.

Sustainable Jew

Fred Winegust

Forty-five years ago, the first steps toward ecological and environmentally friendly living appeared on Sde Eliyahu. It began when kibbutz members agreed that the use of insecticides, pesticides and chemical fertilizers in the fields was damaging to the Earth, the environment, the kibbutz members and the food they were growing. The kibbutz began to grow organic grapes, pomegranates, dates and vegetables.

Sde Eliyahu proved that crops could be successfully and profitably grown without chemical fertilizers and pesticides, in perfect harmony with nature and the environment. Today, the kibbutz is surrounded by a 500-metre-wide belt of naturally grown product where no chemicals have been used for years. "We live and breathe here – why on earth would we use poisons in our own backyards?" said kibbutznik Mario Levy, the father of organic agriculture in Israel. "We want to produce the best for the markets and ourselves, so we do it right – organically."

One of the rabbinical comments on Cor.ca/ask.html highlights the fact that both "wine and grape juice have always been an extremely important part of Jewish ritual. For that reason, all wine and grape juice must be made by people of Jewish faith and carry reliable kosher supervision."

Rabbi Daniel Korobkin, of the Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto, said that pesticides or other chemical additives in wine and grape juice are not halachic issues that require rabbinic authority or knowledge, but rather a health issue. It is important that the grape juice and wine production is properly supervised, so that the end product is kosher for Passover, and therefore useable at the seder.

The production of Sde Eliyahu's kosher organic grape juice is supervised by Rabbi Achiya Amitai, the rabbi of the kibbutz, and carries a Badatz certification. All of the grapes used in the production are untouched by chemicals and are handpicked before they enter the grape-juice making phase.

"This grape-juice product is being imported to North America from Israel for the first time in three years," says Nachum Grafstein, owner of Grafstein Wines in Toronto. "I have customers who don't drink wine, but are still looking for a quality, healthy product over which they can make kiddush. This kosher organic grape juice from Sde Eliyahu can fit the bill, not only for Passover, but all year round."

Wishing all my readers a sustainable Chag Kasher v'Samayach.

Winegust@gmail.com

EGGPLANT & BEEF BULLUPS IN TOMATO SAUCE

2 lg tins chopped tomatoes
2 tbls olive oil
1 medium onion, minced
2 lg eggplants, peeled, sliced ¼" lengthwise
2 tsp salt
3 Tbls olive oil

4 lbs ground beef, 1 lg onion, minced and sautéed, if desired, 4 eggs, 1 tbl salt

In a large pot over medium high heat 2 tbls oil. Add onions; saute until softened. Add tomatoes; set aside. Place eggplant slices on parchment lined baking sheet. Brush with oil; season with salt. Bake in 400° oven 15 min., until soft. In large bowl combine remaining ingredients; mix well until combined. Place some meat filling onto a slice of eggplant; roll up. Place seam side down onto baking pan.Pour tomato sauce over rolled eggplant; bake covered in 350° oven 25 min. Uncover and bake additional 10 min.

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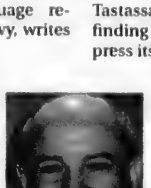
On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:



Comments made by and about Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez, who died of cancer on March 5, show that he was strongly anti-American and anti-Israel.

L'augmentation, a play by French author Georges Perec, which will be presented by Ariel Ifergan at the Segal Centre for Performing Arts.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says that antisemitism is finding increasingly ugly ways to express itself.

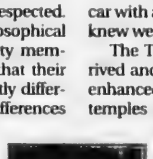
The president of Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science, Daniel Zajfman, left, lashed out at the international ranking of universities as "useless" and even "dangerous" during a recent visit to Montreal.

CEGEP students and other pre-university Quebec youth are being offered a specially designed "gap year" at Tel Aviv University (TAU). The Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University and BBYO Beyond helped create this new program for overseas students which begins in the fall.

A Commie at our Shabbat table

There was a time in the Toronto Jewish community, about half a century ago and before, when diversity of opinion was respected.

Journals from across the philosophical spectrum were read by community members who were OK with the idea that their neighbours' opinions were stridently different than their own. Ideological differences were debated over a schnapps and herring. Individuals with conservative views looked forward to joining a Commie friend at a Shabbat table, arguing the existence of God, the significance of a Jewish state, the civil rights movement and the interpretation of the biblical "Esau hates Jacob" story. We seemed to have been more at home with our communal and personal belief systems, so much so that we allowed others their points of view. Change was celebrated. Differences were cause for dancing.



Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

Then free love dried up. The generation that survived the war and antisemitism in downtown Toronto started making it. They sold their panelled wagons and trotted over to the Cadillac dealership to buy an elegant car with a front end so long that the "goyim" knew we were no longer working for them.

The Toronto Jewish community had arrived and those who could afford it built or enhanced their own shuls, synagogues and temples with theatre seats and reserved parking spots for the sexton. Religious and lay leaders who were once independent in their interpretation of Jewish laws and the community voice found themselves seatbelted into the plush passenger side of their *ba'alei batim's* Eldorados, beholden to the families who built the edifices in which they operated.

The free flow of ideas began disappearing, and our bold leaders, universal in their thinking, moved south or to Israel. Denominational and ideological fiefdoms sprang up, and the push and pull of religious and institutional variety became a thing of the past.

The Jewish federation, a most essential central organization, followed suit, and while its message was one of unity through diversity, fundraising became its central motif, and it ultimately became what seemed like a new denomination within our community structure. Soon enough, Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), an organizational role model in its advocacy and practice, was disbanded. The CJC was replaced by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, an entity more reflective of the old days when our community had no choice but to be insular with one voice.

For the past few years, we've operated as if our membership was one-dimensional in nature. Everyone took their corners, and we shut out much of the world, once again.

More recently, however, cracks began to show, and like a lyric in a Leonard Cohen song, the light shone through them. Jewish groups unaffiliated with the very safe organizations we have grown to question are cropping up and challenging the status quo. Advocacy groups within and outside shuls are fighting on behalf of the Roma community, and others are challenging the government while still supporting the State of Israel. Some rabbis are once again debating in public.

One such example was a recent intellectual battle, in this newspaper, over aspects of Torah between *CJN* columnist Rabbi Martin Lockshin and Rabbi Daniel Korobkin of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto ("A book for the thoughtful, 'skeptical' Orthodox," Jan. 10; "When Orthodox scholarship is neither," Jan. 31, and on cjnews.com). How refreshing.

While the cracks may be small, it's just a question of time before the Toronto Jewish community morphs back, and moves forward, to a place with more eclectic leadership and a membership that embraces diversity of thought about our peoplehood, Israel, Torah and our place in the world.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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Israel has a new government

Last Saturday night, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, informed President Shimon Peres that he had succeeded in forming a coalition. The new government, comprising 68 of the 120 members of Knesset, was sworn in Monday. *Please see related story on page 35.*
(Israel Sun photo)

Pope Francis has Jewish connections

JTA

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the Argentine cardinal who was elected pope and took the name Francis, is said to have a good relationship with Argentine Jews.

Pope Francis, 76, a Jesuit, was the choice of the College of Cardinals on March 13 following two days of voting in Vatican City. He is the first pope to come from outside Europe in more than a millennium. Reflecting the changing demographics of Catholics, he comes from Latin America.

As archbishop of Buenos Aires, Pope Francis attended Rosh Hashanah services at the Benei Tikva Slijot synagogue in September 2007.

Canadian Jewish organizations were quick to congratulate the new Pope last week. In a statement, David Koschitzky, chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said he hoped Pope Francis would "continue the work of his predecessors and in so doing... break new ground in bringing together all of those who are made in the image of the Creator.

"We note the close relationship that His Holiness has had with the Jewish community of Argentina, and his many visits to synagogues where, in one moment, he said he came 'like a pilgrim, together with you, my elder brothers.'"

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, congratulated the Pope and noted his friendship with Argentine Jews.

"It is our understanding that Cardinal Bergoglio was a true friend to the Jewish community of Argentina in the aftermath of the horrific terrorist bombing by Iranian proxies in 1994," Benlolo said in a statement.

Continued on page 36

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio in 2008

Tzav
Candlelighting: 7:14
Havdalah: 8:18
Greater Toronto Area

For coverage of U.S. President Barack Obama's Israel visit, go to cjnews.com

CANADA

Zundel Lawyer Dies

VICTORIA — Doug Christie, the lawyer who defended every major Holocaust denier, neo-Nazi and accused war criminal in Canada over the past 30 years died March 11 of liver cancer at age 66. Among his clients were ex-teachers Jim Keegstra and Malcolm Ross, Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel, white supremacists John Ross Taylor and Wolfgang Droege, disgraced native leader David Ahenakew, and accused war criminals Imre Finta and Michael Seifert. Christie was first diagnosed in 2011 with prostate cancer.

WORLD

Jews Remembered

ATHENS — The Jewish community of Thessaloniki in northern Greece held a series of events March 16 and 17 to mark the 70th anniversary of the first deportations of the city's Jews to Auschwitz. On March 15, 1943, the Nazis sent the first convoy of 4,000 Jews to the death camp. By August, 49,000 out of a prewar population of 55,000 Jews had been deported. Fewer than 2,000 survived. Last week's events included a march from the city's Liberty Square to the Old Railway Station for a memorial and a ceremony March 17 at the city's Monastiriotes Synagogue, where Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras was expected to speak. Thessaloniki was a key centre of Sephardi Jewry for 450 years after the expulsion from Spain. Today, about 1,000 Jews live there.

Thugs Threaten Teen

PARIS — Three men who accosted a French Jewish teenager in a suburban Paris subway said they would do to him "what Mohammed Merah did." According to a report on the incident by the National Bureau of Vigilance against Anti-Semitism, an advocacy organization known by the French acronym BNVCA, the 17-year-old kippah-clad male was threatened in the southern Paris suburb of Vitry-Sur-Seine on March 3 by three black men who asked him "why Israel was doing this to the Palestinians." The report said the men also told the teen, that Merah, the 23-year-old Islamist who last year killed four Jews at a school in Toulouse, "was right to do what he did." They added, "Now we're going to do what Merah did. We will kill all of you Jews, one day we will kill a Jew." A witness corroborated the exchange, the watchdog group said. The presence of the witness may have prevented a physical attack on the teen, the organization added in its report on the incident.

Cdns. Fourth At Israeli Physics Meet

TEL AVIV — A team from Montreal's Hebrew Academy finished fourth in an international physics competition in Israel, the highest placing of any non-Israeli school.

The five-boy team was among 40 senior high school teams took part in the 18th annual Shalheveth Freier Physics Tournament at Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science, held March 12-13.

All but one of the other top 10 teams were from Israeli schools. A team from Slovenia finished sixth.

The teams must design and build a safe from a simple box based on physics principles, with a locking mechanism that opponents can't crack. They must also devise a physics riddle to further confound their peers.

Hebrew Academy's entry proved to be only one of four safes that were impenetrable. Moreover, Hebrew Academy's "The Walking Dead"-themed safe was also voted the favourite safe by the other students. The judges, Weizmann scientists, also took into account the teams' ingenuity and originality.

The Hebrew Academy boys' team beat Bialik High School, St. George's High School, The Study and a Hebrew Academy girls' team to win the eastern Canadian finals held in Montreal in February.

There was one other Canadian team at the competition, from the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Vaughan campus, which finished outside the top 10. Globally, 120 teams vied for a spot at the final in Israel, and only seven made it.

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Parties quiet on change in Sobeys hechsher

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Amid reports the Montreal Vaad Ha'ir has been in talks to put its MK hechsher on the kosher bakery, meat and deli sections of Sobeys' store in Thornhill, Ont., none of the parties said to be involved would comment on the possibility of the MK expanding its presence in the Toronto area.

At a Feb. 20 press briefing in Montreal, the Vaad Ha'ir's executive director, Rabbi Saul Emanuel, spoke about the MK's proprietary kosher database and said his agency has been approached by companies across the country to supervise their products. Rabbi Emanuel would not confirm for *The CJN* whether Sobeys in Thornhill is one of these companies

A national spokesperson for Sobeys told *The CJN* that "Sobeys does not release or provide comment on any information regarding its current or pending business partnerships."

The Kashruth Council of Canada, which currently supervises Sobeys' Thornhill kosher flagship store under its COR hechsher, also had no comment on the possible incursion.

If the Montreal agency were to win the contract, Sobeys would be the first store or restaurant in the Toronto area to be supervised under the MK.

The MK hechsher already has a beachhead in the GTA. Since 2009, the MK has been found on airline meals originating from a kosher kitchen at Pearson International Airport. The facility was originally owned by Cara Operations Ltd., which sold its airline catering division's Canadian operations to Gate Gourmet in 2010.

Rabbi Avrom Pollak

The Kashruth Council also has a local competitor in Badatz Toronto, which supervises a number of food manufacturers and one synagogue caterer.

Montreal's Vaad Ha'ir is, apparently, not alone in its goal of expansion, as kashrut organizations race to gain worldwide market share among industrial food manufacturers. But when it comes to local caterers, restaurants and individual supermarkets, most consider them off-limits to outside agencies.

"We feel very strongly that that's best served by local [kashrut] organizations," said Rabbi Avrom Pollak, president of Baltimore-based Star-K Kosher Certification. "They are much more attuned to what is going on... than somebody trying to do it from a distance."

Kashruth Council spokesperson Richard Rabkin agreed.

"A community is best served by its local kosher certifier," he said, adding that his agency has been approached by retail establishments in other communities, but has thus far declined.

Competing standards would lead establishments to pick and choose "which rules suit them the best," Rabbi Pollak said, thereby confusing consumers: "Can I eat there? Can't I eat there?"

Continued on page 14

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A fastidious chronicle

From the editor's desk...

Last month, in Jerusalem, the Israel Museum opened a new exhibit of wide panoramic proportions called *Herod the Great: The King's Final Journey*. The exhibition has sparked a great deal of excitement and is attracting large numbers of visitors. (Please go to cjnews.com for a story about the exhibit.)

Herod strides imperiously and brutishly through the cities and villages of Judea and, of course, in Jerusalem in the last century BCE. Historians have tried to imagine precisely who he was ever since time, wind and nature's eternal elements buried the broken columns of his spectacular archeological masterpieces in the sand and earthy clumps of the ancient land.

And now, a new book, brings Herod to life once again, enabling us to imagine him afresh, if not actually anew.

Written by Yehuda Shulewitz, *Herod: The Man Who Had to be King* (Penina Press, 2012) is an ambitious work that sweeps character, drama, intrigue, history, classics and theology into one epic novel.

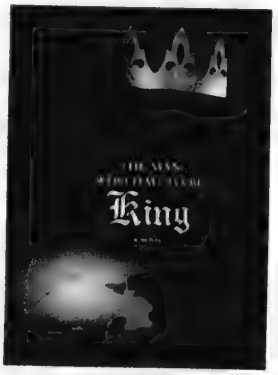
The novel, however, was not completed by Shulewitz. Alas, he died around this time six years ago, during Passover 2007. His wife, Malka Hillel-Shulewitz, a renowned scholar of Jewish history in her own right, completed the work that was ultimately published some five years after the author's death.

Yehuda Shulewitz was a rare multi-disciplined scholar: economist, historian of the Roman classical age and student of archeology. His prodigious research skills are clearly evident in the book. Shulewitz was carefully meticulous about writing into the book the actual details of Roman-Jewish history of Herod's time.

The literary-historical focus of the book, of course, is Herod and his obsessively cruel quest to become the ruler of Judea. But Shulewitz depicts that focus with a very wide lens. He brings us the key figures of Judea, Rome, Parthia, Babylon and Egypt.

Much of western civilization owes its evolution to the seminal events of Judea during Herod's time. Shulewitz helps us to "see" how those events might have unfolded.

Herod plots against the Hasmonean rulers in Jerusalem even as the extended Hasmonean family members plot and intrigue against each other. Rome intervenes. Parthia intervenes. Egypt hovers. Blood flows frequently. Betrayal, treachery, deception, exploitation and cruelty are the political instruments of choice.



Shulewitz was not a literary stylist. His language and idiom are occasionally too modern for the plot he weaves. But nor was it his intention to write literature. Rather, he is a fastidious chronicler of historic detail, a spellbinding storyteller and a master imaginer of dialogue and homily.

Typical of Shulewitz' imagination and erudition is the following instruction by the sage Shemaiah to a group of Shabbat worshippers in the town of Emmaus who seek his guidance regarding the brutal Romans.

"If we could maintain our sovereign independence, this was undoubtedly to be preferred," he declared in a firm voice. "Our unique way of life has not evolved on an abstract, ethereal plane divorced from the realities of life. The Torah deals with and governs every aspect of life, with relations not only between man and his Maker, but also between man and man. The Lord has sanctified us with His commandments, and in a similar vein, the Prophet Isaiah proclaimed that the Holy God is sanctified by justice. The pursuit of justice in its every aspect, enshrining the principle that man is created in the divine image, the hallowing of life – this is the quintessence of our way of life."

Shulewitz has left us a story that far surpasses the "mere" account of Herod's career and his rise over the horrible heap of human ruins that his ambition wrought. He tells us who the Hasmoneans were and he tells us how the Jews lived.

More importantly, he tells us how they survived. It is thus a story of love and reverence of a learned man for his people. As Shulewitz' wife writes in the afterword, "In the ancient world, when a people were conquered it usually accepted the small gods and ways of the conquerors. Not so the Jews for whom Faith, Freedom and Justice were among the signposts that guided them along their way to accomplishing what they believed was their God-given mission – to make the world a better place for all mankind."

Herod: The Man Who Had to be King is a highly entertaining, informative and, very often, inspiring book. **–MBD**

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BUILDING HOPE

Israeli youths visiting Toronto volunteered with Habitat for Humanity Toronto in Brampton over the weekend. The group is part of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Diller Teen Fellows Program, which aims to unite Jewish young people from North America and Israel in the name of tikkun olam. For the full story, go to cjnews.com.

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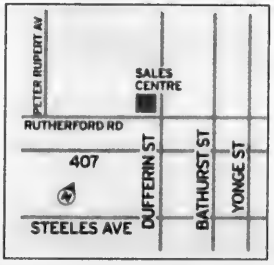

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Rebbetzin brings dual message to Toronto

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis laments modern-day plagues ranging from cellphones to Europe being "taken over by the Muslim world," but the petite, soft-voiced, charismatic author and advice columnist insists she is an optimist.

In a post-lecture interview at Thornhill's Chabad Flamingo March 10, the rebbetzin said that while she is "a realist," she wouldn't do what she does if she weren't an optimist, too.

Jungreis, who has lectured everywhere from Europe to Russia and South Africa to the Philippines, told *The CJN*, "I do believe that people can be reached."

A child survivor of the Holocaust, Jungreis moved to New York with her family at age 12. Her father was the scion of a Hungarian rabbinic dynasty that was decimated during the war. She likens today's situation to prewar Germany and sees her role as that of an alarm clock, telling people to "wake up."

Her lecture at Chabad was titled "Life is a Test," the same title as her 2006 book. She has written five books in total, and is working on a sixth. A longtime columnist for the *Jewish Press*, an Orthodox weekly, Jungreis is also the founder of Hineni, a New York-based outreach organization.

Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis talks to an audience member after her lecture at Chabad Flamingo. ***(Frances Kraft photo)***

The rebbetzin is still dealing with the after-effects of her own personal test – a fall last Pesach in San Diego that resulted in four fractures, major surgery and subsequent rehab.

She has resumed her work, and now walks with a cane, which she used to effect at the beginning of her hour-long talk, raising it in the air to bless the audience with health and "*Yiddishe naches.*"

The rebbetzin told the crowd of the "message from HaShem" that she inferred from non-Jewish hospital staff in San Diego, who encouraged her to "take one more step," and called her a "ballerina."

Jungreis looked for meaning in the word, remembering that ballerinas "spin, and fall down, but they stand up, and they go on tippy toes."

As well, she thought of the Hebrew sound-alike *ba'al rina*, meaning "master of joy. "You have to be joyous. God is giving you another day."

Coy about her age, admitting only to being "not 40 years old any more," Jungreis briefly raised the question of retirement, vowing "Never, children.

"Why do I go? Because I love my people," she said. As well, the generation of Holocaust survivors is "quickly disappearing, and those who are here are mostly ill or infirm."

Jungreis has a dual message – her wake-up call about the threat to Israel, and her exhortation to "be a Jew."

"As much as we were sleeping [in prewar Europe], we are sleeping now," she said. "Do you know of any nation that will come to the defence of Israel? Will any nation go to war on behalf of Israel?... Don't kid yourself. Don't be sleeping."

"We are so busy with our iPhones and our iPods, we don't have time, we don't know how to listen."

As well, she noted, the average Jew never prays. "Officially, we pray three times a day, but religious Jews are a small minority... If you pray, God will listen," she said.

Jews have forgotten their heritage, she said. As well, she added, "We have become mean and selfish."

Her father taught her as a child that, "If you learn to smile when you have pain in your heart, you will give strength to others." In turn, the smile will be returned and enter your heart, she said.

"I know that God will not abandon me," she told *The CJN*. "I remember there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and I remember that in the desert there is always sunshine. But for growth, you need rain and thunderstorms... Life is a journey, and a journey is not always simple."

As well, she urged her audience to keep Shabbat, if not completely, then in part. She likened the weekly Sabbath to "a piece of gold."

Individual efforts matter, and every day counts, she said.

In addition to her appearance at Chabad Flamingo, Rebbetzin Jungreis spoke at Associated Hebrew Schools and returned to the shul the next day to talk to a group of bat mitzvah girls. She will be back in Toronto in the spring to speak at JUMP (Jewish Urban Meeting Place).

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Israeli-Palestinian deal won't solve all woes

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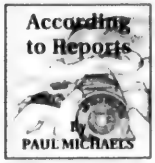

BY PAUL MICHAELS

Last week, while Israel was in the process of forming a new government and the Vatican was deliberating over the choice of a new pope, some media attention turned to U.S. President Barack Obama's trip to Israel, which was scheduled to begin March 20.

Journalists reported about the low level of expectation that the U.S. administration was signalling for Obama's first visit as president. Obama would not introduce a new peace plan for Israelis and Palestinians, but rather would be coming to listen to both sides and also to discuss urgent issues such as how to deal with Iran's drive for nuclear weapons. He might even leave Israel early, some speculated, to attend the investiture for the new Pope.

In a March 13 *New York Times* column, "Mr. Obama goes to Israel," Thomas Friedman put Obama's visit in perspective. "The most destabilizing conflict in the region is the civil war between Shiites and Sunnis that is rocking Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain and Yemen. While it would be a good thing to erect a Palestinian state at peace with Israel, the issue today is will there be anymore a Syrian state, a Libyan state and an Egyptian state," he wrote.

Barack Obama at the Western Wall in 2008 *(RNS file photo)*

Still, the familiar refrain about linkage involving Israel and the wider region figured in Friedman's analysis: "[T]he unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict emotionally resonates across the Arab-Muslim world," although solving it is necessary, but not sufficient "for regional stability," he said. Too many pundits have claimed, almost as a matter of course, without any evidence at all, that resolving this conflict is both necessary *and* sufficient. At least Friedman introduces a bit more realism into the picture in light of regional developments that have nothing to do with Israel and the Palestinians.

However, it might also be argued that the emotionalism Friedman refers to would not be dissipated by a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, because the parties feeding most off anti-Israel passions don't want to see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict solved, they want to see Israel disappear. This of course means that a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would not even be a necessary condition for "regional stability" since Israel, within any boundaries as the Jewish State, would remain an unacceptable provocation. That's the view of Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, etc. – that is, in general, of both Shia and Sunni Islamists. In the meantime, Israel remains a useful cause for recruiting terrorists.

Other parties, mainly Arab secular autocrats, have been quite content for decades to see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continue, as it conveniently serves to distract attention from their own domestic failures.

This is not to say that an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians is not vital. It is, but it's for the benefit of both Israelis and Palestinians themselves.

• • •

When asked by Patrick Martin of the *Globe and Mail* (March 11) whether he thought it important for Hamas to accept Israel as a Jewish state (the same could have been asked of Fatah), former Shin Bet head Ami Ayalon replied: "No. It is for me to decide on the identity of my state. I'm not going to demand that their future state of Palestine be a democracy."

Ayalon drew the wrong analogy. The issue of identity here concerns peoplehood, not the form of government. The vast majority of Israelis have for many years acknowledged the right of the Palestinian people to statehood, whereas the Palestinians still refuse to acknowledge the same for the Jewish People. This constitutes the wide "peace gap" between the sides. To close the gap recent Israeli governments have emphasized the need to recognize "two states for two *peoples*," as the United Nations itself envisioned in 1947. It's not sufficient for some Palestinians to say they recognize "Israel" but to then insist on the "return" of potentially millions of Palestinian "refugees" to that state, thereby creating another Arab-majority country.

If there's linkage that really matters, it's to be found in genuine mutual recognition.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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For the good of Israel

It took Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu all but one of the 42 days that the law allowed him to form a coalition. But he was finally able to present the news of a new government to President Shimon Peres last Saturday night.

The new, 33rd government of the State of Israel will comprise 68 members of the Knesset from four parties: Likud-Beitenu (31 seats), Yesh Atid (19), Habayit Hayehudi (12) and Hatnua (6). The new Netanyahu government, therefore, will have a seven-seat cushion in the 120-seat Knesset.

Prior to his meeting with President Peres, Netanyhu said "The new government will work together in full cooperation for the benefit of the entire Israeli public. We will act to strengthen the state of Israel's security and to improve the quality of life of its citizens."

These words by Netanyahu were probably spoken, in one way or another, by every incoming Israeli prime minister since the first days of the state in 1948. But this time, the expectations upon the prime minister will be significantly different because the nature of the new coalition is significantly different than past governments.

The coalition is essentially centrist, without the participation of extremist parties of the left or the right and without the participation of the haredi parties, Shas and United Torah Judaism, who will now sit in a 52-strong Knesset opposition led by the Labor party.

Security issues have always dominated the national discussion in Israel. They still do. But there is no disputing that domestic, economic, social and electoral change hovers in the air in Israel. The challenge for the new government will be to steward the country through this change with as little upheaval as possible.

We wish them wisdom, strength, courage and an abiding concern for the others' dignity in leading this stewardship for the good of all Israel.

Their work has already begun. And, as we know, like all service for the public good, it is never-ending.

For the good of the world

We also extend our hopes and wishes to Pope Francis in his newly appointed role as steward of the Catholic Church. The world needs men and women of God who are of overt moral strength and goodness, who celebrate, not fear, difference and diversity in mankind. Men and women of God care for God's creations and care to make the world we inhabit the very best He had in mind for it. If Pope Francis reaches for this wide embrace of all humanity, his ministry will truly be a blessing for the entire world.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) asked external affairs minister Joe Clark for a clarification of government policy after he told the annual CIC conference in Ottawa that Israel's handling of unrest in the West Bank and Gaza was "unacceptable," "shocking" and "illegal."

Dry Bones SAYING IT.

ISRAEL HAS A NEW GOVERNMENT BECAUSE ISRAELIS DEMANDED A WIDENING OF THE MILITARY DRAFT.
BUT NOBODY IS SAYING THAT!
YOU'RE SAYING IT!
YES
BUT I'M NOT SOMEBODY!
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Cost of Jewish education

The issue of affordability of day-school education remains the elephant in the room in terms of Jewish communal priorities in Ontario. Everyone knows that the problem exists, yet after the debacles of the past few elections, the issue appears dormant on the communal agenda. Whether the issue is politically dead in Ontario is debatable. Both the former and current leader of the Liberal party bear the primary responsibility for cynically twisting and turning the issue in such a way to render it unpalatable to the vast majority of the Ontario public.

Leo Baeck Day School's tuition subsidy initiative, of up to $5,000 per student for eligible families, is to be lauded as a step in the right direction. The fact that the upper eligibility range of that new initiative reaches salaries of $350,000 should serve as a wake-up call to the entire community as to the true severity of the education-funding problem in Ontario.

Parents in Montreal are finding the fees of $7,000 to $8,000 per year difficult. Those of us in Ontario, where elementary school fees are double that figure, can only say "halevay – would that were the case here!" In the meantime, the problem continues to worsen, slowly rendering Ontario a less-than-desirable place for the younger generation to establish their own Jewish households in the future.

Jerrold Landau
Toronto

• • •

Help Andrew

In connection with the article "TumourCraft technology helps oncologists treat cancer," (March 7), which discusses Andrew Avetikov, who is suffering from a particularly aggressive cancer and needs financial assistance in his dire situation, the Jewish Russian Community Centre has established the JRCC Help Andrew Fund. Members of the community are asked for their support. Donations can be made online at www.jrcc.org/helpandrew, on the phone or by mailing cheques to our offices. One hundred per cent of all donations will be directed toward medical expenses related to Andrew's condition.

Rabbi Yoseph Y. Zaltzman
Jewish Russian Community Centre of Ontario
5987 Bathurst St., Unit 3
Toronto, Ont. M2R 1Z3
416-222-7105

• • •

Treat all with equal respect at Wall

I cannot understand why anyone would be arrested for praying at the Western Wall ("10 women arrested at Western Wall," Feb. 14). A group of women have gathered at the back of the women's section at the Western Wall for their monthly prayers since 1988. A ban in effect in Israel states that women are not allowed to wear tfillin while praying at the Western Wall. They were arrested for breaking the ban, but they were later released without charge.

I am a 15-year-old Jewish girl and I believe that just because these women chose to display their religion differently than the acccepted Orthodox norm for women praying at the Western Wall does not mean they were wrong. They were standing at the back of the women's section, where they would not have disturbed others. I believe that the Western Wall should be a place where all Jews can pray regardless of their traditions or practice. It is not a private synagogue. It should be open to all forms of Judaism. Everyone must be treated with equal respect.

Maya Borden
Toronto

• • •

StandWithUs arranged events for Israelis

The article "Israeli students aim to dispel myths about home" (March 7) failed to acknowledge the significant role played by StandWithUs (SWU) Canada during the visit to Canada of the Israeli student group WordSwap. As a member of SWU Canada's board, I had the wonderful opportunity to share a memorable dinner and conversation with eight of the WordSwap members at interfaith advocate Raheel Raza's home, arranged by Meryle Kates, executive director of SWU Canada.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

StandWithUs (standwithus.com) arranged many community events for WordSwap's participation. These included a reception at the home of the Canadian director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, Donna Holbrook; participation in the Ignite Christian Conference; presentation of a Purim play and workshop at Catch the Fire Church, and visits to Congregation Darchei Noam and Beth Sholom Synagogue. Together with Hillel, we assisted WordSwap by setting up tables on campus and providing well-received StandWithUs materials. We also helped Hillel co-ordinate Innovation Israel during their visit.

Susan Kendal
Thornhill, Ont.

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Passover: a fine-tuning of the human soul

Rabbi David Hartman, the founder of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, passed away last month. This is an abridged version of an essay he wrote in 2010.

Rabbi David Hartman

As the festival of Passover draws nearer, the streets of Jerusalem are filled with signs of joyful aspirations and preparation for a major spiritual event in the lives of the Jewish people.

Supermarket shelves are lined with ever-increasing varieties of matzah, families spend the weeks leading up to Passover washing the drapes, the linens, the floors, even rewashing loads of laundry. Everyone talks about cleaning, recipes and kashrut: do you follow the Ashkenazi custom of not eating kitniyot, or do you follow the Sephardi custom? Must you eat shmurah matzah to fulfil the mitzvah on seder night? And exactly how much matzah must you eat to fulfil the mitzvah?

As much as I am happy to be part of the Jewish People preparing for the holiday of Passover, I confess that I am bored by the kinds of conversations I hear around me, by a level of discourse that doesn't seem to get beyond an excessive concern with the minutiae of halachic ritual.

Coupled with the concerns about food, Passover suggests a supernatural model of redemption, which posits that God will break into history and save us just as He did during the Exodus from Egypt. Rather than give weight to our own personal will, responsibility and moral agency, this theological worldview says that the best we can hope for is that God will look down and have mercy on us. It is a way of understanding the holiday that positions us as passive and patient, waiting for an interventionist God to rescue us from our Galut realities.

Does this truly reflect what Passover is about? A memory of miracles? An obsession with rituals? Whatever happened to the dramatic, overarching themes of freedom from oppression, self-governance and spiritual rebirth?

In search of a little religious sobriety, I recently began revisiting the work of Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan, the great 20th-century Jewish thinker and founder of the Reconstructionist movement. The crucial question for Rabbi Kaplan is how do the commandments percolate into the life stream of the Jewish People? How do the rituals shape us ethically? How do the mitzvot propel us to become full human beings and reach our powers of ethical personality? In other words, how does Judaism impact us in the quest for human self-realization? Rabbi Kaplan's philosophy grew out of his quest to understand how the Jewish People created patterns of living with the potential to redeem us from selfishness, narcissism and cruelty, and open us to a world of holiness.

I am very moved by Rabbi Kaplan's thought. He constantly tried to find underlying spiritual and ethical meanings beneath the surface of Passover. He sought to crack open halachic formalism and reveal a deep teleology of spiritual aspiration.

What is the holiday of Passover about? What do we make of our inherited narrative that we recount every year around the seder table? How do we understand its theological implications? What kind of God is the God of Passover? And what are we talking about when we talk about freedom?

For the Jewish medieval philosopher Yehuda Halevi, the Exodus story is the central prism through which to understand the Jewish God, as it illustrates the most fundamental principle of Judaism: God's absolute will and sovereignty over history. For Halevi, it is the miracle of the Exodus that mediates the reality of God. It is this view that Rabbi Kaplan rejects unequivocally. The notion of Judaism as supernaturalism – the idea of a God who is above nature, yet whose interference nature must obey – is anathema to Rabbi Kaplan's thought. Rabbi Kaplan, and his philosophical antecedents, such as Maimonides and Spinoza, did not see nature in opposition to God's will. On the contrary, it was in the very processes of nature that they saw the divine. For Maimonides, God is revealed within the normal patterns of the world, within the natural order of the universe. According to this school of thought, we need not see God as supernatural in order to feel that God is present.

The leader of the seder uncovers the matzah for the benefit of everyone seated around the table at the start of the evening ritual. Rabbi David Hartman urges us to "try to keep alive the ethical implications of the Haggadah." ***[Flash90 photo]***

But a God revealed exclusively in nature is a difficult experience for Jews. I remember after the Six Day War visiting Heichal Shlomo, where people sat for hours recounting miraculous interventions during the war: the bomb that fell into the ark containing Torah scrolls but didn't go off, the Egyptian troops who were about to attack but then suddenly turned away, the sighting of Elijah the prophet. Jews love miracles. Why? Because they can't stand order.

One of the most evocative and psychologically complex parts of the Passover narrative is the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. Maimonides is particularly concerned with the biblical passage that describes the hardening of Pharaoh's heart as an explicit act of God. This is a critical passage for Maimonides, whose entire conception of Judaism is based on the notion of human freedom. How do we explain the hardening of Pharoah's heart? Did God suddenly turn Pharoah into a puppet? Did he take away his human will?

Maimonides provides an answer. He says that none of the biblical instances of God taking away a person's freedom should be read literally. Rather, they should be understood as instances in which an individual brought about a curtailing of freedom as a result of his own actions. It is Maimonides's understanding that human beings can create a habitual form of behaviour that, practised enough over a long enough period of time, obliterates the possibility for change.

Maimonides maintains that it is precisely because God created human beings with rationality that once we begin to seek righteousness and perform good deeds, we have a natural hunger to continue. Those who, of their own initiative, "come to purify themselves," are aided by God. God's "aid," in this sense, is built into the laws of nature – in this case, into the very essence of human nature. God has structured a universe in which human beings are driven by an innate capacity to act righteously. That is the meaning of divine grace. God is not seen in miraculous breakthroughs, but in the very structure of human reason and human nature.

Thus, according to Maimonides, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is distinctly not an example of God intervening in nature or compromising human will. God created humans in such a way that once we set out on a course in life – noble or nefarious - we become "wired," in a sense, to continue on that path. Based on this reading, God did not harden Pharaoh's heart so much as he created a world in which Pharaoh's ongoing refusal to free the Hebrew slaves gave birth to a self-perpetuating reality. For this reason, Pharaoh represents the antithesis of freedom. He is the embodiment of enslavement, of both the self and the other.

Passover is meant to celebrate and sustain our deep yearning for freedom, not necessarily to show that God can change the order of the universe. Passover is a holiday that inculcates the belief that man will overcome oppression, that freedom will reign throughout the world. The faith that tyranny will ultimately be vanquished is deeply embedded in the significance of Passover.

Yet we must not allow that faith to obscure the need to address the various expressions of modern-day slavery. How do we treat foreigners and immigrants in our society? Do we take seriously the precept not to oppress the stranger because we were strangers in Egypt? The Haggadah calls for nothing less than a seminar on freedom, slavery and oppression. And we should leave the seder table with a new consciousness of what freedom is and what it means to yearn for it.

Redemption is not otherworldly salvation at the end of time. It's not the World to Come or Resurrection of the Dead. For Rabbi Kaplan, redemption is not something that's going to happen at the end of days when we'll all be instructed to pack our bags and welcome the messiah. Redemption is an individual's growth into a complete human being, a person who fulfils all of his or her aptitudes. Redemption is not an abstract philosophical or theological construct, but a fine-tuning of the human soul that helps us to love more and to be more sensitive. It creates a meaningful pattern of self-fulfilment.

Messianic aspiration and hope should act as a normative critique of the status quo in history. Messianism takes us beyond the given and creates hope for new human potential in history. It is not a predictive moment in history but a religious aspiration to redo history in the image of peace and love. It is the mission of these holy days to create conditions within human beings for their personal fulfilment. It is the purpose of the holidays to wake us up to our true capacities, to release the deeper ethical components of what it means to be a human being.

That is the reason it's incumbent upon us to try to keep alive the ethical implications of the Haggadah. If we understand and internalize the true message of Passover, we can develop a whole new response to those without power, and take seriously the opportunity to love the stranger as yourself.

What the PQ's Bill 14 teaches us about Israel

In an interesting overlap, in mid-March, the PQ's restrictive language law, Bill 14, ended up being considered in the Quebec National Assembly just as a dustup began over a *New York Times* blog post by a philosophy professor named Joseph Levine denying Israel's legitimacy because it dares to be a Jewish State. Bill 14's heavy hand – and, in fact, the restrictiveness of the original Bill 101– helps make the argument why Israel can be a Jewish, democratic and legitimate state, well within the international consensus.

Gil Troy

in Montreal

In Bill 14, Premier Pauline Marois' separatist Quebec government proposes extending the language law to smaller businesses, revoking a municipality's bilingual status when its English population drops to half and depriving military families of their right to send their children to English schools. The separatists cheer this attempt to eliminate some of what they consider the "loopholes" in Bill 101, or what many of us would consider its rare safety valves.

I would have no problem with a bill encouraging the study of French, the use of French and the cultural expression of French in Quebec. As a Zionist, I'm a big fan of positive nationalism and understand a people's need to express and preserve a traditional culture through public displays. But my problem comes from Bill 101's – and now the more oppressive Bill 14's – negative nationalism. It shifts from promoting French to knocking down English, so much so that the Quebec legislature repeatedly has had to invoke the ridiculous notwithstanding clause in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, basically saying that notwithstanding the basic rights and freedoms this law violates, the legislature is passing this flawed bill.

Israel takes a different approach – especially theoretically, and increasingly in practice, too. Yes, Israel is a Jewish State, seeking to foster a rich, thick, public culture that expresses and preserves Jewish ideas, values, rituals and holidays. Israeli culture, as we know it, also synthesizes traditional Jewish cultural expressions with western sensibilities, all done with the occasional Arabic or Middle Eastern accent added, but with a clear cultural and legal bias *for* Judaism. However, this bias "for" is also trumped by an important counter-tradition.

Israel's Declaration of Independence promises civic equality to all the country's inhabitants. In the great philosopher Michael Walzer's terms, this recognizes that Israel is not just an exclusive "club" or a "family" but is also a state based on a certain "neighbourhood" or territory, and everyone in that neighbourhood deserves basic legal democratic rights. As a result, there are no oppressive language laws. In fact, English, Arabic and Hebrew signs can be found throughout the country, and I see more English on the streets of Jerusalem than on the streets of Montreal – where the English language is banned, an absurdity in a modern democracy.

With these basic protections, Israeli nationalism – meaning Zionism – can be a positive, not a negative, nationalism. And, thanks to these basic protections, there are Arab Supreme Court justices, Arab Knesset members, Arab celebrities, Arab doctors, Arab lawyers, all thriving in the Jewish state. Of course, Israel sometimes violates its founding ideals and must work harder to ensure that all Arabs face no discrimination – but theoretically, especially, I am far more comfortable with the Israeli approach than the separatist Quebec approach.

And yet, for all the delightful democratic duality of the Israeli situation, for all the compelling complexity of its legal and ideological posture, this is the country regularly singled out for censure, this is the nation whose basic legitimacy is questioned, in the *New York Times*, throughout Europe, and, in much uglier ways, throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds.

This demonization is disproportional. There seems to be an endless supply of indignation directed toward the Jewish state. And these kinds of existential attacks, these kinds of sweeping, one-sided rejections of Israel's right to exist, these negations of all the good it does and tries to do, invite a deep pessimism. These kinds of arguments and this kind of obsession transcend questions of borders and boundaries, of settlements and of settling accounts.

When we see intellectuals, when we hear progressives, and when we read academics joining the pile-on against Israel, we need to confront them. We should challenge their arguments. We must point out that they're enabling the fanatics. And we need to accuse them of being obstacles to peace in perpetuating these untruths.

Pushing the halachic envelope for women

I share with my readers this month parts of the tribute I gave at Rabbi David Hartman's shloshim gathering in Toronto.

I've been patronizingly reminded by many Orthodox rabbis in my life that "men and women are different, so they have different roles and different rules, and why are you so upset about it?" – which takes a deep and profound question of the nature of gender, humanity and the religious enterprise and turns it into a "one unhappy feminist" scenario unbefitting the seriousness of the theological challenge.

But I've been equally privileged to meet deeply thoughtful Orthodox rabbis who have struggled with Judaism's gender inequalities, not as a statement of "Oh those poor, angry women who don't understand the beauty of Judaism's gender roles" but as part and parcel of their inquiry into a sustainable Judaism. Chief among them, ahead of his time and public in his discourse on women and Halachah, was my teacher, Rabbi David Hartman. Studying with him shook my preconceived notions about the intractability of this issue, for he wrote and practised an Orthodoxy that was engaged and wrestling meaningfully with the traditional boundaries of women's participation and – more importantly – with a Halachah that preaches the full human dignity of women, but doesn't always practise it.

He rested on an underlying principle that is stronger than any "piecemeal" solution giving women access to this thing or that, or giving temporary "permissions" for women to participate in this activity or that. In his book *A Heart of Many Rooms*, he writes, "It is not only to legal norms that we owe our allegiance, but also to the values and the human character that these attempt to realize." He constantly taught that his halachic innovations around women were an attempt to realize the values of human dignity that Judaism teaches.

In his last book, *The God Who Hates Lies*, he attacks the condescending methodologies of discourse. In speaking about the refusal of the Orthodox establishment in Israel to solve the problem of agunot – women whose husbands won't give them a Jewish divorce, creating a lifetime of anguish and isolation – he questions the halachist who said, seemingly empathetic of the agunot, "It's my personal Akeidah!" Not being able or ready or willing to halachically solve the problem of thousands of chained women was the rabbi's own personal test of faith? Hartman boldly asked, "Your Akeidah? Is that supposed to bring comfort to the abandoned woman whose life is passing her by?"

But perhaps he is most well known among those who struggle with Judaism's gender biases for his courageous and landmark decision to support the establishment of Shira Hadasha in Jerusalem, the first "partnership minyan" where separate-seating Orthodox davening is the norm, along with women having aliyot and reading Torah and leading certain parts of the service from their side of the mechitzah (which retracts, by the way, for the Torah reading and for the dvar Torah.) Of this he wrote, "I became unable to justify women's exclusion from a minyan; why should they be denied the religious dignity that comes with full communal participation, treated, in essence, as if they were not there? I cannot be bound, or insist that others be bound, by a halachic theology that privileges certain kinds of sperm, wombs, and genes and stigmatizes others."

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

in Toronto

He did not support Shira Hadasha because it made women feel better. He supported Shira Hadasha because he rejected the halachic theology that privileges men. What's more, he rejected the notion that biology is spiritual destiny, that there is an essential, existential "female nature" of woman that is eternal and factually true. Rabbi Hartman writes, "Is the woman we see walking the streets today the woman of the Talmud? No authority in the world can convince me that she is; no past authority can make it into a reality… So then this creates the conflict: The God who loves permanence wants us to deny what we experience, while the God who hates lies wants us to give it credence."

The God who demands I be truthful, Rabbi Hartman would say, is the God who brings the truth of gender inequality onto my tongue and into open, listening ears.

Rabbi Hartman was, for me, a mighty partner in this particular tikkun olam, which the God who hates lies is still waiting to see completed.

Historian launched an overdue debate in Poland

"I'm not defaming anyone," said the Polish American historian Jan Gross, a tall, angular man with a shock of snow-white hair. "I'm just trying to tell the truth."

Gross, 66, a professor of war and society at Princeton University in Princeton, N.J., was rebutting criticism of his books, which have hit a raw nerve in some Polish quarters.

For about a decade now, Gross has been no stranger to controversy, having written three hard-hitting accounts of the Holocaust and the postwar period in Poland that have polarized public opinion in his native land and the Polish diaspora.

Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland, published in 2001 and a National Book Award finalist, explores a pogrom in a Nazi-occupied Polish town in the summer of 1941 in which upward of 1,600 Jews were slaughtered by their Catholic neighbours.

Fear: Antisemitism in Poland after Auschwitz, published five years later, examines the hostility and violence to which Polish Jews were subjected upon returning to their homes in Poland after World War II.

Golden Harvest, which he wrote with his wife, Irena Grudzinska, came out last year and focuses on Polish "diggers" who sifted through the ashes and remains of murdered Jews in the Treblinka extermination camp in the hope of finding jewelry and dental gold overlooked by the Nazis. The gruesome activity they engaged in, he suggests, was a metaphor for the plunder of Jewish wealth during and after the Holocaust in Poland.

These books, two of which have been bestsellers, have brought Gross a measure of fame and notoriety and played a significant role in cracking open Polish collective memory of a dark epoch and launching a long-deferred debate on the explosive subject.

More to the point, Gross has been instrumental in exploding a cherished national myth that Poles, rather than having been solely victims of the brutal Nazi occupation, were also oppressors.

Critics have lambasted Gross, denigrating his methodology, questioning his facts and claiming he traded in stereotypes, prejudices and common gossip. A few have even claimed he was intent on damaging Poland's international image.

In a nasty reference to *Neighbors*, Lech Walesa, the Solidarity trade unionist and a former president of Poland, contemptuously dismissed Gross as "a mediocre writer" and "a Jew who tries to make money." Norman Davies, the British historian, claimed *Neighbors* was "deeply unfair" to Poles.

Walesa's cutting remarks do not bother Gross in the least. "Someone slipped these words into his writing. He's a good man. He didn't read *Neighbors*. This is my supposition. He was under the influence of a very nationalist, antisemitic priest, Father Henryk Jankowski." As for Davies, he said, "What happened in Jedwabne was unfair to Jews, not Poles."

Jews in Poland have climbed on the anti-Gross bandwagon, too.

Marek Edelman, one of the leaders of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, condemned *Fear*, claiming that postwar violence against Jews in Poland was rooted in banditry rather than antisemitism. In a commentary on *Golden Harvest*, the chief rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, observed, "Gross writes in a way to provoke, not to educate."

Responding to their attacks, Gross said that Edelman backed away from his original assessment, and brushed off Rabbi Schudrich's comment as "silly."

Among liberal Poles and Holocaust survivors, Gross has been praised as an important voice.

Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska, a former deputy editor of the Catholic magazine *Znak*, wrote that "the painful truth of Jedwabne" was "the most serious test that we Poles have had to confront in the last decade." The novelist Elie Wiesel, in a review of *Fear*, observed it had forced Poles to reflect on their checkered past.

To Gross – a graduate of Warsaw University who emigrated from Poland with his parents in 1969 after being briefly imprisoned by the Communist regime for his involvement in a student protest movement – the reason why he has come under such sharp scrutiny is clear.

"My critics are deeply wed to a nationalist version of Polish history and are unwilling to face the truth about Poland's past," he said in a recent interview in Toronto. "It's a narrative in which Poles are viewed as victims who can't do wrong. But there are a lot of Poles, including members of the Catholic intelligentsia, who view things in a completely open-minded way."

Asked to describe his enemies, he replied, "People who are ignorant and unwilling to learn about history."

Yet he admits that the slings and arrows have been hurtful. "It saddens me that a segment of the public refuses to think openly about the past." He hastened to add that he has never had an unpleasant public encounter in Poland. "On the contrary, people have come up to me to thank me."

His books, he said, have "unblocked the story of Jewish persecution at the hands of their [Polish] neighbours."

Jan Gross

As a result, this issue is "openly and honestly" debated today. "I would say there has been a progressive opening up of Polish minds. Poles are increasingly looking at the Holocaust objectively."

He is particularly pleased that a group of Polish historians, namely Jan Grabowski and Barbara Engel-King, do not flinch from exposing "Polish collusion" during the Holocaust.

Under the shadow of Nazism, Poles suffered greatly and heroically and helped Jews, paying the price in some instances for their decency, he noted.

Yet far too many Poles participated in the persecution and murder of Jews, or denounced them to the Germans. "This is a story we have to tell," he said.

In 12 villages within the vicinity of Jedwabne, in Wasosz and Radjilow, for example, hundreds of Jews were murdered by Poles. In his judgment, these events would not have happened without Nazi provocation.

Gross said that Polish-language books about these atrocities are currently being translated into foreign languages, including French and English.

A visiting fellow at Yad Vashem in 2012, he began writing on Polish-Jewish themes after concluding that historians had portrayed wartime Polish-Jewish relations incorrectly. "There wasn't much written on it, but it was claimed that Poles were either unable to help Jews or had provided as much assistance as possible."

Rejecting this perhaps self-serving analysis, Gross said that wartime Polish-Jewish relations were generally unfriendly. There was a yawning chasm between Poles and Jews, with the blatant antisemitism of the prewar era having decisively influenced Polish attitudes toward Jews.

Being the son of an assimilationist Jewish father who was a lawyer and sociologist and a Catholic mother who translated French literature into Polish and helped save her husband during the Holocaust, Gross seems ideally placed to ponder the depths and intricacies of Polish-Jewish relations, past and present.

And while he believes that antisemitism in contemporary Poland is a serious phenomenon, he takes solace from the belief that Poland's younger generation is enlightened.

Not surprisingly, Gross is optimistic about the future of Polish democracy, which supplanted four decades of communism almost 25 years ago. "It's doing fine," he said.

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ROMSPEN

Seminar takes moms 'Beyond the Diaper Bag'

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

For young mothers looking to entertain their little ones, there's no shortage of baby-centred programming. But Jane Farkas, organizer of a new initiative called Mommy Talks, says it's time someone thought about the moms, too.

Farkas, a 28-year-old mother of three kids under the age of five, spoke with *The CJN* about the launch of Mommy Talks, a new program designed for Jewish mothers who want to better themselves for their families and contribute to their community in positive ways.

The first annual seminar titled "Beyond the Diaper Bag," to be held April 7 at the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre, is the brainchild of Farkas, who runs Aish HaTorah's AishCampus Thornhill program with her husband, Rabbi Erez Farkas.

Although her job requires her to work with Jewish students, Farkas said she got the itch to reach out to fellow Jewish moms following the birth of her youngest daughter.

"I started a blog because I needed an outlet. It's called AwesomeMommy.ca. Then I started a mommy group at my house with a friend who was on maternity leave," she said.

"I wanted to do something because... the 'Mommy and Me' groups at the mall are all good, but they're all baby-centred."

But it wasn't until Farkas read the best-seller *Prisoner in Tehran* by Iranian-Canadian author Marina Nemat that she was compelled to organize an event tailored to busy moms who don't want to lose themselves in loads of laundry and diaper duty.

"A few months ago, I read that book, and I was appalled at myself that I didn't know that Iran used to be a normal country. When I finished reading the book, I said to my husband, 'Did you know that Iran was a normal country? And he said, 'I think that's common knowledge, Jane,'" she recalled.

Jane Farkas, here with her youngest daughter, Pnina, is the organizer of Mommy Talks, which presents its first annual seminar in April.

"It's not like I live under a rock. I'm a well-read, educated person. I have a bachelor's degree, but I still didn't know that."

Upon reflecting on the books she has read since her children were born, it occurred to her that they were all pregnancy or parenting books.

"I couldn't handle the idea that my entire life had become carpool, snacks, lunches and after-school activities. I love being a mom, but there just has to be something more to life than just that."

Farkas hopes this upcoming event, sponsored by Aish Toronto, the Prosserman JCC and the DANI Toronto, which helps special-needs adults develop life skills, will inspire women to "take care of themselves, the community and eventually the world."

She said this introductory seminar will touch on a range of different topics, including how to start a blog, honing your time-management skills, mom-friendly fashion tips, and the importance of being accountable and improving the world.

Children are welcome, of course, as there will be programming led by certified early childhood educators running simultaneously, which will keep moms free to enjoy the lectures, break-out sessions, a catered sit-down lunch and a raffle.

The raffle alone is worth the price of admission, Farkas said.

"I have a storage room full of stuff – way over $3,000 worth of stuff. I have hair straighteners, gift baskets, jewelry. It's insane."

But it's the women who will be addressing a capacity crowd of 100 mothers that lends this seminar credibility.

The keynote speaker and the inspiration for the event, Marina Nemat, who often speaks out about her experience being imprisoned and tortured in Iran following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, will talk about making the world a better place.

Farkas has also invited Margaret Wallis-Duffy, founder of a multidisciplinary wellness centre called Wallis for Wellness; Ro Little, the president and CEO of mommyblogdesigns.com; Dr. Tara Bloom, who focuses on feeding and nutrition for infants, as well as fertility issues; Jessica Kaplan, M for Mendocino's brand director, and Kathy Laszlo, co-founder and co-director of DANI Toronto.

"Margaret will be talking about making sure that mommies are well and mentally healthy so that they can provide for their kids," Farkas said.

"Jessica, who is the brand manager for M for Mendocino... is going to present about spring trends just to help mommies put together an outfit that goes beyond your Lululemon outfit. Or you can go to Ro's session, who'll talk about getting online, how to start a blog, how to make money from a blog."

Farkas added that she didn't realize until recently that the seminar takes place on Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, so she invited Jody Spiegel, the director of the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program at the Azrieli Foundation, to present a short Holocaust memorial video to commemorate the day.

For more information or to register, visit mommytalks.ca. Tickets are $18.

Students fundraise for Send a Kid to Camp

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

La'azor is an organization of nine students who want to make a difference through passion, creativity and fun.

"We are realistic, but we know that if you can change even one person's life, then you have changed the world," said founding member David Tock, 23. "We want to become better people, so we work together, learning about current events and global issues that might not be covered on the national news."

Tock, who is currently a biology student at York University, started the organization in October 2012 after being inspired by the values he gained at Camp Northland-B'nai Brith. He said La'azor takes an innovative approach when it comes to fundraising and strives for originality.

The members of La'azor – which means "to help" in Hebrew – meet once a week to discuss issues ranging from animal treatment to Israel and politics. "Generally, we cover topics that the members might be aware of but could use a bit more of an understanding," Tock said, "and topics that they might not have any idea of but are still serious issues that exist in the world."

Beyond discussion and learning, Tock said the group also works on planning events to help raise money for charities or causes that the members are passionate about. Their March 2 Bar Mitzvah Bash was a big milestone.

Through ticket sales, fundraising and a silent auction at the party, La'azor chose to support the Jewish Camp Council of Toronto's Send a Kid to Camp Foundation and Save a Child's Heart – an Israeli non-profit organization that provides free cardiac surgery for infants and children from underprivileged areas.

Tock said the event was a success, which has "really added a lot of fuel to the fire. We want to continue helping others and continue learning. I think our immediate future will be more based on volunteering as a group, trying to arrange for some speakers to come in and provide a bit more of a focus on gaining a perspective beyond what we are exposed to on a daily basis."

Since many kids and young adults are constantly bringing attention to serious world issues, Tock said having a group like La'azor is necessary. "It allows us to come together and become aware, and in turn advocate for others who need to be heard."

For more information, visit www.laazor.com.

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New kosher bakery opens at Bathurst and York Downs

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

A little more than one year after Richman's Kosher Bakery closed its doors, a new kosher bakery under different ownership is opening in the same spot on Bathurst Street.

The similarly named Richmond Kosher Bakery, supervised by the Kashruth Council of Canada, which administers the COR hechsher, was set to be open briefly before Passover and will open permanently after the holiday, say its owners, Ben Raz and Dmitri Arabov.

The new store is in the same location as Richman's, which occupied the spot for nearly 50 years. It closed in December 2011, a victim of rising costs and increased competition.

Raz said that the brightly lit, roomy new store has been totally renovated, complete with two separate ovens for dairy and pareve baked goods.

Arabov, who studied at a culinary school in Israel for two years and has also worked in Europe, said the store features breads, bagels, buns, pastries and fine cakes.

"We have whole wheat, dark rye bread, whole wheat, multigrain and water challah, and organic spelt, and kamut bread," he said.

Special for the Shabbat after Passover, he said, Richmond will have the traditional key challah.

"We also have sugar-free muffins sweetened with natural organic agave nectar, and quinoa cookies and muffins."

Among Arabov's 15 or 20 varieties of cakes are a Mozart cake with hazelnut and meringue, a caramel crunch cake, a flour-free sponge cake with raspberries and filled with dark chocolate mousse and pareve milk chocolate mousse made from rice milk, croquembouche and dulce de leche.

The owners also plan to have some tables set up for customers to enjoy coffee and fresh daily sandwiches.

Raz said that when the new "Richmond" sign went up, a number of people phoned and dropped in to see when the store would be opening.

"They're looking forward to it," he said.

"Richman's was in this spot for a long time. The customers are happy to see another kosher bakery opening."

Ben Raz

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Four generations practice philanthropy

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Torontonians Harold and Esther Mecklinger left a legacy of philanthropy. Now in its fourth generation, the family continues to contribute to the community, locally, in Israel and internationally.

The community will have an opportunity to pay tribute to the Mecklinger family on May 9 at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

Alan Mecklinger, Harold and Esther's son, is a developer and landlord of industrial commercial plazas, and Alan's wife, Elise, is the author of several award-winning cookbooks. Both are active volunteers, and now their children are following in their footsteps.

"The Mecklinger family has made their mark in the Toronto community," said Mike Feldman, chair of the Mecklinger family tribute committee.

He added that the family has contributed "their hearts and resources" to many worthy causes, among them, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Baycrest, Mount Sinai and Princess Margaret hospitals, the Breast Cancer Foundation, Koffler Centre of the Arts, the Jewish National Fund and many others.

For generations, the Mecklingers have been active members and supporters of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

Seated, from left, are Alan Mecklinger; Brooke, granddaughter, daughter of Kailee and Shawn; Elise Mecklinger, and Dylan, grandson, and son of Kailee and Shawn. Standing, from left, Pam and Jordy Mecklinger, daughter-in-law and son of Alan and Elise; Dave Mecklinger, son of Alan and Elise; Kailee, daughter-in-law; Corey, son of Kailee and Shawn, grandson of Alan and Elise, and Shawn Mecklinger, son of Alan and Elise.

A highlight of the tribute will be the screening of the 90-minute documentary, *A.K.A. Doc Pomus*, on the extraordinary life of Brooklyn-born Jerome Solon Felder (1925-1991), a son of Jewish immigrants who used the stage name Doc Pomus.

Alan and Elise Mecklinger, along with Honey and Barry Sherman, are the executive producers of the documentary, and Will Hechter is the producer.

Doc is credited with writing more than 1,500 popular songs, including *Save the Last Dance for Me, This Magic Moment, Viva Las Vegas, Can't Get Used to Losing You* and *Teenager in Love*.

The documentary follows young Jerome, who was paralyzed by polio as a child, as he became a blues singer and then a songwriter and lyricist of some of the greatest hit songs recorded by top stars, including Elvis Presley.

A.K.A. Doc Pomus opened the New York Jewish Film Festival at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts on Jan. 9.

Doc was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1992, and he was the first white person inducted into the Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame.

Elise and Alan said they became involved with the film because it makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about the impact that Jews have had in shaping American art and culture.

The host for the evening is former sports broadcaster Terry Leibel, who was on the Canadian national equestrian team in the 1970s.

The honorary chairs of the Mecklinger tribute evening include Paul Godfrey, Harry Gorman, Will and Linda Hechter, and Tom and Anna Koffler.

For more information or to make reservations, contact Claire Horowitz at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, 416-633-3838, ext. 242, or visit www.beby.org.

Competition seen as beneficial for consumers

Continued from page 3

That's in line with the thinking of the late Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, a leading 20th-century halachic decisor, who suggested it was not proper for an outside rabbi to supervise within the jurisdiction of an established organization.

Rabbi Pollak emphasized that while a national kashrut agency might supervise a chain of supermarkets, a single store is more appropriately served by a local certifier.

"I'm not going to say there aren't instances, individual rabbis, or even organizations who, for whatever reason, try to come in and certify an establishment. From my experience, this is a result of some other deep-seated rivalries or something else going on," he said.

But "the vast majority of organizations would very strongly disapprove of such a thing."

He added that "it's certainly not for the benefit of kosher consumers," and that Star-K, like the Kashruth Council, subsidizes local kashrut supervision using revenue from larger-scale industrial clients.

It's unlikely that competing hechshers would drive down the cost of local supervision for non-industrial clients, he said. "If it is… cheaper, they're only doing it to undercut the local organization and for some reason want to do it at a loss."

In the manufacturing realm, however, competition is generally considered beneficial to consumers and manufacturers, Rabkin said.

The March 2013 list of new Star-K-supervised companies shows the agency will go anywhere and everywhere, including Guatemala (for fruit blends and purées), Spain (olives), India (herbal extracts), Sri Lanka (coconut products), and even the GTA, where Star-K supervises Krinos Foods olive oil, among other food products.

"There's no rivalry, no turf warfare in any sense," Rabbi Pollak said.

The Kashruth Council has also expanded over the last five years, Rabkin said, certifying manufacturers "not only in Canada but in the United States, Israel, Europe, South America and Asia."

Rabbi Benjamin Lisbon of the Los Angeles-based Kosher Supervision of America said, "Many companies around the world are seeking a certifying agency that can position them into the marketplace."

Unlike the Kashruth Council and Star-K, KSA doesn't supervise local eateries or caterers at all. Created 20 years ago in response to "a tremendous call for more west-coast certification," KSA today supervises companies worldwide. In Canada, the hechsher is most commonly seen on baked goods such as Ace Bakery baguettes and New Moon Kitchen cookies.

"Whether they export it to the U.S. or Israel… [clients want] a symbol that can bring them outside their own little community."

Steven Bager of Toronto, who started Grain-Free JK Gourmet with his wife in 2001, wanted a hechsher that's widely recognized in the United States.

He approached "probably half a dozen" agencies, including the Kashruth Council, Star-K, the Orthodox Union (OU) and KSA. The OU was probably best known, but also more expensive.

"We decided on KSA, because we wanted to have a broader impact than what COR could provide us," Bager said.

Correction

In the article "Israel must include Arab minorities: conference," (March 14), Don Green's first name was misspelled. *The CJN* regrets the error.

WOOLLY ARTISTS: Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 1 students had a truly dyed-in-the-wool experience as part of their Passover preparations. Textile artist Melanie Siegel, left, guided the students through the entire process of making felt for a matzah cover as part of the school's visiting artist program. The children learned to pull apart the wool, wet the mixture and turn it into fabric. The next step was to craft the felt into matzah covers for their seder tables. Pictured with Siegel are, from left, Aster Slawner, Ezra Moscovitch, Ethan Rose, Ofri Magen and teacher Rena Markus.

Historian evokes prewar Jewish Warsaw

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Warsaw, the centre of the Jewish universe in Poland, was the biggest Jewish city in Europe prior to the Holocaust.

The Jewish areas of Warsaw exuded a spirit of raw energy and dynamism. And now they're all gone, destroyed by the Nazis in only a few years.

Pre-World War II Warsaw, inhabited by more than 350,000 Jews representing about one-third of its population, was evoked by historian Samuel Kassow in a March 11 lecture at the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto.

Kassow, a professor of history at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn., described Warsaw, the Polish capital, as a hub of Yiddish literature, theatre and journalism and a meeting place between Jewish and Catholic Poles.

As the citadel of communications, manufacturing, distribution and banking in Poland, Warsaw was home to the largest Jewish proletariat in Europe, he noted in his lecture, titled "Warsaw as a Jewish Metropolis."

Since the Holocaust, many Jews have regarded Poland as a graveyard, said Kassow, a consultant to the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which is officially scheduled to open in Warsaw in April 2014.

But until that unprecedented disaster, which consumed approximately 90 per cent of Polish Jewry, Poland, with Warsaw at its apex, was one of the most important centres in the Diaspora, he added.

Warsaw's Jewish population markedly increased in the 19th century as Lithuanian Jews, known as Litvaks, and Polish Jews from the countryside migrated to the city.

There was "little love lost" between Lithuanian and Polish Jews, at least at first, and Polish nationalists accused the Litvaks of being Russian agents. But in time, the Litvaks were fully accepted and became the founders of Warsaw's leading Yiddish dailies.

Samuel Kassow

By 1939, when Poland was invaded and occupied by Nazi Germany, the majority of its Jewish residents had come from somewhere else.

Warsaw, the epitome of diversity, brought together a throbbing mélange of secular and religious Jews of all stripes and beliefs: Zionists, assimilationists, Chassidim, socialists and communists.

But to some Polish Catholics and assimilated Jews, the lively Jewish districts of Warsaw appeared exotic and alien.

Courtyards were a distinctive feature in Jewish neighbourhoods, with some having more inhabitants than rural shtetls, Kassow said.

Separate worlds onto themselves, these courtyards were crammed with residential dwellings, workshops, offices, stores, synagogues and institutions. And as the Polish-born novelist Isaac Bashevis Singer once wrote, a person could easily spend his or her entire life within its precincts.

Warsaw was truly a melting pot, Kassow suggested.

There was a great chassidic community, with the Ger dynasty dominating its ranks and playing an integral role in the modernization of Polish Jewish Orthodoxy.

The Zionist movement was a major force, but Zionism lost its edge after the British authorities in Palestine imposed immigration restrictions.

Polish perceptions to the contrary, only five per cent of Jews supported Communism.

By the late 1930s, Kassow went on to say, the Bundists, consisting of Jewish socialists enjoyed the support of a majority of Warsaw's Jews.

Jewish Warsaw, too, had a strong underworld, and gangsters established their own synagogues, said Kassow.

The high point of Polish-Jewish relations occurred during and after the 1863 uprising against the Russian empire. Eventually, however, Poles turned on Jews, regarding them as "the threatening other," and the relationship between Poles and Jews soured, "never to be good again," Kassow said.

Among Catholic Poles, a consensus developed that Jews were foreigners and should emigrate. Meanwhile, Polish Jews fought hard for their civic rights, but it was "an uphill battle," he said.

On the eve of World War II, Kassow stated, most Jews in Poland wanted to be identified as "proud, self-respecting" Jews rather than as "Poles of the Mosaic persuasion."

Students to be part of Shoah poster contest

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Canadian post-secondary students in graphic arts and design are being asked to participate in an international Holocaust remembrance poster competition.

The contest, sponsored jointly by Yad Vashem and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), will showcase 20 Canadian-made posters that will compete against submissions from the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic and Israel.

Jason Kenney

It's all for "the privilege of having their design displayed at over 90 locations around the world, including the United Nations headquarters in New York City and the European Commission in Brussels," according to a statement by the Minister for Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney.

Canada assumed the chairmanship of the IHRA earlier this month.

This year's contest theme is titled "Keeping the Memory Alive – Journeys through the Holocaust."

The contest will be judged on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Jan. 27, 2014. At that time, an international panel of experts in both "design and Holocaust education" will award 500 euros in cash to the winner. Second place will receive 300 euros, with third place getting 200 euros.

The 12 best designs will be exhibited around the world to mark the 2014 International Holocaust Remembrance Day and will be made available as an educational resource, according to the ministry.

"Our government believes it is critically important to be engaged in efforts to commemorate and teach the lessons of the Holocaust to help prevent future acts of genocide," Kenney said.

The deadline for submissions of final designs is April 30. For more information on eligibility requirements or to submit a design, email holocaust-poster@cic.gc.ca and specify "Holocaust poster competition" in the subject line.

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ICRF Israel Cancer Research Fund

Violinist and cantor give spellbinding performance

Cantor Yitzchak Meir Helfgot, left, and violinist Yitzhak Perlman

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

The sold-out Sing for the Children benefit concert for Chai Lifeline brought together the internationally acclaimed violinist, Yitzhak Perlman, and celebrated cantor, Yitzchak Meir Helfgot.

The melding of Perlman's soulful sounds and skilful mastery of the violin combined with Helfgot's spellbinding tenor gave the audience at the Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto an exceptional experience of communication between violin and voice.

From the rousing opening of *Shalom Aleichem*, the program of Yiddish folksongs, chassidic melodies, eastern European Jewish folk music, cantorial masterpieces and spirited klezmer music had the enthusiastic audience clapping in appreciation of the master musicians.

Helfgot's rendition of *My Yiddishe Momme*, together with Perlman's serenely splendid playing, was an emotional trip for young and old alike.

Helfgot's interpretation of *R'tzeh*, a pleading prayer from the daily liturgy; *Mizmor L'Dovid*, the Psalm of David traditionally sung on the Sabbath, and the joyful Yiddish folk song *A Dudele* (A Song to You) provided evidence of the unique art form that is the young cantor's singing.

The accompanying orchestra, comprising 25 musicians from the Klezmer Conservatory Band and the Eternal Echoes Chamber Orchestra, was conducted by Russell Ger and performed arrangements written by Hankus Netsky.

Laura Lowenberg, 18, a special guest from Montreal, spoke of her four-year battle with a rare brain cancer. She had two major surgeries, followed by a stroke. She paid tribute to Chai Lifeline and its many volunteers and programs that helped her and her family through the devastating ordeal. The brave, articulate teenager received a standing ovation.

The money raised at the sixth annual Chai Lifeline concert on March 11 will provide support for children with severe illnesses and their families.

As people left the concert hall, one could hear many express their enthusiasm for the concert. "It was the greatest concert. It was spectacular," one audience member was overheard to say.

Chai Lifeline helps sick children and parents

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

"Chai Lifeline is always there for anyone who needs help," said Shani Goldner whose son, Nachman, has cerebral palsy.

Nachman, 10, who has six brothers and sisters, is the only child in the family with a disability.

"Nachman does well cognitively," said his mother, "but physically he can't walk. At home, we have built things to accommodate him."

She told *The CJN* about her gratitude to Chai Lifeline for sending volunteers to her home to help with Nachman and the other children, and provide them with a camping experience, the Shining Star after-school program and many other services.

"It gives us some respite and allows the family to do things together that Nachman cannot do," she said.

Chai Lifeline Canada is a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Toronto. It was started seven years ago under the leadership of Rabbi Mordechai Rothman, who understood that when a child is diagnosed with a serious pediatric or chronic illness, the sick child, as well as siblings and parents, need support.

For children with cancer, dysautonomia, muscular dystrophy, Crohn's disease, cerebral palsy, Pelizaeus–Merzbacher disease (PMD), Soto syndrome and genetic diseases, Chai Lifeline has a multitude of programs and services.

"We have become exceptional at what we do because we have built on the knowledge and the expertise of International Chai Lifeline," said Craig Fried, director of development of Chai Lifeline Canada.

"However, our funding is completely separate from the international organization," he added.

Fried said that if a child in Canada needs counselling, tutoring, financial aid or wants to attend a summer camp, the funds are raised here and the services are free of charge.

The organization has 150 loyal volunteers who give their time to support Chai Lifeline's big-brothers and big-sisters program.

"The volunteers visit our kids at the hospital and at home, and they help us with many other programs," Fried said.

"Our donors are honestly my heroes. They truly make this all possible. Our work is never done, as we are growing every day with more referrals from the Hospital for Sick Children and from the community."

He added that Chai Lifeline wants the community, the schools and synagogues to know it is there for them.

"They should reach out to us for support. Our motto is 'Fighting Illness with Love,'" Fried said. "We are dedicated to meeting the social and emotional need of the children, as well as their families. Many times financial devastation occurs for the family."

Chai Lifeline operates family retreats, special sibling programs, offers peer and professional support, trips to Disneyland in Florida and other locations, and runs two extraordinary camp programs for seriously ill children.

Camp Simcha in upstate New York, has two-week sessions, and Camp Simcha Special expands on the Camp Simcha model to fit the needs of children with severe needs that require continuous medical management.

"This helps the children and their families retain a sense of normalcy," Fried said, "and gives the parents much-needed respite."

For more information about Chai Lifeline, call 647-430-5933 or visit its website, www.chailifelinecanada.org.

Parents of 'lone soldiers' discuss support group

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

In the past few years, a substantial infrastructure has arisen in Israel and abroad to provide support to "lone soldiers" – volunteers from abroad who serve in the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).

Lone soldiers have facilities set aside for them, rights to various perks, organizations advocating on their behalf, all in a bid to make their lives away from home more manageable.

But what about their parents? The soldiers may be alone while serving in Israel, but their parents are thousands of miles away, wanting the best for them, but often without the information or wherewithal to provide them parental support.

Sigal Almog

Last week, about 30 parents and grandparents of lone soldiers, or those about to enlist, gathered in the home of Perla and Ron Riesenbach to lay the foundation for a support group.

They heard from a spokesperson for the Association for the Soldiers of Israel, who answered their questions about resources available for their children; they also heard from Shira Forman, a lone soldier who recently completed her service, who described her experiences navigating lone soldier issues, and they traded information about the subject parents most like to talk about – their kids.

"For me, the group is a support system for Canadian parents with a son or daughter in the Israeli army. Some parents feel so alone and helpless and don't know what they can do to help their child with a problem," said Perla Riesenbach, whose son, Ariel, is serving in the IDF.

Referring to parents who attended the information session, she said that "there was a couple whose son has had many problems and they didn't know what they could do about it from here. Now they do. They're surely not the only set of parents in that situation. Parents have to know that they're not alone, [that] there is some sort of 'customer service' that they can access. Basically, just like there is support for the soldiers in Israel, this is support for the parents in Canada."

Todd Greenbloom, whose 20-year-old daughter, Jenna, is serving in the IDF, said he was worried about her during Operation Cast Lead. A support group would have helped him, he said.

"It's like any kind of support group. When you're going through [something], it's helpful to have somebody going through the same thing. It's empathy."

While quite a few people asked about his daughter, it's different when there are others going through the same thing, he said.

A recurring theme in his conversations with other parents "is the thirst for information for ourselves and to raise awareness in our children to be able to advocate for their own rights in Israel," Ron Riesenbach said.

A number of speakers and parents noted that lone soldiers are eligible for all sorts of benefits – such as the right to be granted permission for a visit home – but they must actively pursue those rights.

A secondary agenda for the proposed group is for parents to interact, share information and provide support to each other, Riesenbach said.

"We're an information organization and a self-support organization," he stated. The meeting was intended to gauge interest in creation of a support group that might meet a few times a year and remain in contact through social media, he added.

Sigal Almog's daughter, Shiri, is currently serving in the IDF. Born in Israel, Shiri and the family moved to Toronto when she was 10. "It was always her intention to go," Almog said. "She's so Israeli. Even though she came here, she stayed there."

Almog came to the information session because, "I want to meet other people like me and see what they think and they are going through.

"I was in the army. I know about it. I had a brother killed in the army. My only concern is that she's there and I'm here. If she needs anything, I can't help her."

Almog hoped she could learn from other parents the best ways she could provide long-distance support for Shiri.

Nira Rittenberg was also born in Israel, but she's lived in Canada since she was five. Her son, Oren, 21, is planning to serve in the IDF. "It was something he said he'd do since Grade 9," she said.

"People told us, 'Don't worry, it's something that will blow over. He'll find a degree, a girl, everything will dissuade him from going.' That it won't happen."

Oren, who attended the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and Bialik Hebrew Day School, defied prognosticators. "He believes ideologically that this is something important to do. He believes supporting the state by outsiders is a message [for Israelis] also, and he truly believes it will make him a better person," Rittenberg said.

Former lone soldier Shira Forman addresses a parent support group.

While all his friends from the University of Western Ontario went off on job interviews, he hooked up with Garin Tzabar, the Israeli scout organization that assists foreign soldiers in Israel. He'll fly to Israel in August as part of a group of 30 enlistees – four men and 26 women.

"He wants to be a combat medic," his mom said.

The members of Garin Tzabar, a group formed for Diaspora Jews and children of Israelis who serve in the IDF, are adopted by the Israel Scouts and placed in a hosting kibbutz that becomes their home away from home during their army service. The soldiers experience their army service together as a social unit and provide mutual support and camaraderie, the organization's website states (www.israelscouts.org).

If organizers in Toronto get their way, pretty soon their parents will have their own group providing mutual support and camaraderie, too.

Parents shmooze at meeting to establish support group.

THE ANNE & MAX TANENBAUM CHAT Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto | האקדמיה העברית ע"ש טננבאום

tanenbaumchat.org

Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (TanenbaumCHAT) invites applications for Sept. 1, 2013 for the position of

VICE PRINCIPAL of JEWISH STUDIES

Kimel Family Education Centre
Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus

Reporting to the Principal of Jewish Studies and the Campus Principal, the successful candidate will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Jewish Studies program at TanenbaumCHAT's campus in Vaughan.

Candidates must demonstrate appropriate scholarship, leadership, educational, management and administrative skills and experience and must be able to demonstrate and model effective Jewish leadership in accordance with the TanenbaumCHAT ethos. The preferred candidate has a strong academic background in Jewish Studies and education, including a graduate degree. He/she has experience in high school classroom teaching, curriculum development and school administration, and possesses or is eligible to complete the Ontario Principal's Qualifications program or its equivalent. He/she has excellent written and oral communication skills, is fluent in Hebrew, is computer literate, and has a track record as a team player.

Applicants are invited to email their resumé in confidence to Mrs. Rhona Birenbaum, Acting Head of School at **rbirenbaum@tanenbaumchat.org** by April 3, 2013.

UJA Federation

New fund aims to make education affordable

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — School leaders and parents have enthusiastically welcomed a new Federation CJA fund that aims to make Jewish education more affordable, especially for the middle-class, by capping tuition for eligible families.

"It's a win-win situation," said Sidney Benudiz, executive director of United Talmud Torahs/Herzliah High School, who is pleased by both the extra money's practical effect and the signal the federation is sending that Jewish day school education is a priority.

A pilot program called C.A.P.S., started last year, is now being made permanent and placed under the federation's new Generations Fund for Educational Excellence. It sets a tuition cap for qualifying families, with the fund making up the difference to the school.

Parents can go to www.generationsfund.ca and input their financial and family details into an online calculator to determine whether they qualify under new, more flexible criteria.

Grants of $1,800 are also available for students entering kindergarten and Secondary I as incentives to parents. That part of the program is accepting applications until March 25 at noon.

The Generations Fund, established with donations from some prominent community members, will provide subsidies over and above those already granted to more than 3,000 students through the federation's Tuition Assistance Allocation, which benefits mainly lower income families.

That program's criteria had left more and more middle-income families unable to qualify, the federation said.

The federation has not said how big the Generations Fund is or how much it will pay out each year.

The founders of the fund, along with the federation, are the Sylvan Adams Family Foundation, Morris and Rosalind Goodman Family Foundation, Alvin Segal Family Foundation, in memory of Barbara Weldon, and the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal.

Participating schools are Akiva School, Solomon Schechter Academy, Jewish People's and Peretz Schools/Bialik High School, Hebrew Foundation School, Hebrew Academy, and Ecole Maimonide.

The Generations Fund will also assist the schools in improving their educational standards.

The Bronfman Jewish Experience Centre will oversee grants to participating mainstream schools for projects aimed at developing lay and professional leadership, fundraising, recruitment, and marketing and public relations, as well as for "cutting-edge" programs that will attract enrolment.

"An excellent Jewish education is vital to preserving culture and Jewish vibrancy in our community," said federation president David Cape. "I'm proud of the measures we're taking to make such an education more accessible, and hope that all those who qualify give this opportunity due consideration."

For more information, visit the program's website, or call Natana Shek Dor at 514-345-2645, ext. 3200.

The Generations Fund is under the Gen J initiative, which aims to preserve and strengthen Montreal Jews' identity, primarily among youth.

As a pilot program for this school year, Benudiz said 72 students out of a total enrolment of approximately 600 at UTT/Herzliah benefited from the new tuition cap.

And with the criteria for eligibility more flexible for next year, he expects even more to be accepted.

The cap on tuition, once approved, he noted, is good for the duration of a child's schooling, from elementary through high school and does not have to be renewed annually.

Sabrina Bercovitch, a Gen J associate at the federation, clarified, however, that the cap would change if the family's income or number of children changes.

Abortion is often permitted: rabbi

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Chabad and Agudath Israel in the United States have "allied themselves" over the years with the Catholic League and Christian evangelicals by supporting the overturning of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark "Roe v. Wade" decision protecting therapeutic and partial-birth abortions, Congregation Beth-El's Rabbi Allan Nadler asserted recently.

Rabbi Allan Nadler

But although a 1999 Agudath Israel policy paper backs up Rabbi Nadler, Chabad in New York said that it has never tabled a formal public position on Roe v. Wade, and Chabad representatives suggested that Rabbi Nadler is misstating the group's position.

Speaking earlier this month in the first lecture in a four-part series at the shul on the "Jewish Ethical Perspectives on 'Matters of Life and Death'" Rabbi Nadler said the positions of Agudath Israel and Chabad on therapeutic and partial-birth abortions run counter to talmudic law.

In an email exchange with *The CJN*, Rabbi Nadler said that "there is no basis in Halachah for opposing such medical procedures, since until the baby's head has... exited the womb, the mother's health is paramount, and Jewish law actually mandates that the fetus be destroyed to protect the health of the mother."

He added: "The rabbinic rulings on this are, in my view, perfectly consistent with current U.S. and Canadian law, under which all therapeutic abortions are protected by law. Indeed, a 'partial-birth abortion' is a medical procedure rarely employed, and when it is, it is always to protect the life of the mother," he said.

"Thus my claim is that the position taken by Chabad and Agudath Israel are inconsistent with talmudic law."

But in an email exchange with *The CJN*, Chabad in New York said that Rabbi Nadler's claims about Chabad have no basis in fact.

"I'm not saying he made it up," media relations director Rabbi Motti Seligson said. "He may have heard something from someone and is defining it as Chabad's position. But I have no idea what he is talking about."

But Rabbi Nadler said that the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Schneerson, spoke out against Roe v. Wade "on very numerous occasions... his position is well known."

"Really? So it was a very well-known secret position?" retorted Rabbi Seligson. "If this were an opinion of the Rebbe, whether communicated to 'close associates' or spoken about by farbrengen, it would have been published. I did some of my own research and found no such thing."

Rabbi Berel Bell, founding dean of Montreal Chabad's Chaya Mushka Seminary for girls, did not specifically recall whether Rabbi Schneerson ever offered a specific opinion on Roe v. Wade. He said it's possible that he did, but that he'd have to do more research on it.

Rabbi Nadler said: "One thing is certain: numerous haredi and chassidic rabbis have taken a hard line against Roe v. Wade and even harder against partial-birth abortions."

In general, Rabbi Nadler noted that Judaism allows abortion under many circumstances, because it does not consider the fetus to be human until the mother gives birth.

Those circumstances could include the physical and psychological health and well-being of the mother, he added. The fetus in Judaism is viewed a "limb" of the mother, and not as a human life.

However, he added, Judaism does not allow abortion for frivolous reasons, such as sex selection or for convenience.

Rabbi Nadler said an "enormous amount of confusion exists within the [Jewish] public square" about how Judaism views birth control, abortion and such questions as when human life begins."

One of the major misconceptions, he said, is that there is a "Jewish-Christian ethic" about abortion.

Nothing could be further from the truth, he said.

"The Jewish approach is legalistic, not metaphysical," and not based, as it is in Catholicism, for example, on belief in the "ensoulment" of the embryo from the moment of conception.

Rabbi Nadler cited several sources to make his case.

Exodus 21:22-23 says that if someone causes a woman to abort or have a miscarriage, the person responsible pays a fine and is not considered guilty of ending a human life.

"In legal terms, this would be considered a tort, not a capital offence," Rabbi Nadler said

In the Mishnah (Ohalot 7:9), if the life of a woman in labour is in jeopardy, one can dismember the fetus (a partial-birth abortion) as long as the head has not yet emerged, at which point the fetus is considered human.

The "most powerful" source for Rabbi Nadler is Arachin 7a, which says that even in the case of a pregnant woman condemned to death, her execution would not be postponed until the baby is born, unless she is in labour.

In other words, it's clear you're not killing two people if you execute a pregnant woman, Rabbi Nadler said, even though it might very well appear "unseemly" to do so.

James
PASTERNAK
Toronto City Councillor, Ward 10, York Centre

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Wishing everyone in the community a Happy Pesach!

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Developers sue posters' author for defamation

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Gordon Warren says he's not an antisemite and that he's just trying to raise awareness of alleged corruption at Winnipeg City Hall.

The man behind the notorious "$hitler's List" posters also claims that he didn't realize most of the names on that list were Jewish until after he began posting his posters in downtown Winnipeg last fall. He further claims he was shocked at the response.

But while Manitoba's attorney general and Winnipeg police have declined to press charges against the failed city council candidate, brothers Robert and Sandy Shindleman have sued him for defamation and are asking for an injunction stopping him from making further accusations on his blog, as well as for general, punitive and special damages and that he pay their court costs.

The brothers' statement of claim says the "untrue and defamatory statements of the defendant were made deliberately, with malicious intent, and were motivated by racism and antisemitism," and that they "constitute hate speech," the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported.

The Shindleman brothers are among western Canada's leading property developers and commercial realtors. They're also longtime friends and business associates of Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz.

In January, Warren acknowledged that he produced the posters. The attorney general's office declined to bring charges because they didn't explicitly promote genocide, a B'nai Brith Canada attorney told the *National Post*.

The Shindlemans' suit primarily accuses Warren of libel, but it also claims the brothers were the victims of hate speech. If the hate speech claim is proven, the court could issue an injunction stopping Warren from saying anything more about the brothers.

Sandy & Robert Shindleman

Warren has noted in his blog postings that Shindico, the brothers' company, has won several untendered city hall contracts during Katz's tenure (he is in his third term), including a land swap between Shindico and the Winnipeg Fire Department that came to light last summer and had not been approved beforehand by city council.

He also referred in his postings to Katz's purchase of a home in Scottsdale, Ariz., from Sandy Shindleman's sister-in-law. Katz reportedly paid $1 million for the property.

But the brothers claim Warren did more than publicly allege they've been involved in irregularities. They say he has accused them of shady transactions in their dealings with city hall and the transaction in Arizona.

They also say Warren contacted Revenue Canada, U.S. tax authorities and the Phoenix FBI office about the Arizona deal, alleging that the Shindlemans were involved in "bribery, fraud and money laundering." In a Feb. 20 blog post, Warren said the FBI and the IRS are investigating the deal.

Warren may claim he's not on an antisemite, but his blog (bringkatztojustice.blogspot.ca) suggests otherwise. In a Feb. 23 post, under the heading, "the Katz Doctrine," he listed what he suggested are Katz's "Ten Commandments":

"1) God is never angry about the Jews, just about the Non-Jews. 2) Who wants to be smart shall occupy himself with money matters, because there are no corner pillars in the Torah that are more important, because they are like a sparkling fountain. 3) The possessions of the goyim are like an ownerless desert, and everybody (every Jew) who seizes it, has acquired it. 4) Non-Jewish property belongs to the Jew who uses it first.

"5) The Jew is allowed to practice usury (loansharking) on the non-Jew. 6) Jews may steal from non-Jews. 7) Jews always have to try to deceive non-Jews. 8) Jews may lie to non-Jews. Jews may use lies (subterfuges) to circumvent a gentile. 9) Every Jew is allowed to use lies and perjury to bring a Non-Jew to ruin. 10) If a Jew is tempted to do evil, he should go to a city where he is not known and do the evil there."

The case will be heard in the Court of Queen's Bench starting March 26.

With files from JTA

PASSOVER PLAY: Junior kindergarten students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill turned their classroom into ancient Egypt and, through dramatic play and interpretation, put themselves in the story of Passover.

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Woody Allen's classic film, **"Manhattan"** will kick start this series - **Thursday, April 11, 1PM**

Thursday, April 18, 1:30PM
"Heart of the City" *by Ariel Sabar*
New York is one of the world's most romantic cities, so it's no surprise that Ariel Sabar chose it as the magical setting for his short stories, each of which is dedicated to the true story romance of 9 individual couples. These relationships span the 1940's to the present day.

Thursday, May 2, 1:30 PM
"The Golems of Gotham" *by Thane Rosenbaum*
This is an affectionate, humorous, but serious love story with a difference. Fourteen-year old Ariel seeks to understand the missing people in her life – her grandparents and mother. Using the mystical Jewish symbol of redemption and rescue (golem), Ariel hits the streets of New York with six literary Holocaust-surviving ghosts, who teach her how to live and love.

Thursday, May 30, 1:30 PM
"Rules of Civility" *by Amore Towles*
In 1938, young, feisty and single Katey Kantent navigates life in New York, moving from her secretarial job with a law firm to the upper reaches of New York society. This love story visits many of New York's sites, while bringing in hints of the music of the times (jazz), the art (Stuart Davis), fused with echoes of F. Scott Fitzgerald and other contemporary literary figures.

Sponsored by:
National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto Section
***Events will be held at:* Council House, 4700 Bathurst Street**
***Cost: Member:* Series $36 • Individual $15**
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***Prior registration preferred.* After April 2: 416-633-5100**

דער יידיש ווינקל

דזשערי קעין

פסח 2013

נעט מויערן פֿאַרן וואַרשעווער געטאָ!

מיר נעדענקן דעם טאָג – ערב פסח –אַפּריל 19, 1943 דען די יידן אין וואַרשעווער געטאָ האָבן נעזאָגט "נעגוּ" אָן אירגענדוואָס אַנען קענן די נאַצי מאָכט. מיט אַנעצונדענע פֿלעשלעך נאַפֿט, נאַנאַנעס אין די הענט, אַריינגעשמוגלטע ביקסן אָן נרענאַדן האָט דער רעשטל פֿון געטאָ יידן נעהיטן די נאַצי מערדער אַז יידן וועלן זיך נישט לאָזן נעמען שטילערהייט צו די אויטאָס פֿון טרעבלינקא.

אין דעם באַריכט פֿון דער דייטשישער קאָמאַנדאָס אין וואַרשע האָט זיך דער אופשטאַנד אָפּנעזיצן נעווען דעם 16טן מיי. דער קאָמאַנדאָס שרייבט אַז 13,000 נעטאָ קעמפֿער זיינען אומנעקומען אין קאָמף אָן 6,000 יידן, באַהאַלטן אין קעלערס, זיינען דערשטיקט פֿון הייך אָדער פֿאַרברענט נעוואָרן תּען די נאַציס האָבן אָנגעצונדן די פֿיַער וואָס האָבן פֿאַרברענט די יידישע נאָסן פֿון נעטאָ. בלויז די הענט פֿון נעטאָ מיינט וואָס האָט אַריינגעצאָמט אַ פֿאַרשוווּנדענער יידיש וועלט זיינען נעשטאַנען.

פֿון די אַריבער 300,000 יידן וואָס זיינען אַריינגעשפּאַרט נעוואָרן אין נעטאָ זיינען נעבליבן די עטלעכע וואָס, אין די לעצטע מאָמענטן פֿון קאָמף, האָבן זיך אַרויסנעשוווּמגלט דורך די קאַנאַלן, צום פּוילישן זיַיט. צוישן זיַי איז נעוען מאָרעק עדעלמאַן, דער לעצטער קאָמאַנדאָס פֿון די נעטאָ קעמפֿער, אין חלאָדקע מיט, דער קוריער וואָס איז נעוען דער קאָמטאָק צוישן די נעטאָ קעמפֿער אין די פּאָלאַקן ארומ אָנדער זיַיט נעטאָ מרור. די צוויי וויכטיקע עדותן צום אויפֿשטאַנד זיַינען נישט לאַנג אַדער פֿון אונדז: עדעלמאַן מיט צוויי יאָר צוריק אין חלאָדקע מיט מיט פּיר מאַנאַנטן צוריק.

היַינט אין וואַרשע, אויף די זעלבע ערד וואָס האָט דעמאָלדיקס די נעטאָ, זען די חלק די נייע חענט פֿון אַ מהדי וואָס שטעלט אויס דעם טויזענט יאָריקער נעשיכטע אין דערנייכונג. פֿון יידן אין פּוילן. ס'איז אַ פֿיל צו פֿאַרנעמן. דער טויזענט יאָריקער לעבן פֿון יידן אין פּוילן האָט נעבראַכט גרויס קולטורעל, אַקאַדעמיש, אין עקאָנאָמיש דערפֿאָלג צו ביידע פֿעלקער.

דער מחיי, נעבויט פֿון יידן איבערן נאָרער העלט בשותפות מיט דער פּוילישער רעגירונג, האָט נעקאָסט אויבער וויכציק מיליאָן דאָלאָר, און חענט וויַיזן אַז דער חורבן איז קיינמאָל נישט נעוען אַ באַשערטער רעזולטאַט פֿון די אָנעשטרענגעטע באַציונגען צוישן פּוילישע יידן און קריסטן. מיט דעם אָנטקעגן פֿון די לעצטע עדות וואָס האָבן דוכנולעבט די נעטאָ איז וויכטיק צו האָבן פֿאָר אַ יונגער דור יידן און פּאָלאַקן, אַ מאָרענדעס דעמאָלְ צו די וואַרשעווער נעטאָ אופֿשטאַנד.

פֿאָר די פֿון אייך וואָס זיַינען קאָמפּיוטער פֿעיק וויל איך רעקאָמענדירן אַ קורץ נעשיכטע פֿון – "די נעטאָ אופֿשטאַנד" – נעשריבן פֿון מאָרעק עדעלמאַן. מע קען עס נעפֿינען דורך "נוגל": The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, by Marek Edelman

אויב איר האָט נעדאַנקען חענן אונדזער וויקל שרייבט דורך פּאָסט אַדער בליץ- פּאָסט: info@cjnews.com

The Hittites: a forgotten people rediscovered

The Hittites were a people who, although mentioned in the Bible, were virtually unknown until the late 19th and early 20th century.

Early in the 20th century, German archeologists came upon an imposing site called Boghazkoy, on central Turkey's Anatolian plateau, in the bend of the Halys River. It has been continuously excavated ever since, with minor interruptions during the two world wars.

We now know that the major phases of Hittite power occurred in the second millennium BCE during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, and were divided into the Old and New Hittite Kingdoms. The Old Hittite Kingdom flourished in the first half of the second millennium, while the New Kingdom was a major power in the Near East from 1420 until 1200 BCE during the Late Bronze Age.

We first hear of the Hittites from documents found in the Old Assyrian trading colony of Kanesh, modern Kultepe, in southeastern Turkey, circa 1750 BCE. They quickly rose to become a major power in the region, and one of their kings, Mursilis I, sacked Babylon in a lightning raid, either in 1590 or 1550 BCE (depending on which chronology one uses), bringing to an end the city's first dynasty, made famous by the well-known Hammurabi. There seems to be evidence that Mursilis himself was murdered upon his return home. It was an act that plunged the Hittite kingdom into almost two centuries of chaos.

It was during the next phase of their history, New Kingdom, that the Hittites would become major players in the history of the Ancient Near East. This was the period that the renowned American Egyptologist, James Henry Breasted, called the First International Age. It's represented by the large cache of tablets found at the court and capital of the heretic Pharaoh Amenhotep IV, better known as Akhenaten. These documents are known as the Amarna tablets, named after the modern Egyptian site, Tell el Amarna, where they were discovered.

Past Forward

Alex Gropper

One of the Hittite princes almost became pharaoh of Egypt when the widow of the famous Tutankhamun (Akhenaten's successor), Ankhesenamun, asked the Hittite king to send her one of his sons to marry. However, there seems to be evidence that he was murdered on his way to Egypt.

The Hittites would have a chance for revenge at the Battle of Kadesh, circa 1274 BCE, when they fought Ramses II. It's the only ancient battle for which we have two accounts, both the Egyptian and the Hittite. Each side claimed a victory, but it would seem that the Hittites did better since Egypt virtually withdrew from Syria after the battle.

Afterward, both sides drew up a peace treaty, of which we also have two copies. It would be one of the last bouts of glory for the two empires, as they were about to be engulfed by the mass migrations and population displacements at the end of the Bronze Age, circa 1200-1150 BCE. It was these upheavals that would bring Israel to the former Egyptian province of Canaan.

Passover cleaning, Part 2

Cleaning and cooking and so many dishes/ Out with the chametz, no pasta, no knishes/ Fish that's gefilted, horseradish that stings/ These are a few of our Passover things. **[http://bit.ly/passclean8]**

If Passover cleaning isn't one of your favourite things, you're not alone. But as the days count down to Passover, take a break. Commiserate with coreligionists. And meet some who actually look forward to the annual ordeal.

Debra Nussbaum Cohen is not in that camp. It's the cleaning competitiveness that gets to her. As when her friends kvetch, "'Oh, Sammy brought chametz into the living room after I turned it upside down to clean it for Pesach (sigh)," or "I told Maddie to stay out of the closet. I already cleaned but she got in there (sigh)." Nussbaum says it's time for women to unshackle themselves from "Brillo bondage." **[http://bit.ly/passclean16]**

Elana Sztokman is a sister in arms. "I think we women should stop trying to seek approval, be it from other women, from our mothers, from our neighbours, or from men… I would rather spend some imperfect time with imperfect friends and family making imperfect art and music at an imperfectly set table, where we can share our flaws and our real strengths, and laugh and smile our way through this wonderful holiday." **[http://bit.ly/passclean17]**

The late *Jerusalem Post* humorist Sam Orbaum set his sights on the annual cleaning ritual – and his wife's rush to chuck out the non-kosher for Passover food, including a jar of date spread. "Whoa there. That's the one commandment I *do* observe religiously: thou shalt not throw away perfectly good food. We have an understanding in my home: the kids get first dibs.

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

What they leave over, we offer the cat, what the cat doesn't want is my supper. So that's why, the other night, we all sat down to a delicious meal of honeyed date-spread patties with marshmallow topping (left over from Lag b'Omer) on a bed of lemon wafers (Purim). When I asked the kids what they'd like for dessert, they begged for broccoli." **[http://bit.ly/passclean18]**

In "The Joys (?) of Passover Cleaning," Emuna Braverman utters some very controversial words: "I'm beginning to feel like an endangered species, because I like Passover. It's actually my favourite holiday." This fact dawned on her after she attended one of those Passover getaways where everything is done for you. "And I learned an important lesson. Studying the ideas underlying Passover was not the true preparation… It was the physical effort that led to the emotional and intellectual preparation. I felt less prepared when I didn't take out my special dishes, when I didn't clean my children's bedrooms… And I felt more alone. That crucial link to other Jewish women was not being forged… So, much as I would like a vacation, as tempting as some events sound, I've returned to what I enjoy. I can't wait to start cleaning." **[http://bit.ly/passclean9]**

When the plagues strike/ When the lice bite/ When we're feeling sad/ We simply remember our Passover things/ And then we don't feel so bad.

Have a Chag Kasher v'Samayach – a kosher and happy holiday.

Highway@rogers.com

On Pesach, I'm stickin' with the union

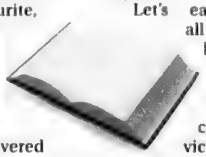
Rabbi Jennifer Gorman

Pesach is a holiday of many meanings. It's a holiday of freedom. It's the holiday on which b'nei Ya'akov became Am Yisrael. It's the holiday most deeply embedded in the Jewish psyche, but it's also a day of strong family and personal meaning. "*V'haya ki yomru aleichem b'neichem ma ha'avodah hazot lachem* (Shmot 12:26). "And it shall happen that your children shall say to you, 'What is this service to you?'"

I hail from socialist, Zionist stock. I was raised on the music of the labour movement in English, Yiddish and Hebrew. Holidays were a connection to generations of freedom fighters, to the union leaders of my grandparents' and parents' generation, and to those generations of Jews willing to stand up to oppression from the time of Mitzrayim until today.

Pesach was the greatest of all. We sang slave spirituals and labour songs. We recited a poem called *The Greatest Walkout Ever Known*. These ideals were thoroughly embedded by the time my own children were born. They learned Woody Guthrie lyrics alongside the *Shema*. We smiled every time our eldest sang out "You can't scare me. I'm stickin' with the union!" Over time our children's taste in music moved on from Woody Guthrie's *Songs to Grow By* to Alice Cooper. The Beatles are a huge favourite,

Rabbinic Reflections



and our eldest has discovered classical music.

Still, Pesach is the time we return to our roots. We are again singing the spirituals of "When Israel was in Egypt land, let my people go..." and "For the old man is a comin' for to carry you to freedom, follow the drinking gourd." We do this because God took us out of Egypt, saying to us that we shall follow the mitzvot, especially those regarding the treatment of others, because we were once slaves in Egypt. This is the meaning of this service to us. We understand. We're not afraid to stand up to tyranny and injustice, and we're sticking with the union that binds us as a community and a nation throughout history and into the future.

There is an old Jewish joke, "They tried to kill us. We won. Let's eat." Throughout all of history, Jews have not only fought against oppression and hatred, we have celebrated our victories. It's not the victory over others, but the victory over hatred, injustice and oppression.

We celebrate because we know it could have been different. We know because we live it. We live it as a collective memory, we live it through history, and we live it each and every day.

Rabbi Jennifer Gorman is executive director of Mercaz-Canada, www.mercaz.ca.

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Best wishes for Good Health and Happiness at Passover

Expanding the discourse

As Pesach approaches, it's easy to get caught up with all the preparations, the invitations and the menu. It's easy to forget that this holiday is a celebration of so many things that year after year we could choose our focus. One year we may decide to centre our seder conversations around freedom, another year it might be redemption, and yet another year it might be human suffering. The goal of the seder, and the holiday in its entirety, is to experience the challenges of ancient Israel and realize that these remain challenges to the human condition even in our modern world.

Pesach is filled with politics, from the personal to the national. On the personal political level, we all experience the question of who will be going to which seder. Who will be hosting and how much time will we spend on the ritual before getting to the food. There are family members who enjoy the philosophical/religious discussions, and there are family members who roll their eyes and count the pages of the Haggadah. We are all seated around the same table.

The national politics usually address questions of whether the message of Pesach is particular to the Jewish People or a global message. Should we put an orange on the seder plate to remember gay, lesbian and other fringe groups who do not yet feel welcomed? Should we introduce the idea of Miriam's Cup, or should we remain strictly traditional? All of these questions are wonderful fodder for seder discussions, something the sages promoted.

Midrashic Moments

Rachael Turkienicz

Pesach is a time for broadening our view of Jewish possibilities. It's an opportunity to expand our discourse and hear ideas we would otherwise not get the chance to explore. Whether or not one is ready to embrace a new practice is irrelevant. The important aspect of Pesach is to seize the moment for discussion – to let our minds truly experience the freedom of a free-thinking person and explore new thoughts.

Even if nothing changes around our seder tables, we can choose innovation in our approaches. The great Torah commentator Maharal stated that the four cups of wine at the seder table are representative of the four matriarchs. He has introduced the idea that we are framing our seder with the strength of our ancestral women. We could follow this theme and decide to discuss the strong women of our particular families. We can honour the memories of those who have passed away as well as recognize and celebrate the women present in our lives. We could discuss each woman as we prepare to drink each of the four cups of wine.

We would truly be enacting the goal of the sages, since the midrash stated that Israel was redeemed from Egypt due to the merit of our righteous women – the women of the ancient world, in our four cups and the women of today, in our enriched conversations around the seder table. It's a tremendous way to experience the celebration of this great holiday.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

Festival Schedule Available in the April 4th CJN
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What's New

By LILA SARICK

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Deadline reminder: Deadlines will change because of Passover. March 28 is the deadline for the issue of April 11. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 21

JOB FAIR

A summer/seasonal community job fair, organized by JVS Toronto, for students and adults, will be held starting at 4 p.m., 540 Finch Ave. W. Pre-registration required. 416-661-3010, ext. 3406.

BIBLICAL CURRENT EVENTS

Rabbi Michael Dolgin discusses "Using Ancient Texts to Understand Modern Israeli Society," tonight and March 28, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

JEWISH TEXTS

Rabbi Eva Goldfinger discusses "Contemporary Jewish Texts and Their Import for the Future of Judaism," with Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 7 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr. $20. 416-385-3910.

Saturday, March 23

BROTHERHOOD SHABBAT

Bernie Farber discusses "Is Canada Losing Its Human Rights Agenda?" at Beth David's brotherhood Shabbat. RSVP in advance for lunch. Email to: brotherhood@bethdavid.com or www.bethdavid.com.

HAVDALAH ON ICE

Temple Har Zion hosts Havdalah on Ice, 5:30 p.m., Elvis Stojko Arena. RSVP by March 21, thzskates@gmail.com.

SHABBAT CHAZZANUT

Cantor Jacob Mendelsohn, creator of the film *A Cantor's Tale*, hosts a Shabbat Chazzanut, 8:45 a.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. Special kiddush following services. 416-783-6103.

Thursday, March 28

COMMUNITY CONCERT

A community choral concert featuring the voices of Beth Radom Congregation, Holy Blossom Temple Singers, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir, Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir, Toronto Jewish Chorus, Temple Emanu-El, Temple Shaarei-Beth El, Toronto Jewish Male Choir and Kol Rina Women's Choir, presented at 7:30 p.m., Beth Radom Congregation, 18 Reiner Rd. $20 suggested donation, proceeds to local Jewish charities.

PIRKEI AVOT

Rabbi Cory Weiss leads a study of Pirkei Avot, Thursdays at noon, Temple Har Zion.

DOC POMUS

Doc Pomus Restrospective. Enjoy an evening of music and soul with **Jordan Klapman** and **John Mays**, 8 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. For more information, contact Claire Horowitz at 416-663-3838, ext. 242, or visit www.beby.org.

BOOZE AND VIEWS

Oraynu Congregation's young adult group discusses "Jews, Booze and Views: Circumcision," Pauper's Pub, 539 Bloor St. W., 7:30 p.m. RSVP **Denise**, 416-854-0133.

Other News

SEDERS & PRE-PESACH PREP

Beth Sholom Synagogue hosts a pre-Passover dinner March 22 with children's entertainment. Call 647-873-1238 or naomi@bethsholom.net. The synagogue holds a

Continued on page 23

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Happy Passover

Adath Israel Synagogue
Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue
Beth Sholom Synagogue
Beth Shalom Synagogue (Ottawa)
Beth Torah Synagogue
B'nai Shalom of Halton Peel
Lodzer Synagogue

Eric Gossin, President

Continued from page 22

chocolate seder March 23, 10:30 a.m. Reservations required.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue holds a chocolate seder, March 24, 1:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Chabad of Markham holds a seder, March 25. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or info@chabadmarkham.org.

Am Shalom Congregation, Barrie, hosts a seder, March 26. Registration required. 705-792-3949.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a seder, March 25. RSVP 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Chabad of Markham hosts a seder March 25. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or info@chabadmarkham.org.

The Chai Centre is holding seders March 25 and 26. RSVP 416-271-0659 or email info@thechaicentre.com.

THEATRE TRIPS

Beth Emeth Synagogue is offering theatre trips to Stratford and Shaw festivals this summer. To book, call 416-633-3838 or theatre@bebyorg.

TORAH TOTS & KINDERCAMP

Registration is now open for Torah Tots, which is offering a full daycare program and Kindercamp, for children ages 2 to 6. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 227 for daycare or ext. 221 for camp or www.kindercamp.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Meals on Wheels needs volunteers to deliver meals to seniors. Call **Karen Sacke**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

LONERS IN THE BIBLE

Mitch Parker teaches a course on Loners and Outsiders in the Tanach, Thursdays at 7:15 p.m., starting April 18, Holy Blossom Temple. Sponsored by the Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning. Advance registration required, 416-789-7400.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2-12. Starts March 21, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors holds a seder, March 26, Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. Tickets on sale at the Betel Centre.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Bingo, April 9, 12:30 p.m.; Casino Rama, April 17; Sunday dance, April 21, 7 p.m.; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. March 21, "Healthy Eating, Part II," 1:30 p.m.; An archeology class, "The History of Ancient Israel," taught by **David Lipovitch**, begins Thursdays, April 4, 1 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starting in May. Become a more informed patient, a better caregiver or a more competent guardian of your well-being. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Baycrest is offering a falls prevention course for older adults living in the community who have fallen or have a fear of falling. OHIP covered. Course starts April 15. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

Hadar Senior Citizens Social Club is looking for new members. The club meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Call **Phyllis** 905-889-5722.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. **Osnat Lipa** presents "Influential Jewish Artists and Their Art," April 16, 23, 30. $36.

Circle of Care/Baycrest Day Centre for Seniors provides a secure Jewish environment for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

A Support Group for Russian-Speaking Seniors is offered by Circle of Care. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale. Registration now open for spring courses.

Courses offered are: Borsht Belt and Bubbameises, starts April 8; Bridge levels 1-3 starts April 8; Mah-jong evening class starts April 8, daytime class starts April 10; Advanced bridge starts April 11.

"Europe United and Divided," taught by **Hugh Innis**, starts April 9; "What's So Funny: The Complex World of Comedy," taught by **Kevin Courrier**, starts April 10; "Influential Jewish Artists," taught by **Osnat Lippa** starts April 11; Yoga with **Dorry Korn** starts April 11.

The Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp will run a Passover camp, March 25, 28, 29 and April 3. Depot bus service, daily indoor swim and camp programming. Call **Lauren Grundland**, ext. 4039, or lauren@centrecamp.ca. Register directly at centrecamp.ca.

MILES NADAL JCC

JCC Family Ice Skate at The Pavilion, March 24, 3-6 p.m. info@centrecamp.ca.

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Registration for spring classes, March 20 for MNJCC members and March 28 for non-members.

A community seder will be held March 25. Reservations, 416-516-2005.

Rabbi Aaron Levy teaches "From Barley to Psychology: Evolving Approaches to the Omer," April 3-24, 7:30 p.m. Ext. 154.

What Is Toronto? A performance curated by Toronto historians and civic thinkers, will be presented April 5, Al Green Theatre. Pre-show chat 7:30 p.m., show at 8 p.m.

Zuzana Sermer, author of *Survival Kit*, gives a Yom Hashoah lecture, April 7, 11 a.m.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

The Women's Chorus with conductor **Gillian Steyck** meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. No auditions needed.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets April 10, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

Nurture: Stories of New Midlife Mothers is in the gallery until April 21.

Young Frankenstein presented by the Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre, April 11-21. 416-324-1259.

Call for submissions for the Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition 2013. Deadline is July 2, 2013. For guidelines, see www.mnjcc.org/CJPC.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Pizza party and animal show for grandparents and grandchildren, March 24, 10 a.m. Call ext. 3037.

StrollerFit classes for mothers and babies start April 11. Call **Tonya**, ext. 3028.

Registration now open for the centre's big band, starts April 10. Call **Staci**, ext. 3037.

PJ Library time with a Yiddish twist, May 5, 3:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 19

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Quebecers' books about Jews are bestsellers

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Two very different books with strong Jewish themes by francophone Quebecers are bestsellers in Montreal this month.

Pourquoi moi? Ma vie chez les Juifs hassidiques (Les Editions Libre Expression) by Lise Ravary and *Anita, une fille numérotée* (Les Edition XYZ) by Claude Jasmin were No. 14 and No. 22, respectively, on the bookstore Renaud-Bray's list of most popular books last week.

The former is veteran journalist Ravary's memoir of her powerful attraction to Judaism – unusual for someone who describes herself as a Québécoise *de souche* from Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. She was editor-in-chief of *Chatelaine* and *Elle Québec*, and founding editor of *Elle Canada* magazines.

Disillusioned since her teens with the Catholic faith she was raised in, Ravary began her journey toward conversion to Judaism following a trip to Israel some 20 years ago.

Jasmin's lightly fictionalized short novel is a story of star-crossed love set after World War II. The narrator (clearly Jasmin) falls madly in love with a Jewish girl, a Holocaust survivor. There is no happy ending. In fact, the story concludes under a cloud that has hung over Jasmin for the rest of his life. Jasmin has never before told his real life love for such a girl and how it abruptly ended, and the book has a confessional tone.

To read entire story, go to cjnews.com.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Maria Malinsky	Feb 27/13	1 Royal Parkside Drive
Paula Kates	Feb 28/13	5 Wakunda Place
Aniko Barta	Feb 1/13	4998 De Maisonneuve W.
Susan Barrett	Mar 1/13	139 Merton Street
Barney Daiter	Mar 1/13	60 Vinci Crescent
George Sarkozi	Feb 25/13	351 Christie Street
Althea Wine	Mar 2/13	120 Promenade Circle
Karen Moscovitz	Mar 2/13	100 Yorkville Avenue
Daisy Biderman	Mar 3/13	147 Elder Street
Sam Kotzer	Mar 3/13	65 Yorkville Avenue
Sophie Casselman	Mar 2/13	65 Shallmar Blvd.
Ruth Harris	Mar 3/13	590 Oshawa Blvd., N.
Barbara Brenzel	Mar 3/13	160 Wellesley Street, E.
Barbara Lampcov	Mar 4/13	4 Ridley Blvd.
Molly Medoff Kopelow	Mar 4/13	7601 Bathurst Street
Morris Greiver	Mar 4/13	33 Lawnview Drive
Joyce Glazier	Mar 5/13	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Joyce Starkman	Mar 5/13	229 Shaughessy Blvd.
Lou Waese	Mar 5/13	2500 Bathurst Street
Erna Cooper	Mar 6/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Phil Balaban	Mar 6/13	4005 Bayview Avenue
Sam Brownstone	Mar 7/13	65 Spring Garden Ave.
Mel Brass	Mar 7/13	302 Silvana Crescent
Fay Geitzhals	Mar 8/13	74 Renondo Drive
Dr. Ian Wexler	Mar 8/13	7 Overdale Road
Harold Goldman	Mar 7/13	1500 Steeles Ave. West

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Trnuig, Sam	Feb. 26/13	88 Charles St
Kam, Sara	Feb. 26/13	4001 Bayview Ave
Karasin, Joseph Ruben	Feb. 25/13	15 Bideford Ave
Green, Israel	Feb. 28/13	61 Clanton Park Rd
Veltman, Efim	Feb. 27/13	Private
Pozner, Haia Rose	Feb. 28/13	137 Toporofski Ave
Mintz, Sofia	Feb. 28/13	Private
Jakter, Sam	March 2/13	120 Promenade Circle
Olin, Oded	March 2/13	6 Overbrook Place
Elzikovich, Rivka	March 2/13	
Zimmerman, Wolf	March 2/13	52 Thornbrook Crt
Ruben, Gordon	March 1/13	645 Castlefield Ave
Partnoy, Norman	March 4/13	29 Glen Cres
Karpati, Itzhak	March 4/13	60 Langtry Place
Reiss, Morris	March 8/13	3560 Bathurst St
Aronovich, Aharon	March 10/13	541 Finch Ave. W
Lightstone, Irving	March 8/13	5 Fisherville Rd
Frounson, Evgueni	March 7/13	Private
Weinberg, David	March 8/13	Private
Weiss, Piri	March 10/13	Private
Goldfarb, Abraham	March 8/13	187 Acton Ave

HEBREW BASIC

Miriam Tivoli	Mar 2/13	784 Centre Street
Irwin Lea	Mar 2/13	1650 Sheppard Ave. East
Ida Wisben	Mar 7/13	429 Walmer Road

HOWARD IZENBERG MONUMENTS

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Susan (Kobor) Barrett

passed away on March 1st peacefully in her sleep after a courageous year with cancer.
Susan leaves behind her parents Peter and Hedda, children Michael (Emily) and Jessica, beloved partner Peter, siblings Suzanne and Gabor (Edyie, Andrea, Matthew), and niece Lisa (Jordanna, Adam).
Susan lost Tony, her husband of 20 years in 2002.

The family of the late
WOLF ZIMMERMAN ז"ל
Would like to thank all of their family and friends for their donations and kind expressions of sympathy during their recent bereavement. It is deeply appreciated & greatly acknowleged.
The Gelberman & Richards Families

BROWNSTONE, Sam - On Thursday, March 7, 2013 at North York General Hospital. Sam Brownstone, beloved husband of Odette. Loving father of Harvey Brownstone. Dear brother of Meyer, and Sheiky Brownstone. Sam will also be sadly missed by his extended family and friends. At Benjamin's Park Memorial Chapel, 2401 Steeles Avenue West (3 lights west of Dufferin) for service on Friday, March 8, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. Interment Beth Tikvah Synagogue Section of Pardes Shalom Cemetery. If desired, memorial donations may be made to the North York Seniors Centre, 21 Hendon Avenue, Toronto, M2M 4G8, 416-733-4111 ext. 208 or to Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 416-221-3433.

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We gratefully acknowledge the overwhelming number of family members, friends, colleagues, students and patients who have honoured the memory of Gerald, our beloved husband, father, grandfather, son and brother.

We are deeply touched and we thank you.

Nancy, Andrew and Ayelet, Jason and Ellie, Suzanne and Christian, Sam, Naomi, Will, Neige, Joa, Noam, Esther and Michael

To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling. To place any other related notice, please call 10 DAYS prior to publication date.

416-391-1836

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Israel Truth Week fights 'obvious lies'

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Fighting anti-Israel "radicalism" isn't just for Jews – everybody must support Jewish students on campus, says Mark Vandermaas, a civil rights activist and founder of Israel Truth Week, which has been holding events in several Canadian cities this month.

"We're sending a message to Jewish students and their families that they're not alone," Vandermaas said.

He uses the term "week" loosely when referring to his campaign, which is in its second year.

A two-day conference took place in Hamilton, Ont., on March 5 and 6 featuring 21 speakers whom Vandermaas described as "local knowledge experts," including human rights advocate Majed El Shafie, who helps rescue people who are persecuted based on their faith.

In the week after the conference, March 11 to 15, the right-leaning Canadian Patriotic Society (CPS) held daily two-hour vigils at York University. There was also a student-run event at Ryerson University organized by the Ryerson Israeli Student Association and Ryerson Campus Conservatives.

The week of vigils at York came one week after Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) took place on the school's main campus.

CPS member Sharon Isac said IAW inspired her to become involved in Israel Truth Week.

"Even as an ordinary... citizen, not of Jewish descent or of any religious faith, I take great offence in being lied to and feel shame in seeing the obvious lies and delegitimization of a sovereign state that has existed for more than 60 years," said Isac, who is Japanese-Canadian.

Mark Vandermaas speaking at the Israel Truth Week conference *(David Strutt photos)*

Israel Truth Week conference keynote speaker Majed El Shafie

Although Vandermaas' family is not Jewish, his father escaped from a Nazi war camp during the German occupation of Holland, he said.

His interest in pro-Israel activism grew out of his criticism of how police handled protests that erupted in Caledonia, Ont., in 2006, when aboriginals demonstrated for nearly a year against a construction site they said was on native land. He says anti-Israel groups were supporting what he described as the protesters' "lawlessness" there.

The final straw, he said, was when he heard about an event celebrating Israeli culture at the University of Western Ontario that was shut down by anti-Israel protesters. He decided something needed to be done.

Vandermaas said this year's Israel Truth Week was "light years ahead" of the inaugural version. Only 50 people attended last year's one-day conference, though he noted that it was put together with very short notice. This year, however, about 200 people attended over two days.

But Vandermaas said he's not concerned about numbers. He considers the campaign a success, because it has attracted enough people that it could take on a life of its own even if he were no longer involved. As well, he said, it has helped him make several valuable connections, such as Rabbi Jonathan Hausman in Boston, who ran a panel discussion there this year.

Additionally, conference organizers raised about $14,000 for Alyn Hospital, a pediatric and adolescent rehab facility in Jerusalem.

He said he hopes Israel Truth Week will continue to grow.

"The thing to remember is that Israeli Apartheid Week is about attacking values. Israel is a proxy for all of the traditional liberal values that we in the West hold dear," he said. "We have to defend those values whether those victims are in Israel or here."

Isac agreed, saying the CPS considers it a matter of upholding democratic values and principles.

"Unless we are prepared to take a stand and defend them vigorously, with our lives if necessary, we are in danger of losing them," she said.

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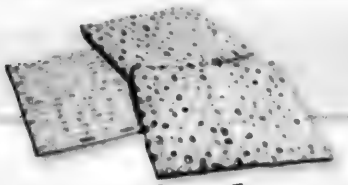
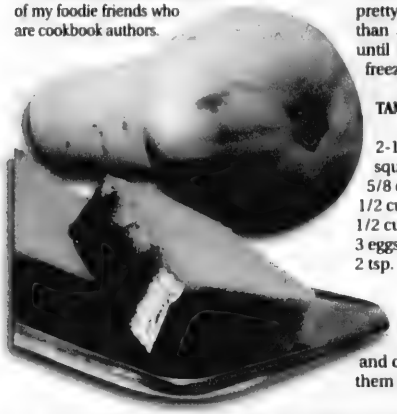


Passover Food Ideas

A magical matzah tour – dining with the authors

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

All aboard the magical matzah! We're going on a culinary tour to see what's cooking in the kitchens of several of my foodie friends who are cookbook authors.



First stop is in Jerusalem at the home of cookbook author and food writer, Tamar Ansh. She is the author of *Pesach – Anything's Possible: Over 350 Non-Gebrochts, Gluten-Free & Wheat-Free recipes.* Tamar writes: "Here's a great kugel recipe that is neat, pretty and a totally different colour and taste than all other kugels you've probably met until now! Plus it's baked, not fried in oil, freezes well and presents so beautifully."

TAMAR ANSH'S BUTTERNUT SQUASH KUGEL

2-1/2 cups cooked and mashed butternut squash (about 2 medium squashes)
5/8 cup potato starch
1/2 cup oil
1/2 cup sugar
3 eggs
2 tsp. cinnamon

Cut the butternut squash in half lengthwise. Place the pieces in a large pot with about 2 inches of water, and cover the pot. Bring to a boil and cook them for 30 minutes, until the squash is fork tender. Remove the squash from the pot and let it cool. Scoop out the meat from the skin, discarding the skins. Mash the squash meat and measure out the amount needed.

Tip: Any extra squash can easily be frozen and used later in a vegetable soup.

Preheat the oven to 350. Sift the potato starch over the mashed squash with a small sifter or tea strainer. (This prevents lumps.) Add in the oil, sugar and eggs. Mix together, by hand, very well until the batter is smooth.

Line an 8 x 11-in. baking pan or two medium-sized loaf pans with baking paper or spray them with baking spray. Pour the batter into the pan(s). Sprinkle the cinnamon over the top of the kugel. Bake for 40–45 minutes, until the centre of the kugel tests firm when pierced with a knife. The centre of the kugel, even when firm, should still be a bit moist. Be careful not to overbake the kugel. When it is done, it also cracks slightly on top. Serves approximately 8.

Tip: This kugel slices neatest when it is cold. Make it one day in advance. The next day, slice it into neat squares and then it can be served cold or warmed up again, covered, for 10 minutes before serving.

• • •

It's time to get back on board the magical matzah for our next stop – so welcome to my Toronto kitchen. I can hear you asking: "Another kugel recipe?" They say if you're having three guests for dinner, six kugels should be enough! I've made various versions of this farfel vegetable kugel for family and friends over the years and it's always a hit. The basic concept came from my late mom's recipe for her farfel kigelach, which she made in muffin tins. I've updated it, adding lots of vegetables to make it healthier than the original version.

NORENE'S FARFEL AND BROCCOLI KUGEL

This scrumptious kugel serves a large crowd, making it perfect for Passover entertaining.

4 cups matzah farfel
3 cups vegetable or chicken broth
3 cups chopped broccoli
2 tbsp. olive oil

Continued on page 28

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Recipes with a healthy twist

Continued from page 27

2 medium onions, chopped
1 red or yellow bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 cups sliced mushrooms
2 cloves garlic (2 tsp. minced)
1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley (or 1 tbsp. dried)
1 1/2 tsp. salt (or to taste)
1/2 tsp. black pepper
5 eggs
paprika for garnish

Preheat oven to 375. Spray a 9x13-in. baking dish with cooking spray.

In a large bowl, combine matzah farfel with broth. Let stand for 10 minutes or until the liquid has been absorbed.

Meanwhile, in a 4-cup glass measuring cup or bowl, microwave broccoli covered on high for 4 minutes, until tender-crisp. Let stand covered for 1 minute. Cool and add to farfel.

Heat oil in a large skillet on medium heat. Add onions, bell peppers, mushrooms and garlic. Sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Cool slightly.

Add cooked vegetables, parsley, salt and pepper and eggs to farfel/broccoli mixture and mix well.

Spread mixture evenly in prepared baking dish and sprinkle with paprika.

Bake uncovered for 45 to 55 minutes. When done, kugel will be golden and crusty. Yield: 12 or more servings.

Note: Keeps up to 3 days in the refrigerator. Freezes and reheats well.

Variations:

Instead of broccoli, substitute cauliflower florets.

For an elegant twist, use a mixture of mushrooms (e.g., cremini, shiitake, portobello).

Mini Farfel Kugels: Fill sprayed muffin pans three-quarters full. Bake at 375 about 25 to 30 minutes, until golden.

• • •

The next stop is in Long Island, N.Y., at the home of cookbook author and registered dietitian Bonnie R. Giller. Bonnie is the author of *Passover the Healthy Way: Light, Tasty* and *Easy Recipes Your Whole Family Will Enjoy*, which contains more than 100 taste-tested traditional kosher recipes with a healthy twist. For information, visit www.passoverthehealthyway.com.

Bonnie and I became virtual friends via Facebook, where she offers expert nutrition advice to her many fans and clients. I was delighted when she agreed to share one of her healthy and delicious Passover recipes with me for this article.

BONNIE GILLER'S CHICKEN WITH HONEY WINE SAUCE

2 whole chickens, cut into quarters (about 3 lb. each)
1/2 tsp. pepper
1 cup dry red wine
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp. dried thyme
1 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried sage (omit if not available)
1/4 cup honey

Preheat oven to 400. Place chicken in a large, deep roasting pan. Sprinkle with pepper. Combine remaining ingredients, stirring to dissolve honey.

Pour over chicken. Roast, basting frequently, until chicken is tender and browned, about 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 hours. Serves 8.

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Choose 1: Coleslaw or baby spinach salad with red onion, toasted almonds, Mandarin oranges and citrus vinaigrette.

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Choose 1: Garlic mashed potatoes with caramelized onions, vegetable farfel or herb roasted mini potatoes.

Choose 1: Green beans with caramelized onions and toasted almonds or candied roasted root vegetables topped with toasted pecans.

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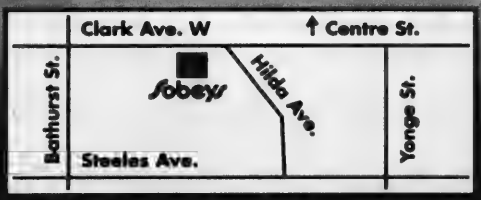

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Israeli chefs prepare feast

Anna Harwood
Special to The CJN

Pesach need not be a time to compromise in the kitchen. It is still possible to serve a sumptuous feast while being careful not to include chametz. As Israel's top hotels are gearing up for one of their busiest periods, executive chefs Moti Bochbut and Charlie Fadida from the Inbal Jerusalem and Sheraton Tel Aviv respectively, took time out to share a few of their most popular Pesach recipes.

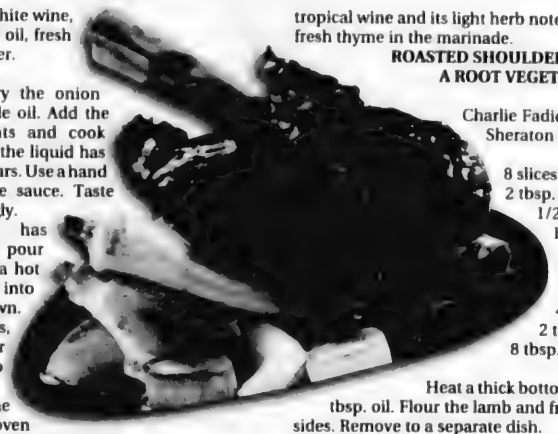
SEARED SALMON FILLET ON A BED OF ROASTED EGGPLANT WITH PEPPERS AND TOMATOES

Chef Moti Bochbut, executive chef Inbal Jerusalem Hotel

4 salmon fillets (with skin attached)
4 cloves of crushed garlic
3 tbsp. olive oil (plus extra for frying)
bunch of fresh thyme, chopped
juice of 3 oranges
1 cup white wine (Sauvignon Blanc recommended)
salt, pepper
1 eggplant, peeled and cut into 3 cm.-thick rounds
2 tbsp. olive oil
¼ cup vinegar
2 tbsp. honey
radish sprouts or roasted pepper to decorate

Tomato sauce:
4 fresh tomatoes, chopped
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 red pepper, coarsely chopped
2 cloves of fresh garlic
3 tbsp. white wine
1/2 cup vegetable stock
salt, pepper,

Soak the salmon fillets for around an hour in a marinade of the orange juice, white wine, garlic, 3 tbsp. of olive oil, fresh thyme, salt and pepper.



Make the sauce: Fry the onion and garlic with a little oil. Add the remaining ingredients and cook over a low heat until the liquid has absorbed all the flavours. Use a hand blender to blend the sauce. Taste and season accordingly.

When the fish has finished marinating, pour a little olive oil into a hot pan and place the fish into the pan, skin side down. Cook for two minutes, flip and cook the other side for a further two minutes.

Place the fish to the side and preheat the oven to 180. Heat the fish for a further 4 minutes in the oven when ready to serve.

Fry the eggplant in a hot pan with a little olive oil on both sides until it turns a golden brown.

In a small pan, boil the vinegar and honey and then pour over the fried eggplant so that it can absorb the flavours.

To serve:

Place a slice of the roasted eggplant on each plate. Carefully place a fillet of salmon on top of each eggplant round and then decorate with radish sprouts or even a slice of roasted pepper.

Drizzle tomato sauce to the side of the fish and serve hot. Serves: 4

Wine Recommendation: This dish goes perfectly with the Mount Hermon White which is available in all good kosher wine stores. The Mount Hermon White is a deliciously tropical wine and its light herb notes will complement the fresh thyme in the marinade.

ROASTED SHOULDER OF LAMB IN A ROOT VEGETABLE SAUCE

Charlie Fadida, Executive Chef, the Sheraton Hotel, Tel Aviv

8 slices of lamb shoulder
2 tbsp. potato flour
1/2 bottle of dry red wine
1 carrot
1 onion
1 root vegetable
1 stick of celery
4 garlic cloves
2 tbsp. tomato paste
8 tbsp. olive oil

Heat a thick bottomed pan and add the 8 tbsp. oil. Flour the lamb and fry until golden on both sides. Remove to a separate dish.

Add the tomato paste to the pan and continue frying for another 5 minutes. Add the red wine and heat until the wine has decreased by half.

Return the meat to the pot and add water until the meat is ¾ of the way covered. Bring to the boil and season with salt and pepper.

Cover with aluminum foil and place in an oven, pre-heated to 350. After 2 hours cooking time, take the meat out and check that it has softened by pressing with finger. If so, remove from oven and serve.

Wine Recommendation: Lamb is a delicious, tender meat which needs to be matched carefully with a fitting wine. The Yarden 2T is up to the challenge with its intriguing mix of cherry, plum and floral notes layered with characters of spice, chocolate and French oak. It is a full bodied and flavour-rich wine which complements rather than overpowers this equally flavorsome dish.

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Is quinoa kosher for Passover?

Chavie Lieber
JTA

NEW YORK — On any given day, a wind might blow through the farmlands of South America, pick up an errant grain of barley and deposit it nearby among the vast rows of cultivated quinoa. If that barley manages to make its way into a sifted batch of quinoa, and avoid detection during repackaging, it could wind up gracing your seder table on Passover night.

However dubious it might seem, the scenario is among the reasons that the world's largest kosher certification agency is refusing to sanction quinoa for Passover consumption, potentially depriving Jewish consumers of a high-fibre, protein-rich staple that many have come to rely on during the weeklong holiday.

The Orthodox Union (OU) announced last year that it would not certify quinoa as kosher for Passover out of concern that quinoa falls into the category of kitniyot, a group of legumes forbidden because they look similar to grains proscribed on the holiday.

Rabbi Menachem Genack, CEO of OU Kosher, also cited the danger of quinoa crops grown in close proximity to wheat and barley fields.

Star-K, a rival kosher certification company based in Baltimore, has been certifying quinoa as Passover-friendly for years and dismisses what it sees as an outlandish prohibition.

Long a staple of the Andean diet, quinoa has earned a reputation as "the mother of all grains," celebrated for its high nutrient quality and as an alternative for those following a gluten-free diet. But quinoa is not a grain at all. It's a member of the goosefoot family, and closely related to spinach and beets.

On Passover – when wheat, oats, rye, spelt and barley are all prohibited – quinoa has emerged as a popular substitute.

That could change, however, with the world's major kosher certifier refusing to give quinoa its Passover seal of approval.

"We can't certify quinoa because it looks like a grain and people might get confused," Rabbi Genack said. "It's a disputed food, so we can't hold an opinion, and we don't certify it. Those who rely on the OU for a kashrut just won't have quinoa on Passover."

The OU's non-endorsement is the result of a debate within the organization's own ranks.

The OU is recommending that kosher consumers look to their local rabbis for guidance on the quinoa question.

Seder in Poland signifies rebirth of Jewish community

Beverly Levitt
Special to The CJN

Seven years ago, California entrepreneur Severyn Ashkenazy gathered in Warsaw, Poland with a small group of American and Polish Jews – all of whom had fled their native land during the Holocaust – and hosted the first Passover seder in that city since 1945.

That Passover actualized a rebirth of the Jewish community to Poland.

But Ashkenazy, whose brainchild the Warsaw celebration was, had a formidable time pulling it together. In fact, it was several years in the making.

Although there were 450 thriving synagogues and some three million Jews in the country before World War II, when the vibrant 66-year-old survivor went back to Poland in 1994, for the first time since he was a child, he found only a handful of haredi Jews.

Ashkenazy thought that if there was a supportive, progressive Jewish community in Warsaw, these "quiet Jews" could reclaim their identity and make peace with their past. And so Beit Warshawa – congregation of Warsaw – was born.

Ashkenazy's first order of business: to host a Passover seder. "It wasn't easy convincing anybody to attend," says Ashkenazy, comfortably seated in his art-filled home in Beverly Hills, Calif. "But we are a people who are constantly saved by miracles, so our group persevered."

"The first seder, which was held in a hotel, in a room near the garden," he relays, had just 20 people – eight Jews and a smattering of Poles. "We were just happy to have anybody participate," he says.

"We ate delicious dishes I remember my mother making – kugels, tsimmes, gefilte fish, chicken soup with knaidlech, brisket, macaroons, and compotes – beloved Passover recipes that had their origins in Poland. They were so comforting; it reminded me of a more innocent time," he says.

Now, the community has its first full-time rabbi , Burt Schuman, from Altoona, PA, and the congregation boasts more than 1,500 people.

ROAST CHICKEN

From *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen* by Joan Nathan, Schocken Books, 1988.

2 - 3 1/2 lb. chicken, quartered
salt to taste
pepper to taste
seasoning salt to taste
paprika to taste
2 large cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
2 dozen pearl onions, left whole with skin intact
2 dozen small white potatoes, left whole with skin intact
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup white Passover wine
vegetable oil as needed

Preheat oven to 350. Season chicken with salt, pepper, seasoning salt, paprika and garlic. Lay chicken, skin side up, in a roasting pan. Douse onions and potatoes with oil and seasonings; place in pan with chicken. Roast 20 minutes. Add a little water if pan becomes dry. Turn chicken over and roast 20 minutes more. Add wine to pan drippings and baste chicken periodically. Turn chicken over once more and roast 20 minutes with skin side up. If you like skin crisp, place chicken under broiler before serving. Serves 6 to 8.

MATZAH STUFFING

From *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen* by Joan Nathan, Schocken Books, 1988.

We recommend this dish be cooked outside the bird.

2 matzahs, broken into small pieces
1 large onion, grated, then drained
2 stalks celery, finely diced
4 mushrooms, quartered
2 tbsp. chicken fat or pareve margarine
3 tbsp. matzah meal
1 tbsp. chopped parsley
kosher salt and pepper to taste
paprika to taste

Preheat oven to 350. Soak matzah in hot water for 10 minutes, being careful not to let it get soggy. Drain thoroughly and squeeze excess liquid. Combine onion, celery, mushrooms with matzah. Sauté mixture in chicken fat or margarine, until golden. Add matzah meal, parsley, salt, pepper, paprika. Place in greased baking dish. If desired, dot with chicken fat or margarine. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden and slightly crisp on top. Makes 4 cups.

APPLE AND CARROT TSIMMES

From *Jewish Cooking in America* by Joan Nathan, Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.

Tsimmes is not only a beloved Ashkenazi side dish, in Yiddish the word means a "complicated procedure," "a mix-up," an "affair blown out of all proportion."

The word also translates as "trouble." A Jewish husband might have said to his wife or business associate, "Don't make such a tsimmes out of it."

While Jews in Lithuania used sweet potatoes and meat in their tsimmes, in Poland the main ingredient was carrots, accompanied, at the whim of the mama, by prunes, raisins, or apples.

6 carrots, peeled and sliced in 1/4 in. rounds
1/4 to 1/2 cup hot water
3 tart apples (Granny Smith) peeled, cored and sliced into thick wedges
3/4 cup brown or white onions, peeled, sliced, then sautéed until golden
1/2 cup raisins
1/4 cup brown sugar or honey, or to taste
salt to taste
1/8 tsp. white pepper
1 cup orange juice
2 tbsp.potato starch
1 to 2 tbsp. pareve margarine

Preheat oven to 350. Place carrots in a saucepan; add water and cook, about 5 to 8 minutes, until tender. Add apples for last 5 minutes of cooking time. Drain and turn carrots, apples and onions into a lightly greased 2 1/2-quart casserole. Add raisins, sugar or honey, salt and pepper. In a small bowl mix orange juice and potato starch until smooth. Pour over carrot-apple mixture. Dot with margarine and bake for 30 minutes or until the top is golden brown. Serves 8.

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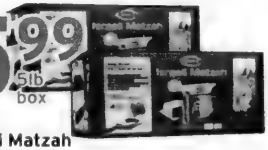

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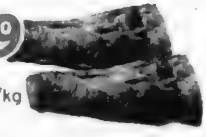

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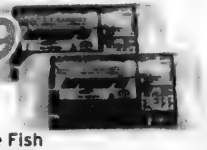

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Kicking up the matzah balls

Eileen Goltz
Special to The CJN

For close to 40 years my friend and I have carried on a debate as to which is the ultimate matzah ball. I contend that my mother's sinkers are best. He touts his lighter, fluffier floaters.

Flavour and texture can be built in several ways. For texture the most common method is by using plenty of stiffly beaten egg whites, which adds fluffiness. You can roll the balls to make them slightly compact.

In my opinion adding water or seltzer to a recipe doesn't really contribute anything substantial taste or texture wise.

The following recipes are all family and friend tested and run the gamut from classic to really way out there. The truth is there is only one truth when it comes to matzo balls, floater, sinker, baked, boiled or stuffed, they're all delicious when shared with family and friends.

HERBED MATZAH BALLS

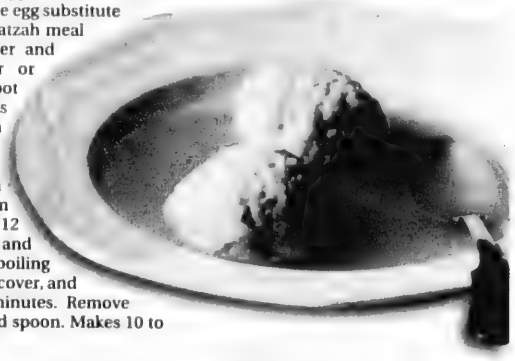
4 large eggs, beaten
6 tbsp. seltzer or club soda
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 cup matzah meal
salt and pepper to taste
2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh parsley
2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill
1 tsp. ground ginger

In a bowl combine the four eggs, seltzer, oil, salt and pepper. Stir in the matzo meal and herbs. Cover and refrigerate the mixture 2 hours. With wet hands, shape matzo balls into 2 1/2 inch balls. Boil 4 quarts of water or broth and add the matzo balls to boiling hot soup or water. Cover and simmer the matzo balls for about 15 minutes (don't peek). Makes 14 to 16 matzo balls

LOW CHOLESTEROL MATZAH BALLS

1 cup matzah meal
salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
4 egg whites
1/4 cup low-fat chicken broth
1 tbsp. finely chopped parsley, optional

Place matzah meal in medium bowl with 1 tsp. salt and pepper. In another bowl combine the egg substitute, broth and parsley. Pour the egg substitute mixture over the matzah meal and mix well. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour or longer. Fill large pot with 4 to 5 quarts of water. Season to taste with salt, then bring to boil. Moisten hands with cold water. Form dough into 10 to 12 medium size balls and drop them into the boiling water. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer. 20 to 30 minutes. Remove carefully with slotted spoon. Makes 10 to 12 matzah balls.



STUFFED AND BAKED MATZAH BALLS

vegetable oil for greasing muffin pans
4 large eggs, slightly beaten
2 tbsp. oil
1 cup matzah meal
2 tsp.salt
2 tbsp. chopped parsley
6 tbsp. chicken soup or water

Filling:
1 onion, chopped extra fine
2 tbsp. oil
2 tbsp. matzah meal
1 egg yolk
salt and freshly ground pepper
dash of cinnamon
water
oil
12 cups chicken soup

Grease cups of a 12-cup muffin pan and set aside. In a medium bowl, beat eggs and oil together. Stir in the matzah meal, salt and parsley. Add the chicken soup or water. Refrigerate 1 hour or more, to absorb the liquid. Meanwhile, make the filling. Fry onion in oil or chicken fat over medium heat until it is very crisp. Cool slightly and then mix in 2 tbsp. matzah meal and egg yolk. Season to taste with salt, pepper and cinnamon.

Dip palms of your hands in cold water. Form 12 matzah balls from the refrigerated mixture, wetting your hands as needed to keep them from sticking. Spoon a heaping teaspoon of filling into the middle of the matzah ball and close well. Fill a 6-quart pot with a lid with salted water and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and drop in the matzah balls.

Cover pot and cook just at a simmer for 30 minutes or until plump. Remove matzah balls with a slotted spoon and put them in the greased muffin tins. Coat each matzah ball with a little oil and bake in preheated 350-degree oven for about 30 minutes, or until golden brown. To serve, place one matzah ball in the centre of a soup bowl and spoon chicken soup over. Makes 12 matzah balls or 6 servings.

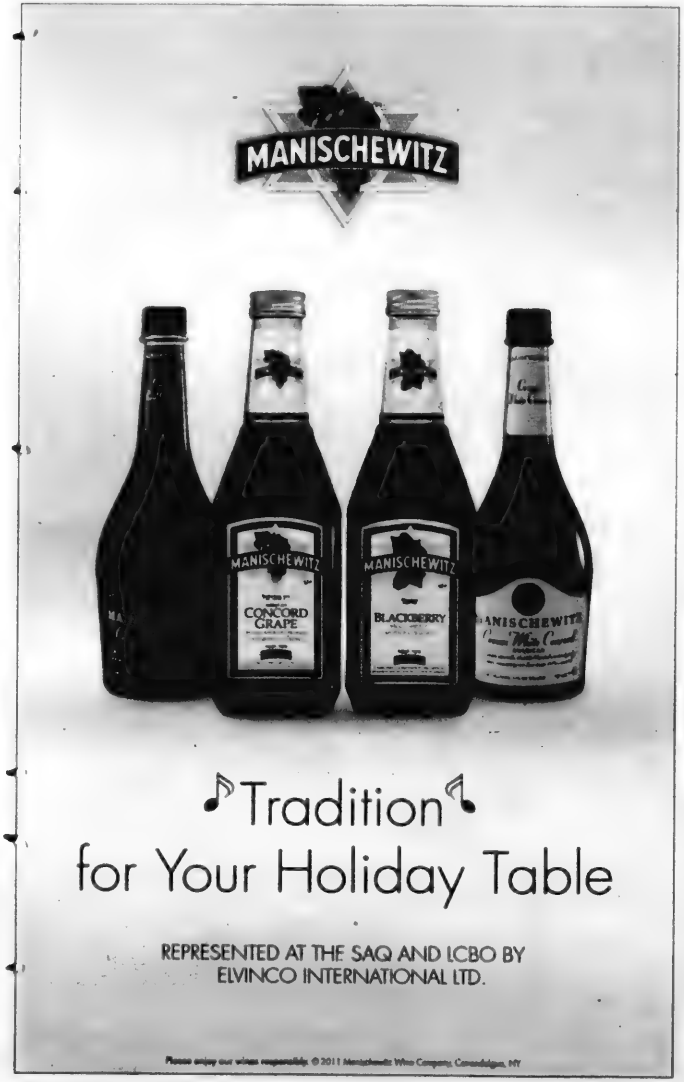
JULIE'S BUBBIE'S MATZAH BALLS

4 eggs
1/2 cup club soda
3 tbsp. vegetable oil
2 tbsp. finely chopped parsley
salt
2 tsp. dried parsley
freshly ground black pepper
1 cup matzah meal

In a bowl whisk the eggs until just blended. Add the club soda, vegetable oil, salt and pepper. Go easy on the salt. Blend in the parsley and matzo meal. Cover and refrigerate this mixture for about 1 hour.

Bring about 5 quarts of water to boil. Rub vegetable oil on hands and form matzo balls with about two tablespoons of mixture. Drop in boiling water and simmer covered and don't [illegible] (okay, maybe once or twice) for about 2[illegible] 35 minutes.

submitted by Julie Materberg, Pittsburgh PA



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Israel has a new government

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu drove the short distance from his residence to the president's residence Saturday night to formally confirm to President Shimon Peres that he has managed to muster a majority coalition.

Peres charged him with that task on Feb. 2 in the wake of the Jan. 22 elections, and gave him a two-week extension four weeks later, making Saturday the final day of Netanyahu's maximum six-week allocation.

"I've fulfilled the mission with which you entrusted me," Netanyahu told Peres.

Netanyahu said the coming year would be "a critical year" marked by challenges in the security sphere and the economic sphere, and by efforts to make peace. "I believe we can bring good news for all Israel's citizens in all these fields," he said. "That's my task, and I know it's your prayer."

Peres said he knew how hard it had been to muster a majority, and congratulated Netanyahu on managing the task. Peres said that along with the challenges facing Israel, "there are lots of opportunities in the areas of security, social action and peacemaking." This is the time to seize them for the good of the country and its people, he added.

Rabbi Shai Peron, left, Israel's minister of education, and his Yesh Atid colleague, Ofer Shelah, right, listen to their party leader, Yair Lapid, centre, as he speaks at a party meeting at the Knesset on March 18. The iconic photo in the background is of former prime minister David Ben-Gurion standing on his head on a beach in Tel Aviv. *[FLASH90 photo]*

Representatives of the Canadian Jewish community sent their congratulations to Israelis as well, in statements issued on March 15.

David Koschitzky, chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said his organization offers its "support to all those in the Knesset who have chosen the path of public service.

"We are confident that the incoming government – which reflects a broad spectrum of the Israeli public – will work to advance policy solutions that unite the country and improve the quality of life for all Israelis."

Continued on page 36

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'Showed solidarity with the Jewish community'

Continued from page 1

"He has celebrated Jewish holidays in synagogue and supervised a Kristallnacht commemoration in his cathedral in Buenos Aires. It seems clear there is a strong mutual understanding and friendship on which both the Catholic and Jewish communities can continue to build."

Rabbi David Rosen, director of interfaith affairs for the American Jewish Committee, told *JTA* that the new pope is a "warm and sweet and modest man" known in Buenos Aires for doing his own cooking and personally answering his phone.

After the bombing of the AMIA Jewish community centre in 1994, he "showed solidarity with the Jewish community," Rosen said.

In 2005, he was the first public personality to sign a petition for justice in the AMIA bombing case. He also was one of the signatories on a document called "85 victims, 85 signatures," as part of the bombing's 11th anniversary. In June 2010, he visited the rebuilt AMIA building to talk with Jewish leaders.

"Those who said Benedict was the last pope who would be a pope that lived through the Shoah, or that said there would not be another pope who had a personal connection to the Jewish People, they were wrong," Rosen said.

Soon after the chimney of the Sistine Chapel sent up a puff of white smoke signifying that the cardinals had selected a successor to Pope Benedict XVI, Francis addressed thousands of faithful from the balcony of St. Peter's Baslica.

"*Buonasera,*" he told them, saying "good evening" in Italian, and thanked his fellow cardinals for going "almost to the ends of the earth" to find him.

Pope Francis hosted a Kristallnacht memorial event at the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Cathedral

Benedict was the first pontiff to step down since 1415.

Israel Singer, the former head of the World Jewish Congress, said he spent time working with Pope Francis when the two were distributing aid to the poor in Buenos Aires in the early 2000s, part of a joint Jewish-Catholic program called Tzedaka.

"We went out to the barrios where Jews and Catholics were suffering together," Singer told *JTA*. "If everyone sat in chairs with handles, he would sit in the one without. He was always looking to be more modest. He's going to find it hard to wear all these uniforms."

Pope Francis also wrote the foreword of a book by Rabbi Sergio Bergman, a Buenos Aires legislator, and referred to him as "one of my teachers."

Last November, as a cardinal, Pope Francis hosted a Kristallnacht memorial event at the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Cathedral with Rabbi Alejandro Avruj from the NCI-Emanuel World Masorti congregation.

He has also worked with the Latin American Jewish Congress and held meetings with Jewish youth who participate in its New Generations program.

"The Latin American Jewish Congress has had a close relationship with Jorge Bergoglio for several years," Claudio Epelman, executive director of the Latin American Jewish Congress, told *JTA*. "We know his values and strengths. We have no doubt he will do a great job leading the Catholic Church."

In his visit to the Buenos Aires synagogue, according to the Catholic *Zenit* news agency, the then-archbishop Bergoglio told the congregation that he was there to examine his heart "like a pilgrim, together with you, my elder brothers.

"Today, here in this synagogue, we are made newly aware of the fact that we are a people on a journey and we place ourselves in God's presence," *Zenit* quoted archbishop Bergoglio as saying.

"We must look at Him and let Him look at us, to examine our heart in His presence and to ask ourselves if we are walking blamelessly."

Renzo Gattegna, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, offered Italian Jewry's congratulations to the new Pope with the "most fervent wishes" that his pontificate could bring "peace and brotherhood to all humanity."

In particular, Gattegna voiced the hope that there would be a continuation "with reciprocal satisfaction" of "the intense course of dialogue that the Jews have always hoped for and that has been also realized through the work of the popes who have led the church in the recent past."

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf

'We will act to improve the quality of life'

Continued from page 35

Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, said the new government was formed at "a critical moment in Israel's history" when the country's enemies are gathering strength.

"The prime minister of Israel and his new cabinet face enormous challenges in their search for true partners for peace. We want them to know that, in Canada, we recognize the enormity of these challenges and support all their efforts to find a realistic and lasting solution."

Netanyahu was able to report on his success after the Jewish Home and Yesh Atid parties finally signed a coalition agreement with Likud-Beiteinu Friday afternoon, paving the way for the new government to be sworn in on Monday.

Earlier on Saturday, Netanyahu also formally informed the Knesset's acting speaker, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, that the work of building a new coalition was complete.

Yair Lapid, the Yesh Atid leader, will be the minister of finance; Likud's Moshe Ya'alon will be minister of defence; the Foreign Ministry portfolio is being held vacant for Yisrael Beiteinu chief Avigdor Liberman. Likud's Zeev Elkin, who will be deputy foreign minister, said Saturday he had not been confirmed in the post, but anticipated that this would take place on Sunday.

Labor leader Shelly Yachimovich said

Naftali Bennett, the leader of Habayit Hayehudi (The Jewish Home) spoke to the media on Monday at the Knesset after the new government was sworn in.
[Flash90 photo]

Friday she looks forward to leading a robust opposition, and had no regrets about rejecting Netanyahu's repeated invitations to join the coalition.

"The new government will work together in full co-operation for the benefit of the entire Israeli public. We will act to strengthen the state of Israel's security and to improve the quality of life of its citizens," said Netanyahu in a statement Friday.

"We promised during elections to take care of the cost of living, to increase competition in the marketplace and to restore to the state its Jewish soul, and now we've got the tools to do it," Jewish Home head Naftali Bennett told reporters.

"With God's help, we signed it. The 33rd government is ready to go!" he wrote on his Facebook account. "I encourage Prime Minister Netanyahu and all of us cabinet ministers to remember that we are representatives of the entire Israeli public."

Tzipi Livni's Hatnua party signed up with the coalition last month, but Netanyahu then faced weeks of difficult talks with Jewish Home and Yesh Atid over coalition terms. Livni will lead peace efforts with the Palestinians, under Netanyahu's supervision. However, any territorial withdrawal, the coalition agreements reportedly state, will require a national referendum.

The two parties insisted on a smaller government – 22 ministers – and on commitments for radical reform to bring haredi men into military service and the workforce, for a "core curriculum" to be taught in haredi schools, and for electoral reform, among other issues. Their demands were anathema to the two haredi parties, Shas and United Torah Judaism, which will now be part of the 52-member Knesset opposition led by the Labor party.

Bennett will head the cabinet panel on concentration of wealth and market competition, and his party will head a joint Knesset committee tasked with drafting a new universal military conscription law.

The coalition comprises four parties: Likud-Beytenu (31 seats), Yesh Atid (19), Jewish Home (12) and Hatnua (6), for a total of 68 members in the 120-seat Knesset.

The outgoing government held its final meeting on Sunday. The new government was sworn in on Monday, some 48 hours before the scheduled arrival of U.S. President Barack Obama on his first official visit.

Timesofisrael.com
–With files from The CJN

Karsenty awaits verdict in latest al-Dura 'hoax' case

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Philippe Karsenty admits to being a little pessimistic.

A month ago, he appeared before the Paris Appeals Court in a case that arose out of the Muhammad al-Dura shooting hoax. The case has dragged on for years, and most recently he's had to again show how the French national broadcaster, France 2 TV, misled its viewers by wrongly claiming Israeli soldiers shot and killed the 12-year-old al-Dura at the Netzirim junction on the second day of the Palestinian intifadah in 2000.

Karsenty is upset because he feels the French establishment is arrayed against him, protecting one of its golden boys, France 2's Israel bureau chief, Charles Enderlin. "The whole French establishment is against the truth and against Israel," he said.

Karsenty also feels he hasn't received the kind of support he deserves from the government of Israel, which he says hasn't asserted its innocence in the case with nearly enough vigour.

"The State of Israel, by not defending itself, is putting the Jews around the world in a bad situation," Karsenty said.

He points to the way antisemites have fastened on the al-Dura incident to accuse Jews of a blood libel. Al-Dura became the poster boy for the intifadah. Postage stamps with his likeness were issued in the Arab world, and an al-Dura poster was clearly visible when Islamist terrorists murdered U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl.

"Al-Dura has a son and his name is Toulouse. As long as our enemy can say they are slaughtering our kids in revenge for theirs who were deliberately killed, too, we have a serious problem," Karsenty said. He was referring to the radical Islamist killer, Mohammed Merah, who in 2012 murdered a rabbi and three children at a Jewish day school in Toulouse.

Merah was inspired by the phony al-Dura allegations, Karsenty asserted.

Today, Karsenty awaits a verdict in his case, which will be delivered April 3. No matter how it goes, he feels he's in a lose-lose situation.

If the court rules against him, agreeing with a trial court that he libelled Enderlin by calling his report a hoax, he clearly loses.

But even if he wins, his opponents will argue it was only on a technicality.

"If I win, they'll find a way to discredit me in the media," he said.

Karsenty set off the seven-year legal imbroglio when he publicly, and loudly proclaimed that the French TV report on the al-Dura incident was a complete fabrication. He was sued and lost at trial, but he appealed.

During the appeal, the judges ordered Enderlin to make all the raw footage recorded by France 2's cameraman, Talal Abu Rahma, a self-professed supporter of the Palestinian cause, available to the court. Enderlin wasn't on the scene when the incident took place and relied on Abu Rahma for the content of his report.

The footage showed lengthy periods in which dozens, if not hundreds of Palestinians milled about at a time the report claimed they were being fired upon by Israelis. The footage does not support claims al-Dura was shot. In fact, it shows him moving after he supposedly was already dead.

As well, there were no obvious signs of blood, the bullet holes did not line up as they should have if Israelis were firing at him, and the footage showed Palestinians faking injuries, with ambulances arriving seconds afterward, suggesting made-for-TV news fabrications, later dubbed "Pallywood."

Karsenty won on appeal, but the Supreme Court ordered a new hearing, saying the lower court erred in compelling Enderlin to produce the footage. As the appellant, Karsenty was responsible for presenting evidence.

Despite the odds stacked against him, Karsenty does not regret putting so much of his energy into publicizing the "blood libel." But, "next time, I'd recommend doing so only if Israel is ready to fight."

Meanwhile, in France the establishment has rallied around Enderlin. Former president Nicolas Sarkozy presented Enderlin with France's Legion of Honour – after the case had gone to trial.

For Karsenty, that's just another indication that "French society is not ready to face the truth."

"In France, the media has decided that Israel is the monster, and they've decided to protect their anti-Israel propaganda. We need to face that. There's no political will to destroy the hoax."

Three more suspects arrested for Toulouse attacks

JTA

PARIS — Three men suspected of planning a terror attack inspired by Toulouse killer Mohamed Merah were arrested.

The suspects, who were not named, were arrested last week in Marignane and Saint-Cyr-sur-Mer near Marseille, Francois Molins of the Paris Prosecutor's Office said Monday at a news conference. Molins said they were in possession of weapons and a cache of explosives.

"The group was capable of committing a terrorist bomb attack on French soil within a short time frame, probably within a few days," he said.

Surveillance of their activities showed the men were "radical jihadists glorifying Mohamed Merah," Molins said, referring to the 23-year-old Islamist who killed three children and a rabbi at a Jewish school in Toulouse last year. Days earlier, Merah killed three French soldiers in two attacks.

In related news last week, police destroyed a fake explosive device found near a Jewish institution in the French city of Lyon.

A store owner told police that while walking past the city's Hillel Centre, he found a contraption made of three metal cylinders connected with metal wires to what looked like a cellular phone, according to a report on the incident by the SPCJ security unit of France's Jewish communities.

Police evacuated residents from nearby buildings before destroying the object, which according to the *20minutes.fr* news website was not a bomb.

"Whoever placed this did everything they could to make us believe this was a bomb," a city official said.

PA duped Norway

The Palestinian Authority misled Oslo when it said Norwegian aid money wasn't used to reward murderers of Israelis, Norway's foreign minister, Espen Barth Eide, said. "It is unfortunate that the incorrect information obtained from the Palestinian Authority was communicated to the Parliament," Eide said. Anders Anundsen, a lawmaker for the Progress Party, said the government has long claimed Norwegian aid did not go to Palestinians incarcerated in Israeli jails for murders and terrorist activities. The PA has pledged monthly payments to Palestinian prisoners in Israel since 2003 and raised payments by as much as 300 per cent in 2011, according to Israel's Channel 2 TV network. Eide's statement came after his ministry received new information that revealed a "major difference to what we have assumed, according to earlier information we received from the PA," Eide said. Norwegian aid to the PA came under scrutiny in Norway last month after a documentary aired by the NRK public broadcaster showed aid went to inciting hate against Israel. Norway, one of the Palestinians' strongest supporters in Europe, has contributed more than $50 million a year to the PA since 2008.

Schalit speaks out for Pollard

Freed Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit joined the call on U.S. President Barack Obama to release spy-for-Israel Jonathan Pollard. Schalit signed an online petition asking Obama to commute Pollard's life sentence to time served. "I have signed a petition and call on you to do the same. Freedom is a great gift and privilege," Schalit posted on his Facebook status. "I thank those who worked for my release, and now I ask you to join the struggle to save Pollard." More than 150,000 Israelis have signed the petition. The petition, which appears in Hebrew and English, was placed online Feb. 11 and will be hand delivered to Obama during his visit to Israel later this month, according to the Justice for Jonathan Pollard organization.

Crash kills two

An Israeli military helicopter crashed during a routine training flight, killing two crew members. Lt.-Col. Noam Ron, 49, of Oranit, and Maj. Erez Flekser, 31, of Haifa, both veteran military reservists, were killed when their Bell AH-1 Cobra crashed March 12 in southern Israel as it was travelling to Palmachim Air Base.

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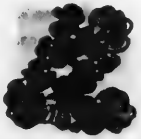

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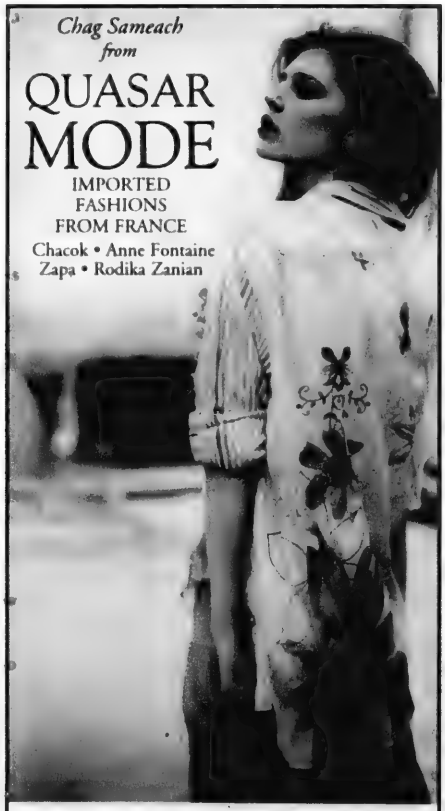

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Mexican resort and spa live up to top ratings

A little piece of paradise lies in the heart of Mexico's Riviera Nayarit at the Grand Velas Spa, at the AAA Five Diamond Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit. The all-suites resort has garnered numerous accolades, including from *Forbes* magazine, which declared it one of the 10 coolest all-inclusive resorts.

Kathryn Kates
Spa File

Just 15 minutes north of Puerto Vallarta on Banderas Bay, the ultra-luxurious spa, a member of the Leading Spas of the World, was named by SpaFinder Wellness as one of the 30 Hot Spas in North America, and with your first step through the spa's grand glass doors, you can understand why.

The warm, elegant spa, whose décor reflects Mexican, indigenous and local Nayarit (state) influences, is celebrating its 10th anniversary. The 16,500-square-foot sanctuary houses 20 treatment rooms, a gym and exercise room, a beauty salon and a spa boutique retailing lines such as Natura Bisse, as well as organic Mexican products. A focal point of the spa is the spacious hydrotherapy circuit that echoes relaxation from its flowing waters. An hour before any treatment, a valet guides each guest through the stations of the hydrotherapy area.

There are 52 staff members at the spa, including receptionists, valets, fitness instructors and 22 therapists who minister to clients seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Silvia Velasco, manager of the Grand Velas Spa, says that 40 per cent of the spa guests are men.

The Grand Velas Spa offers 60 European treatments and Asian-inspired therapies to energize the body and restore one's spirit. "After the hydrotherapy circuit, and once in the *cabine*, our treatments all begin with our spa welcome ritual," says Velasco. "We present a tray representing the four elements of nature and a paper butterfly, because butterflies represent the transformation received from your spa treatment.

"We are very proud because people make great comments, and I think it is because we give a special touch for everyone so that they feel like the only person that we attended to that day. When people leave, the expression on their faces says everything."

Velasco says the spa's most popular services are sports and holistic massages, as well as the therapeutic massage. "This massage is a combination of techniques, including reflexology and shiatsu."

A treatment not to be missed is the Four-Hand Samunprai Massage. It's a perfect way to release tension and muscular pain with the help of hot compressions containing exotic herbs, aromatherapy and two therapists working "hands-in-hands" for 80 blissful minutes.

Other pampering treatments offered include the 100-minute Magnetic Diamond Treatment and Diamond Experience Facial, named in honour of the spa's AAA Five Diamond rating; the Silk Magic Body Wrap; the Reflexo-thermal Mud Treatment, and just so fitting for this oceanfront resort, the Exotic Seashell Massage.

Spacious hydrotherapy circuit offers relaxation. *[Kathryn Kates photo]*

Romantic massages are offered on the beach of Banderas Bay or in the privacy of your suite. There are children's menus with 10 different services, including a Bubble or Princess Massage that can be enjoyed along with family members, also on the beach or en suite, as the spa caters to those 16 years and up, only.

Eight packages are presented as Spa Rituals, including the Green Spa Ritual with Avocado Seed Scrum, Seaweed Bath Therapy, Banana Leaves Body Wrap and Organic White Tea Facial, or the Diamond Ritual with a Crystalized Honey Scrub, Milk Bath Therapy, Neuro Aroma Massage and an Oxygenating Facial.

Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit features 267 large, modern ocean-view suites. It's a family-friendly resort with first-class service, from the top-notch restaurants to the tiered three-temperature infinity pools. There's also a tennis court, plenty of meeting space and a Kids Club. Close at hand are championship golf courses. There are a number of tours and activities offered by nearby outfits, including the Whale Photographic Safari from Vallarta Adventures.

If shops, art galleries and nightlife appeal to you, the Riviera Nayarit has it all, including the market in the fishing village of Bucerias, where souvenir shopping can be had at great bargains for those who know how to haggle; the bohemian art colony of Sayulita with its upscale shops and galleries or, to the south, the bustling city of Puerto Vallarta.

For more information about Grand Velas Spa treatments and Grand Velas Riviera Nayarit, call 1-877-398-2784 or online: www.vallarta.grandvelas.com. For more information about Riviera Nayarit, go to www.riviera-nayarit.com.

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Boutique owner is 'in love with fashion'

Vicky Tobianah
Special to the CJN

Every day looks different for Meira Elituv. The 27-year-old boutique owner might spend one day on the phone with Australian designers, another day in her clothing store in Toronto or sometimes she might be hiring models and overseeing photo shoots.

"You're not gonna work nine to five," she laughs. "You're gonna work nine till you faint."

But there's nothing she would change. "I can't explain why I'm so in love with fashion, but I am and always have been," she said. "Literally, since I was 11 years old flipping through fashion magazines, I've just loved it."

Elituv grew up in Toronto, where she attended the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT), Richmond Hill campus. After graduation she spent a year in Israel, then was accepted to fashion school in Los Angeles. She earned two degrees: one in fashion design and another in business administration. It was definitely a route that most of her CHAT peers had not taken.

"Looking back and seeing the directions my peers have gone into, I've seen there is sort of an expectation for a lot of people, a mould that graduating CHAT sets out for you," she said. "I didn't feel like there was any mould for me, and even if unconsciously I felt there was, I didn't let it stop me."

That confident attitude is something she took with her to Los Angeles, knowing that believing in yourself was key to succeeding in a competitive city like L.A. "You have to be comfortable doing what you're doing and not worry about the little failures," she said.

She immediately fell in love with the city – a perfect place for an aspiring fashion designer. "There's just such an energy about it, you kind of embrace it and it embraces you," she said.

The great weather was just a bonus. "I moved back [to Toronto] last year, and I'm so grateful that California has sun all the time. I'm missing it," she said. "Especially in fashion, I can't wear my suede heels out in the winter when it's icy."

Knowing how competitive the fashion industry can be, Elituv decided to condense all her classes into just a day and a half, during her last year of school, so she could also work full-time as a brand representative presenting to some of the city's biggest buyers.

"I didn't get a lot of sleep, and I can't remember how I did it because now when I don't get sleep, I'm just such a mess," she said. "But it was actually very smart of the school – they want you to work really hard when you're 19 or 20, so when you're 23 you can get a full-time job and you're ahead of the curve." The plan worked: upon graduation, she got a job at a private label company – and most of her colleagues were in their late 20s, making comparable salaries.

If you want to get into the fashion industry, it's definitely not easy and requires a lot of hard work, she said. You have to be prepared for long hours and learning how to work with diverse people all over the world. "It's a bicoastal industry – you're constantly talking to people everywhere, all over the world," said Elituv. "There were times I had to stay at the office till 10 p.m. at night because I was waiting for a call from Hong Kong."

But if you love fashion, then it will be worth it, she believes. "You can't do it if you don't love it," she said. "It's all I ever wanted to do."

She spent three years working in Los Angeles for different fashion companies before Limited Brands, the parent company to well-known brands such as Victoria's Secret and Bath & Body Works, recruited her. She moved to Ohio to become a merchant for them, where she spent a year and a half being completely involved in the design process – from buying to marketing the product to placing it in stores and tracking sales. "You get to have your hands in everything in such a detailed way," she said.

Meira Elituv, left, and and her sister, Tamara, are co-owners of the clothing store Cloakroom.

It was that experience that eventually led her to opening her own business. She decided to return home to Toronto, not knowing what type of career she would find here. But when a friend hired her to attend trade shows in the States, she was surprised to find out that many of them did not sell to any stores in Canada.

"It was an amazing opportunity for Canadian consumers who want to buy these kinds of designs," she said. "Where are the Canadian stores? Does the Canadian store not want to buy this stuff?"

The market was open to bring in specialty American and Australian designers to Canadian stores. In September 2012, along with her sister, Tamara, she opened Cloakroom, a fashion boutique, hoping to bring unique pieces to the Canadian consumer, at comparable prices to what it would cost in the United States. "No one was willing to take the risk," she said. "Our store was."

Just six months into the business, they're already debt-free. Elituv said running their own store has taught her and her sister a lot about how to succeed in the fashion world. Her top three tips?

"Never give up," she said. "You may have a lot of setback and failures, but don't give up – you need to push hard and go further and faster."

Second, she said you must keep an open mind. You may end up dreaming of becoming a designer and then find yourself in fashion marketing. These new experiences will only take you to places you'd never thought you could go.

Finally, she said you have to learn not to judge your own success based on the success of others.

"You shouldn't emulate someone else's career, you should carve your own path and be successful yourself," she said. "It's worth it."

For more information about Cloakroom, visit www.shopcloakroom.com.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

YOUNG VIOLINIST LYRIT MILGRAM WINS TEMPLE SINAI AWARD

Accomplished 21-year-old Toronto-born violinist **Lyrit Milgram** has studied with renowned teachers in Toronto, France, Barcelona and London. A graduate of the Purcell School in London and currently in her third year at the Royal College of Music there, she has already won many awards in Canada and Britain. And now comes another: Toronto's Temple Sinai Congregation recently named her as the winner of its 2013 Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award.

Milgram, who has performed in Britain, Europe, the United States and Israel, is scheduled to give a concert at Temple Sinai on Wednesday, June 19, 8 p.m. Unknown to the temple's jury of professional musicians who selected her as their unanimous choice, Milgram has a strong family connection to Temple Sinai: her grandparents, the late **Sophie** and **Samuel Milgram**, were both active members. 416-487-4161.

• • •

Synagogue Choirs in Concert: Hallel Songs of Praise is a community choral concert featuring the voices of Beth Radom Congregation, Holy Blossom Temple Singers, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir, Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir, Toronto Jewish Chorus, Temple Emanu-El, Temple Shaarei-Beth El, Toronto Jewish Male Choir and Kol Rina Women's Choir. Beth Radom Congregation, 18 Reiner Rd. Thursday, March 28, 7:30 p.m. $20 suggested donation. www.bethradom.com, 416-636-3451.

• • •

Names in the News: Toronto actors **Matt Baram** and **Naomi Snieckus**, co-founders of the National Theatre of the World, are bringing their series of improvised plays, *Impromptu Splendor*, to Tel Aviv, where they are scheduled to perform at the Centre Stage Theatre March 27 to 30. Baram appears in the Citytv comedy series *Seed*, and *Snieckus* appears in the CBC comedy *Mr. D.* and is a panellist on CBC's *George Stroumboulopoulos Tonight*.

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Arts in Brief

• American pianist **Jonathan Biss** matches two **Schumann** pieces for solo piano (*Fantasiestucke* and *Davidbundlertanze*) to 20th century works by **Leos Janacek** and **Alban Berg**, which are all deeply connected. He also presents a post-concert talk. Biss comes by his musical talent naturally: he is the child of Israeli-born violinist **Miriam Fried** and violist **Paul Biss**. $25 and up. Koerner Hall, Sunday, March 24, 3 p.m. www.rcmusic.ca

• Toronto-born and New York-based **Aubrey Glazer** reads some of his lyrical translations of Hebrew poetry by various poets in his new book Golden Molten Stream, with performances by Juno-nominee band **Jaffa Road**, **Aaron Bensoussan** and **Ernie Tollar**. Glazer was formerly a rabbi at Beth Tzedec and Beth Emeth congregations. $10 at the door. The Rivoli, 334 Queen St. W. Thursday, March 28, 7:30 for 8 p.m.

• The 21st Toronto Jewish Film Festival runs April 11 to 21. For tickets and schedule details, visit www.tjff.com

• Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre present *Young Frankenstein*, the **Mel Brooks** musical. $27, $32. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre, Thursday April 11 to Sunday April 21. 416-324-1259.

• Singer-dancer **Tanya Granovski** sings in Yiddish, Hebrew, English and Russian in Sing Me a Song in Yiddish, a benefit performance for the **Toronto Jewish Folk Choir**. **Alexander Veprinsky**, the choir's conductor, is to accompany Granovski on piano. $20 in advance, $25 at the door, VIP ticket $50; refreshments. Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Saturday, April 20, doors open 7 p.m.

• The **Ottawa Klezmer Band** performs its 35th anniversary concert on the fourth stage of the National Arts Centre, Ottawa, Saturday, March 23, 7:30 p.m.

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At the Galleries

• *Nurture: Stories of New MidLife Mothers* is an exhibition of photographs by **Shana Shureck** and **Tracy Cianflone**, curated by **Cyma Shapiro**. At the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until April 21.

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents Influential Jewish Artists and Their Art with art educator **Osnat Lipa**. This art appreciation program offers an illustrated overview of six important artists and their work, ranging from the folkloric themes of **Chagall** to the abstract canvases of **Mark Rothko**, and including **Camille Pissaro**, **Amadeus Modigliani**, **Chaim Soutine** and **Lucien Freud**. Miles Nadal JCC, on Tuesdays April 16, 23 and 30, 1:30 p.m. Registration begins March 28. $36 for the series, $15 per session at the door if space permits. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• The Art Gallery of Ontario is partnering with the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles to present a large exhibition of rare Florentine masterpieces, including more than 90 paintings, manuscripts, sculptures and stained glass from the 14th century. *Revealing the Early Renaissance: Stories and Secrets in Florentine Art* opened March 16 and runs to June 16. www.ago.net

• *Fine Art Photography* by Jack Gilbert continues at the Joseph D. Carrier Gallery, Columbus Centre, [illegible] Lawrence Ave. W., through April 1. www.carriergallery.com

Marty Feldman as Young Frankenstein

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Alon Nashman stars in witty contemporary comedy

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Veteran Toronto stage actor Alon Nashman is starring in *This*, a comedy by New York-based Canadian playwright Melissa James Gibson, currently running at Toronto's Berkeley Street Theatre.

Directed by Canadian Stage Company's artistic and general director, Matthew Jocelyn, *This* features Laura Condlin, Christian Laurin, Yanna McIntosh and Jonathon Young, an ensemble cast that Nashman calls an inspiring, A-list monster team.

"The play is a beautifully crafted Rubik's cube of relationships," says Nashman, who plays Alan.

> ***'The play is a beautifully crafted Rubik's cube'***

"College friends who have stayed together for years have been rocked by the loss of one of their members, the husband of Jane, the central character who everyone adores," Nashman says.

"In the course of her coming out of grieving, she is set up with a mysterious Frenchman who is a doctor without borders. This man throws all of their lives into a flurry, with all sorts of passions and jealousies coming to the fore."

Nashman says the play is a piercing observation of contemporary lives and our fascinations and it takes an extremely funny look at the way 30-somethings and 40-somethings are trying to find meaning in their lives.

Nashman's character is a gay friend of this group, who has a remarkable talent. "He can remember everything he has ever heard. He's a professional who actually goes on TV and makes his money remembering a lecture from college or remembering a conversation from awhile ago, and then they test him because they have a recording of the actual thing," Nashman says.

"That's his odd skill, and it comes into a personal and practical use when this finely honed group of friends start to break apart and remember arguments and conversations and he is able to correct everyone. He's a person you would never want around because he is incapable of forgetting."

Nashman says he's had the privilege of playing incredibly intelligent people before, including Einstein, Freud and Kafka. And once again he's playing a kind of Jewish genius. "What I love about him [the character] and what I can identify immensely with is his struggle to do the right thing and to bring some balance of significance to his life."

Alon Nashman

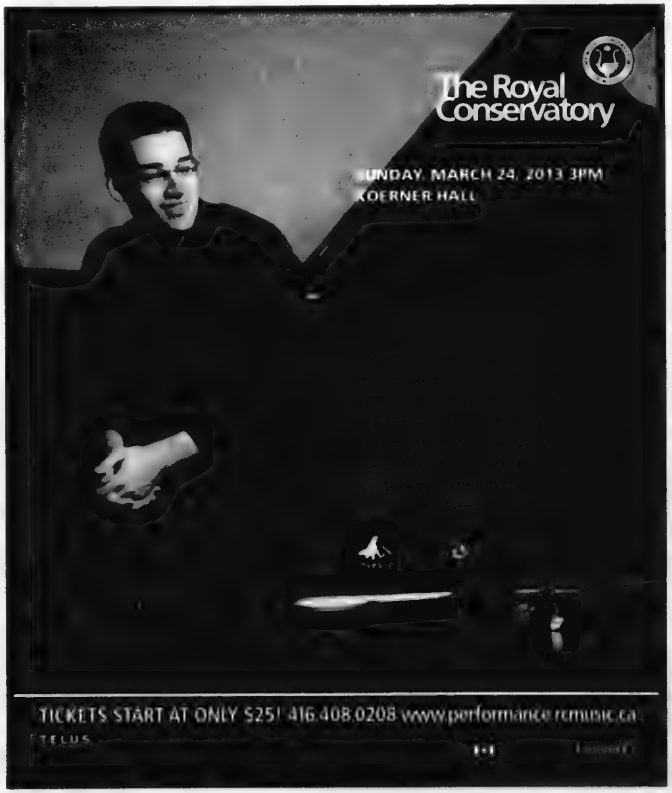
Nashman says that along with wit, there is a great deal of "heart" and "philosophy" in the script. "There is a kind of effervescence to the dialogue. Melissa James Gibson has laid out a phenomenal scavenger hunt for the audience – deeper and deeper into these characters. I think audiences will be delighted as well as provoked."

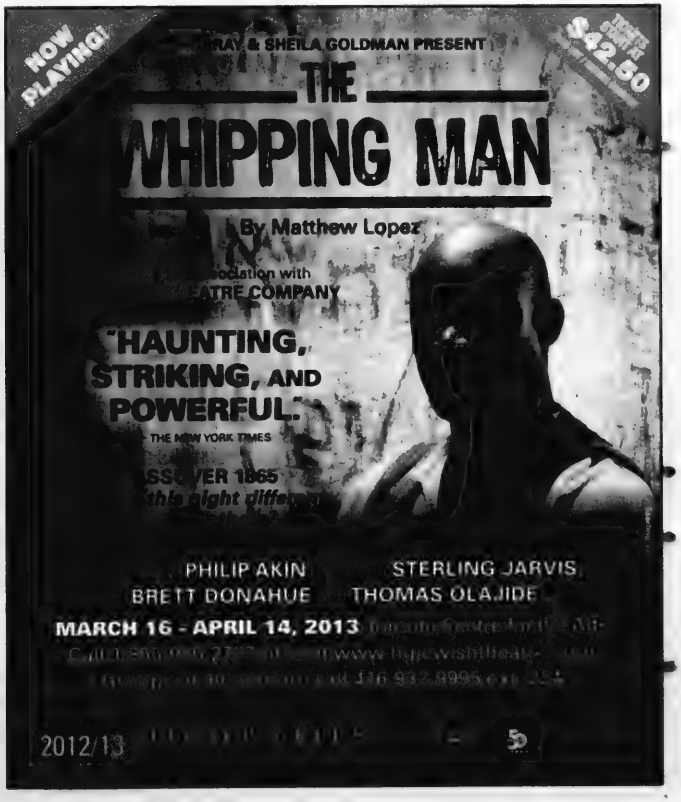
Nashman says the set design of *This* is so startling that audiences are going to walk into a space they think they know as the Berkeley Street Theatre and they are going to be upended by the way *This* uses it.

Nashman's long list of theatre credits includes *Picasso at the Lapin Agile, Forests, Scorched Democracy, The Wild Duck, Macbeth, Remnants* and most recently *Hirsch* at the Stratford Festival. *Hirsch* received a rave review from the *New York Times*. His film and TV credits include *Jonestown: Paradise Lost, Cinderella Man, Our Fathers, The Pact* and *The Assistant*.

This year, Nashman will be taking his one-man play, *Kafka and Son*, which he and Mark Dassidy created 10 years ago for the Ashkenaz Festival and has since toured across Canada, Iceland and Scotland, to Europe with a stop in Prague, Kafka's birthplace.

The play This *runs until April 13. For tickets, call 416-368-3110 or visit www.canadianstage.com.*





Stories that will leave the reader breathless

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

Once, as a young teenager, I had an uncanny, almost otherworldly experience that seemed to free me momentarily from the confines of my familiar world. I'd had an emotional scene at home (the details are forgotten) and needed an escape. I walked briskly into the backyard of our Bathurst Manor home and impulsively did something I had never done before – climb the triangular antenna mast that rose beside the house.

When I reached the roof, I took a few steps up the slope toward the peak, then stopped in astonishment as an unanticipated vista of bungalows – neat rows of them, street after street – suddenly hove into view. Spread out before me was a vigorous universe of parallel lives, all in close proximity. The sight took me out of myself and left me breathless.

I've found similar feelings described in wonderful stories such as Truman Capote's *The Tree of Night*, John Cheever's *The Enormous Radio*, and Steve Stern's *Zelik Rifkin and the Tree of Dreams*, a piece in Stern's recently published *The Book of Mischief: New & Selected Stories*. (Graywolf Press)

The protagonist of *Zelik Rifkin and the Tree of Dreams* is the teenaged Jewish nebbish of the title, who lives in the Jewish neighbourhood of Memphis, Tenn., known as "the Pinch," where he is bullied by his peers and ridiculed by Minnie Alabaster, the girl he adores. One stiflingly hot summer, residents of the Pinch escape their oppressive homes and camp overnight in a local park, and Zelik climbs into the branches of a leafy tree, partly to escape the mocking catcalls of his gang.

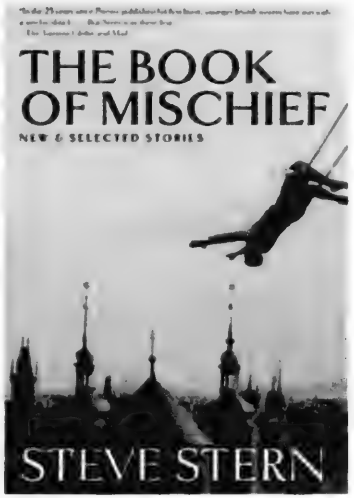
Climbing as high as he can, he encounters a sort of foggy cobweb and sticks his head through – and then discovers he can see into the lives of all his neighbours, many of whom are lying on blankets in the park below. Somehow all of their dreams have risen to a common level and congealed "at a height where some dauntless climber, provided he had the means of ascent, could reach them."

Each night over that sizzling summer, the local Jews take to sleeping outdoors, and the lowly Zelik giddily climbs the tree, puts his head through "the spiral ceiling of fog," and starts to feel as if he's floating over the neighbourhood just like the old Jew who floats over the shtetl in a Chagall painting. He sees the hidden worlds of most of the locals such as Lipman the cobbler, Max Taubenblatt the haberdasher, Aharon Notowitz the Hebrew teacher, and Mr. Silver, his boss at the grocery store who is enamoured with Zelik's mother.

Best of all, Zelik's nocturnal excursions seem to transform him in everybody else's eyes. Suddenly everyone is "giving him such a red carpet treatment, after years of either ignoring him or making fun," and even Minnie sees him as a hero. But as the weather changes and people begin sleeping at home again, their treatment of Zelik reverts to its former chill. Preferring the mystical world of dreams, the nebbish climbs up into the tree and pulls himself entirely into the fog, free at last from the confines of the world. As the story ends, his corporeal body falls from the tree with a "desolate shriek."

Stern typically writes about comically low characters leading drab, ordinary lives, who descend or ascend – it's not clear which – into a fabulous and other-worldly realm. He is a thoroughly Jewish writer with characters fully steeped in millennia of Jewish mysticism and lore, their deeds informed by centuries of Jewish *mishegas* and tradition. How, for example, do folks in the Pinch adapt to the record heat? "Wearing ice bags in place of their yarmulkes they gathered in panting quorums to say prayers invoking rain."

Not surprising for a longtime resident of Memphis who once compiled an oral history of its colourful



Jewish section, Stern has written numerous stories set in the Pinch. Others take place on New York's Lower East Side, in Europe and in the Catskills. His acclaimed 2010 novel *The Frozen Rabbi* combines the shtetl backdrop with modern America.

In the book, a Memphis teenager finds an Old-World rabbi from the shtetl preserved in his family's large freezer; the rabbi thaws out and adds dazzle to their mundane existence. A similar plot device is used to great effect in the story *The Tale of a Kite*, which features a diminutive and sprightly rabbi who floats upwards through a skylight to the upper realms.

In the story *Lazar Malkin Enters Heaven*, the title character is an obscenely old man who refuses to die; he is so decrepit that dust flies off him as from shaking a rug. In exasperation, the Malach Ha-mavet, the Angel of Death, pushes Lazar into an "empty burlap pedlar's sack" and carries him off. In a 2008 interview with *The Forward*, Stern said he realized after writing the story that many legendary Jews were similarly transported to heaven while still alive, from Enoch to the Prophet Elijah (for whom we pour a cup of wine at the Passover seder).

"It was as if I'd plucked a single flower and pulled up an immense root system, tangled in which were several thousand years of wanderings, holy texts and a multitude of ghosts," Stern explained. "Also enmeshed in those roots was a Yiddish literature aswarm with writers like I.L. Peretz, Itzik Manger, S. Ansky and I.B. Singer, writers whose stories ignored the boundaries between the ordinary and the fabulous."

Brimming with energy and allusion, Stern's "whiplash sentences" and sharp comic dialogue convey a Yiddish sensibility that seems reminiscent of Bernard Malamud, but with all of his ghosts and demons and mystical effects, he seems to be a natural successor to Singer in particular.

Stern, however, isn't always master of the perfect ending – his denouments often go on far too long. His Prague-set story, *The Man Who Would Be Kafka*, for example, brilliantly reproduces the Kafkaesque universe of fear and diminished human possibility as well as a modern Prague where Kafka is celebrated as a literary Elvis.

"The stalls devoted to tourist kitsch displayed Kafka postcards, stationery, coffee mugs; T-shirts bearing his silk-screened likeness hung on racks and the slumped shoulders of youths. A bronze head, fixed to the corner of a building where Kafka was allegedly born, exaggerated his features: the jug ears stretched to satanic points, the soft eyes rendered piercing as a mesmerists's, the forehead receding to a vampirish widow's peak. Look left and you saw a Kafka museum, right and there was the Kafka Bookstore & Cafe. Young men, wearing bowler hats and competing with one another in anemic dissipation, held placards advertising Kafka walking tours."

This is gorgeous, evocative prose; but the story goes much longer than it should and, like several other pieces in this collection, overextends its welcome. This collection might have been more dazzling had its creator taken better heed of the critical dictum, "Less is more."

Visit Bill Gladstone's website at www.billgladstone.ca

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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

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David L. Shulman
Special to The CJN

A song of ascents; of David:
Jerusalem is built like a city
That is closely compacted together.
That is where the tribes go up
The tribes of the Lord
To praise the name of the Lord
– Psalm 122

Just as the tribes went up to Jerusalem, so did more than 20,000 runners from 35 countries who participated in the third annual running of the 42-kilometre International Jerusalem Winner Marathon earlier this month.

Runners took part in one of the five races offered: the full marathon that attracted 1,100 participants; the half marathon; the 10-kilometre and 4.2-kilometre races, and an 800-metre "public race."

More than 14 non-profit aid agencies benefited from fundraising efforts linked to the marathon.

Runners started in Gan Sacker near the Knesset and fanned out over the Eternal City; all routes were hilly and challenging. The courses brought runners to the most beautiful parts of the city, including Rehavia, Mamilla and the Armenian and Jewish Quarters of the Old City. In addition, the half-marathon and full-marathon participants toured Armon Hanatziv and were treated to spectacular views of the Mount of Olives and the Old City. Marathoners additionally ran up Mount Scopus and circled the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where we saw far out onto the Judean Hills and the desert beyond. The marathon is appropriately promoted as a "Run Through History."

I was fortunate to run the March 1 marathon with people of many nationalities, including Belgians, Hungarians, a Danish group and a number of Christian groups.

They attracted no attention from the hundreds of Orthodox Jews running in their kippot, with payot and tzitzits flying in the wind. Orthodox women ran in runners' tights underneath their calf-length dresses. There were so many Orthodox runners that a synagogue tent was set up along the course. Is the "prayer station" due to become a marathon fixture?

The course was hilly enough to slow everyone down, but we also took time out to gaze awestruck at the views of Jerusalem and the surrounding area. I stopped dozens of times on the tops of hills to snap photographs and catch my breath. Needless to say, this was the slowest marathon I have ever run. It's no wonder that *Women's Running Magazine* in the United Kingdom named this marathon one of the world top 10 long-distance events, but suggested readers try the shorter runs – 10 kilometres or 21 kilometres, a half marathon – to avoid the "steep and potentially punishing climbs."

In addition to being the most challenging marathon I've run in, it was also the most heavily guarded. Israel Defence Forces soldiers were at every corner and, though armed, seemed relaxed. The soldiers yelled out encouragement to the runners as much as any other bystander.

Abraham Kabeto Ketla of Ethiopia finished first in two hours, 16 minutes and 29 seconds, setting a new course record. Mihiret Anamo Antonios, also of Ethiopia, set a record in the women's race with 2:47:26. The relatively slow times for these international-level runners was due to the difficult, hilly course, which was a challenge for runners of all levels.

The 2014 running of the Jerusalem Marathon is set for March 21. I may go up to Jerusalem once again for a marathon of ascents.

Tournament supports Reena

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

More than 300 players recently participated in the third annual Joel Schwartz Memorial Hockey Tournament, which raised more than $150,000 for Joel's Ongoing Inclusion Network (JOIN).

JOIN is an endowment fund that supports inclusion programming at Reena, a non-profit social-service agency that helps people with developmental disabilities. To date, the tournament has raised more than $400,000.

The March 10 event, held at Chesswood Arena in Toronto, was created in honour of Joel Schwartz, a Reena client who passed away in 2009 at the age of 25.

Diagnosed with Asperger syndrome early in his life, Schwartz faced many challenges but persevered with support. Just two months before he died, he participated in a CIE Birthright Israel trip with the help of a Reena volunteer.

Schwartz's brother, Jonathan, founded the annual hockey tournament with friends Zack Belzberg and Jesse Abrams. Jonathan said the endowment fund has "already committed capital to three inclusion-focused programs with the ability to support these programs in perpetuity."

The programs include the Reena Birthright Shadow Program, which covers half the cost of a shadow for each trip; subsidizing community-centre memberships for residents of the new Reena housing complex on the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Ont., and funding various inclusion-oriented programs co-ordinated by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Community Connect team.

Jonathan said he knows his brother would be "honoured to have initiated a charity for others like him to grow and develop into mature adults while finding their places in the world."

Belzberg said Joel loved to watch Jonathan's hockey games and would be "so happy" to see everyone united through the sport in his honour.

He said he hopes the evening allowed people to develop "a more informed understanding of Joel, why it's important to preserve his legacy, and how they have contributed to an initiative that is helping so many people just like him."

Through the creation of the endowment, "we now have the ability to connect our players and volunteers to the cause we are supporting. Our players are not only participating for the great hockey, but also to learn about and support those living with developmental disabilities."

Belzberg said the event was such a success because of many generous donations, tournament sponsors, a dedicated committee and 20 participating hockey teams. With the support of our community, the tournament has "experienced incredible growth and will continue to do so in the future."

For more information about the Joel Schwartz Memorial Hockey Tournament, visit www.jsmht.org.

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Dance gala supports brain health

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Baycrest raised $22 million for brain health this year, including $750,000 from its recent gala, Dancing With Our Stars, a charity spinoff of the hit TV show

The March 7 event, held at Toronto's Allstream Centre, Exhibition Place, brought out some 600 guests. Since its inception in 1989, Dancing With Our Stars has raised close to $15 million for Baycrest.

Presented by the Baycrest Foundation, the event paired community leaders with professional dance partners, to foxtrot, samba and tango their way into the hearts of the judges and audience.

Guest judges included musician-manager Jake Gold, dancer Jordan Clark and the host of the TV show *Cityline*, Tracy Moore. One of the evening's highlights was an impromptu Harlem Shake dance performed by hosts Dina Pugliese and Kevin Frankish, Canadian television personalities.

Dancing With Our Stars co-chairs were Warren Kimel, general manager and vice-president of Fabricland Distributors, as well as the chair of the Baycrest Foundation, and Keith Pelley, president of Rogers Media.

All of the fundraising occurred before the event. To raise funds, the dancers posted videos on YouTube so that sponsors could support a dancer. David Purdy was the top fundraiser.

Dancing With Our Stars dancers, from left, are Joshua Wise and Sarah-Maude Thibaudeau; Nicole Inwentash and Daniel Studenny; Margaret Nightengale and Mikhail Zaslavskiy, and David Purdy and Tanya Laremchuk
(Susan Minuk photo)

The dancers each had their own personal reasons to dance for brain health.

Nicole Inwentash, 24, wanted to raise awareness in the younger generation about the issue of aging brain health with which many of her peers are unfamiliar. "Illness related to the aging brain can affect anyone," she said. "We want to have the best technology out there to help treat the illness, so when the time comes for the younger generation to need it, it's there," she told *The CJN*.

Purdy, a senior vice-president of Rogers Communications Inc., added, "Everyone has a family member or friend who is affected by aging brain health. That's why I'm putting my best foot forward to help Baycrest achieve its goals."

Dancer Joshua Wise, senior wealth adviser of Wise Wealth Management Group of Scotia McLeod, said, "This touches me personally because my immediate family is affected by Alzheimer's. Raising funds for this cause seemed like a worthy challenge."

Baycrest is a global leader and one of the world's most comprehensive centres for aging brain health.

"We provide wellness and outreach programs, residential housing, outpatient clinics, a long-term care home, a 300-bed hospital and an independent-living facility," said Susan Sutton, president of Baycrest Foundation and Baycrest's vice-president of global institutional advancement. "What that means is that our proven research can be applied immediately to help the people we serve, so our expertise is second to none."

Dr. Nicole Anderson, a senior scientist at the Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest, said how the brain ages and why some people's brains hold up better is a complex puzzle involving an interplay of genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors.

"Successful aging studies consistently point to a few fundamental qualities of a brain-health lifestyle," she said. "The overall message is to stay active, mentally, physically and socially. The most powerful thing we can do is engage in aerobic exercise."

Baycrest is still very Jewish, leaders stress

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Despite what some people may think or have heard, Baycrest wants you to know that it's still very much a Jewish institution.

Since 1918, when the Toronto Jewish Old Folks Home, the forerunner to the Baycrest Health Sciences, opened in downtown Toronto, Baycrest has maintained its deep Jewish roots, says Dr. William Reichman, its president and CEO.

As one of the most successful health-care institutions in the world, he said, "the Jewish guys got it right."

Speaking in an interview at Baycrest, along with Garry Foster, chair of the board of directors, Reichman said that at least 90 per cent of residents in long-term care are Jewish.

"We always open our doors to people in crisis, but Jewish people get first priority. The government has recognized that this is a special place for Jews. It has a Jewish '*tam*,'" Reichman said.

To help serve their needs, Reichman said, Rabbi Geoffrey Haber came on board last year as the new director of spiritual care, and Baycrest's department of cultural, arts and innovation offers synagogue services, holiday celebrations and a Holocaust resource program.

"If anything, we have deeper Jewish roots. The community left us a legacy that we inherited. The depth of that feeling is so strong that it has never changed."

The history of the organization is one of visionary dreams, he said. "[As part of that vision] the Jewish community decided that it wasn't enough to take care of the people on Bathurst Street. Trying to [build upon a legacy] is not a new concept. Tikkun olam is part of Jewish philosophy."

That vision included the establishment in 1989 of Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute, which has scientists in the field of brain research studying memory, brain function and conditions such as Alzheimer's and strokes.

Reichman said that none of the money used by the Rotman Institute is money that would have gone to resident care and services.

"The vast majority of that money comes from outside funding. We have an $18-million annual research budget, and donors support 30 to 35 per cent of it. We [depend on] philanthropy to support [research] activities. We cannot conduct research unless we have money."

As the population ages, said Reichman, "we need this [research.] We have to bring in the best doctors, teachers, everyone, to find the next practice point of research."

A new theatre at Baycrest's Abe Posluns Auditorium, the Jacob Family Theatre, funded by Ellis Jacob, president and CEO of Cineplex Inc. in memory of his mother Tryphosa, will play a part in the research.

In addition to showing Hollywood movies for residents, it will also assist with tele-health and tele-education programs.

Foster said that Baycrest's reputation is resonating outside the Jewish community. "[Professionals] come to us on Bathurst Street to develop services to take to [countries all over the world.]"

Garry Foster and Dr. William Reichman

Foster stressed that "taking knowledge abroad does not mean we are leaving the Jewish community behind. It is our roots and the centre of what we do. We will never outgrow the community."

Baycrest is the jewel of the Canadian health-care system, Foster said. "We are world renowned, and we should be proud. This doesn't exist in the United States. [The community] built fertile ground [in order to] plant flowers in senior care."

Reichman said that with about 800 people waiting to get into its Apotex Centre long-term care residence, and other residents waiting to get into an alternative level of care, Baycrest needs to find solutions.

"This is a serious problem in Ontario. The solution is helping people stay at home, but we don't yet have the means to support people at home. We need to get the message out there that aging at home is an [appropriate strategy.]"

Independence, please!

Married With Kids

Lauren Kramer

My daughters are chomping at the bit for independence. These nine-year-old twins want to walk into the retail village 10 minutes from their front door in Richmond, B.C., order a hot chocolate at Starbucks and saunter around without the supervision of adult eyes.

Part of me would love to give them that freedom. But most of me is terrified something will happen. The cute, historic heart of our neighbourhood looks innocuous by day, its community centre, library and swimming pool heavily populated by young families. They spill out of the cafes, kids munching on croissants and parents tenderly clasping their coffee cups. It looks precisely like the kind of place where you'd want to raise a family, and for the most part, it is.

My neighbourhood is good at hiding secrets, but it's far from immune to the dark forces at work in cities throughout the country. Break-ins in the middle of the night are not uncommon, though shattered glass and busted door locks are fixed so quickly that no one knows they ever happened. Last summer some stranger tried to lure a 12-year-old toward his vehicle, and in recent months, a body was retrieved from the dykes that keep the Fraser River at bay.

As grown up as my little girls think they are, I can't trust them to know how to handle a frightening and potentially dangerous encounter. What choices would they make, and how could I risk exposing them to those situations?

My friend lectured his child never to accept anything from a stranger. "What would you say if someone tried to give you candy?" he asked, testing her later. "Thank you!" she replied enthusiastically.

"There are monsters out there," I try to tell my kids. "Some of them are people who are very sick, but don't know it. Trouble is, you can't tell they're sick by looking at them. Often, they look just like regular people." My girls look back at me with trusting eyes, trying to read between the lines. "We won't talk to anyone," they promise. "Please, just let us go!"

They've seen their older brother head into the village, almost always in the company of his friends and their skateboards. They'll cruise into McDonald's for some french fries, play a game of tag and skateboard down a few hills before returning home, flushed and exhilarated.

My girls want that same feeling, but I just can't give it to them. Not yet, anyway.

"When can we go, mom?" they plead. "When we're 10?"

That date is just a few months away, and I know I won't be ready then, either. The truth is that I don't know when the right time will come to give them freedom to explore. I want to enfold them in my embrace and protect them fiercely from leering eyes, from the danger of a stranger who might befriend them over a cup of hot chocolate at a place like Starbucks.

"Free hot chocolate!" they'd likely think. "I'll take it!"

The risks are way too high to release my girls into the world at large, even if that world is a small village close to home.

So for now, I say a resolute "No" to independence.

HONEY LIME TILAPIA

4 tilapia fillets • 2 eggs • 1 pkg potato pancake mix

MARINADE

2 tbsp lime juice (1 lg lime) • Zest of 1 lime • 1 tbl olive oil • 1 1/2 tbsp honey • 1/2 tsp black pepper • 1 clove garlic, finely minced

In a small bowl, whisk together lime juice, zest, olive oil, honey, salt, pepper and garlic. Place tilapia in very large ziploc bag; pour marinade on top of fish. Press air out of bag and seal. Lay bag in flat dish and turn over once or twice during marinading. Refrigerate at least 1 hr. or up to 4 hrs.

In small bowl, whisk eggs until frothy; in another bowl, pour in potato pancake mix. Dip each tilapia fillet into beaten eggs and then dredge in potato pancake mix coating both sides. Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium heat. Cook fillets 3-5 min. per side, avoiding overcrowding in pan. Serve immediately with lime wedges.

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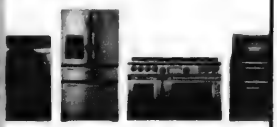

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Québécois journalist Lise Ravary who talks about her experience with two haredi communities and their rabbis when she decided to convert to Judaism.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says the ancient holiday of Pesach has a very modern significance.

Six Canadian Jewish summer camps and 32 others in North America are to receive $1,000 each from the New York-based Jewish Teen Funders Network (JTFN) to develop teen philanthropy programs.

As part of the camp philanthropy program, participating camps will create their own teen-based "philanthropic foundations" and donate money to nonprofit organizations of their choosing.

The goal, said Stuart Guttman, director of Camp Massad in Quebec, is to get an early start in inculcating Jewish value-based principles of giving and to develop community leaders of the future.

The participating Canadian camps are Camp Massad in Quebec, Camp Kineret-Biluim in Quebec, Camp Kadimah in Nova Scotia, Camp Gesher and URJ (Union for Reform Judaism) Camp George in Ontario and JCC Camp Shalom in British Columbia.

Chains on my wrist

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

"And you shall tell your child on that day saying, 'It is because of this that the Lord did (all these miracles) when I left Egypt.'" – Shmot 13:8

This line in the Torah speaks to the commandment of relaying the story of the Exodus from Egypt to your children. It is a difficult mitzvah to fulfil because: a) we must have a clear understanding of how the children at the table learn, listen closely to their questions and you articulate the story well; b) we have an obligation to know the story well, which means we need to do our readings and have a precise knowledge of what we learn from our ancestors fleeing the Pharaoh through the hand of God; c) we tell the story in the first person ("It is because of this that the Lord did (all these miracles) when I left Egypt"), which means we must see ourselves as being part of the Exodus.

The first two requirements are challenging, but by making a true effort to study *Yetziat Mitzrayim* – the going out of Egypt – we should be able to accomplish our goals. But how do we live up to the third obligation – seeing ourselves as one of the Jews who crossed the sea while being chased by the Egyptians?

The following might help. Put a string around your wrists two days before the seder. Make it somewhat tight so that it leaves a mark similar to those left on the whipped bodies of our ancestral Jews who ran from Egypt in the dark of the night. Feel the pain on your body so that you can empathize with the children who were abused and mistreated by Egyptian taskmasters.

A week before you sit down at your Pesach table with your loved ones, create a list of 10 countries where people are enslaved today and study what that means. Know that the master can treat his slave in any way he sees fit, such as cutting off a limb if the child tries to flee. Study up on child soldiers in Uganda. This is what indeed occurs in 2013.

And remember while you study that the Egyptians used the bodies of our children to fill in gaps in the walls of the storehouses we were forced to build. Slavery is brutal. We were slaves in Egypt. Feel and sense that.

Be meditative. Don't waste your time at the seder hoping for it to end as early as possible. Rather, identify with the generations of Jewish men, women and children who suffered in chains. Ask yourself what it means to you that your history, where you came from, is not unlike that of African-Americans or the Roma, who were enslaved in the dark centuries of Europe.

As difficult as it is to imagine, know that someone else was entirely in control of your life, and God delivered you from their hands. That is the story of Pesach.

We the Jewish People were slaves, and despite the enormous freedoms and blessings we have today in Canada, Israel and around the world, our wrists were bound in chains and our backs were bloodied. That is our beginning. As gruesome as it sounds, you were a slave in Egypt.

Let Pesach move you, push you to grow as a Jew. We were slaves. God brought us out of Egypt. Tell the story just as if you were there. If you do, your children will listen, learn and be humbled. Chag Samayach.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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The Canadian Jewish news

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[Israel Sun photo]

Our lives have meaning

The youngster, above, munching his matzah, is clearly posing for the camera at a seder table set for many guests.

It appears he couldn't wait to sate his hunger, for he has already peeled an egg and nearly tipped over the bowl of salt water.

His youthfulness may grant him an exemption from patience, but it does not grant him exemption from the ceremony that is about to unfold around the elaborately and traditionally set table. Indeed his youthfulness guarantees him a major role in the ritual.

The whole point of the seder is to tell the story of our Exodus from Egyptian slavery some 3-1/2 millennia ago. Everyone at the table becomes a student of our history. But it is the children at whom we aim the evening's key lessons. This was always the intention for the uniquely marvellous evening we call *layl* seder Pesach. And the Haggadah is the text from which we teach those precious lessons. As Rabbi Marc Angel of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals in New York has noted, "The Haggadah provides a progressive framework of questions and answers, of engaging each person according to his/her ability and interest. It is an ancient document that can and should be made relevant to the most modern of moderns."

Editorial

The Haggadah is the prototypical instrument of teaching. Pesach is the prototypical occasion for teaching.

What we teach on Pesach, and indeed what we must teach day in and day out, is that our lives have meaning. Our history has meaning.

This is the central theme of the Jewish People's story.

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Pesach
Candlelighting: 7:22
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Greater Toronto Area

This issue of The CJN went to press on Friday March 22

CANADA

New Funding

MONTREAL — A $2-million federal grant for the Segal Centre for Performing Arts was announced March 18 at the centre by federal Heritage Minister James Moore. The money matches dollar-for-dollar private donations to the centre's endowment fund, held and managed by the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal. The funding comes from the endowment incentives program of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund, which encourages donations to arts groups. It received $658,000 in 2009 from the then-new program. The centre raises almost 90 per cent of its funding from donations and ticket sales, with the remainder coming from CJA Federation and government sources.

B.C. Prisoners Sue

VANCOUVER — A Jewish man is among eight prisoners in B.C. suing the federal government for cancelling funding for part-time chaplains last fall, saying it violates their Charter rights to freedom of religion by virtually eliminating the presence of non-Christian clergy in federal jails. Timothy Mitchell Nome, 38, who since signing on to the suit was transferred to a jail in New Brunswick, has joined two Buddhists, two Wiccans, two Muslims and a Sikh prisoner in the suit. It was filed in B.C. Supreme Court and sponsored by the West Coast Prison Justice Society, a prisoners rights group. Corrections Canada has laid off 49 part-time clergy, including 18 non-Christians. It said non-Christians can still be served by full-time Christian and Muslim clergy and volunteers, but the prisoners group says there are no minority chaplains in B.C.

Host Apologizes For Anti-Roma Rant

TORONTO — Controversy-courting Jewish TV host Ezra Levant apologized for a rant against Roma people.

Levant of the *Sun TV* network sparked widespread outrage in September when he referred to Roma as "Gypsies" and "a culture synonymous with swindlers... one of the central characteristics of that culture is that their chief economy is theft and begging."

Ezra Levant

He also said: "The phrase 'Gypsy' and 'cheater' have been so interchangeable historically that the word has been entered into the English language as a verb: he gypped me. Well, the Gypsies have gypped us. Too many have come here as false refugees."

The segment, titled "The Jews versus the Gypsies," aired amid reports of a crime ring of Romanian immigrants in Toronto. The Roma community has asked Toronto police to investigate Levant for hate crimes.

"To those I hurt, I'm sorry," Levant said in his March 18 apology. "It's just wrong to slur a group of people. I made the moral mistake of judging people collectively."

He added, "I don't apologize simply for the sake of being consistent in my views. I regret having made these statements and I'm hopeful that those remarks will serve as an example of what not to do when commenting on social issues."

Sun News apologized for the segment last fall and pulled it from its website. Some said Levant's apology is suspiciously timed, as the Sun network is in the midst of asking the broadcast regulator for space on basic cable.

WORLD

Shout Out To Jews

ROME — Pope Francis acknowledged Jews in the open-air mass formally installing him as pontiff. Francis began his homily March 19 by greeting Catholic dignitaries in the huge crowd in St. Peter's Square. He thanked representatives of other churches and faiths as well as "representatives of the Jewish community." In the crowd were Rome's chief rabbi, Riccardo Di Segni, and the president of Rome's Jewish community. It's said to be the first time Rome's chief rabbi has attended a papal inauguration. Pope Benedict XVI, invited the rabbi to his in 2005, but it was the first day of Pesach, so he declined.

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Film fest highlights emerging filmmakers

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

When the 21st annual Toronto Jewish Film Festival (TJFF) opens to the public on April 10, it will bring with it the usual fine mix of movies that entertain, challenge and educate.

The CJN will be reviewing some of the festival's 100 or so films in upcoming editions and on our website.

The presentation of quality films aside, the TJFF executives are also on a twofold mission: courting future fest-goers and preserving the past.

In terms of the former, the festival has made a concerted effort to engage a younger demographic, and is sourcing films that "aren't your bubbie's" cup of tea, said TJFF managing director Debbie Werner.

"Today's films are not the same as we were showing 21 years ago. They're new, by emerging filmmakers," she said. "They tell fresh stories through fresh eyes. Some of the themes are familiar, but they're being reinterpreted with a fresh perspective."

Werner said that sometimes the festival gets "trapped" by its name, because many young Jews feel they need to look toward a "more secular" venue to get their arts and culture.

"So they overlook us just because of our name. [Youths] think we're going to be a religious experience," she said. "Yes, we do offer stuff for those looking to learn from a religious standpoint, but we also offer tons to those looking to learn culturally about what the Jewish experience is worldwide. The festival is the story of the Diaspora."

As such, before this year's official festival opening, the organizers held a prescreening of *Polish Bar*, an edgy indie film directed by Chicago native Ben Berkowitz that looks at the life of a Jewish DJ in his 20s struggling with his own moral code and connection to Judaism as he works the turntables in a strip club.

TJFF also has a long-running program aimed at Jewish and non-Jewish students called FilmMatters. The education outreach initiative invites schools from around the city to participate in screening Jewish films for cross-cultural, bridge-building purposes.

Debbie Werner, managing director of the Toronto Jewish Film Festival

"The beautiful thing about this program is that it brings kids from all walks of life and ethnicities together," Werner said, "and it breaks down the barriers of their surface differences and let's them see that they share similar interests."

On the preservation front, Werner said she hopes that an archive of Jewish stories committed to celluloid – and digitally – will provide the Jewish community, a resource for future generations.

The TJFF is working to set up its "dream project," the Toronto Jewish Media Library, an online archive of films for posterity. It would be the first of its kind. What it lacks is the funding to get it done.

Continued on page 15

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We must not close our eyes

From the editor's desk...

It was very surprising, indeed disappointing, to see that former prime minister Jean Chrétien attended the recent funeral of Hugo Chavez. Chrétien went there as a private individual, not as an emissary of the Canadian government conveying a gesture of condolence to the government and people of Venezuela.

According to the *Globe and Mail*, Chrétien acknowledged that Chavez "went probably too far" in his policies, but he still nevertheless "felt it [going to the funeral] was the right thing to do."

In trying to explain, however, why he felt it was the right thing to do, the former prime minister relied on a series of straw man justifications that fall away in the light breeze of examination.

"I respect the people of Venezuela" Chrétien said.

It would be quite difficult to find many normal-thinking individuals anywhere on the planet who did not respect the people of Venezuela. The people of Venezuela were not the problem with the politics of its leader. It was Chavez's deeply distasteful, manipulative demagoguery. Disdain for him did not extend to his people.

"He was very much on the side of the poor and we have to think of the poor in any society. I'm not the type of guy who thinks the crumbs on the table are enough for the poor, either there or in Canada," Chrétien said.

Chrétien's sentiment is unassailably admirable. It happens, however, to be the sentiment of most caring people. None of us should think the crumbs on the table are enough for any living soul. But that sentiment is quite irrelevant to the main point about Chavez.

Since when does being on the side of the poor require one to be viciously antisemitic, actively destructive of democratic institutions and wholeheartedly supportive of the main state sponsor of terrorism?

One gets the sense that the former prime minister was evading the simple truth of why he went. He liked Hugo Chavez. He even joked with Chavez about baseball! So, out of respect for the man he once liked, he went to the funeral.

The late president of Venezuela was the most ardent, non-Muslim backer and ally of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Presumably, he was also a backer of Ahmadinejad's ideas and policies toward Israel, Jews and the Shoah.

The late president of Venezuela let loose a state-run apparatus that mercilessly targeted and scapegoated the Jews of Venezuela, so much so that nearly two-thirds of the community fled the country.

Why could Chrétien not draw a line in the moral sand?

At what point does a friendship based somewhat loosely, we presume, on a long-ago expressed, shared affection for baseball, step aside for the sake of honouring the principle that inciting hatred of the Jews is wholly intolerable?

Is it sufficient justification for attending Chavez funeral to say, as Chrétien did, "A lot of people love him there?"

One need not look too far into the pages of history or onto the pages of current events to see demagogues, political firebrands, strongmen or tyrants enjoying the affection of a lot of their people. But surely we must test the nature of a ruler by his policies, his deeds, not by the extent of the "love" of his people.

It is hard to imagine that the former prime minister was unaware of Chavez's appalling policies. And it is harder still to imagine that Chrétien condoned them in any way. Despite his personal distaste for the way Hugo Chavez singled out of the Jews of Venezuela for collective opprobrium and national suspicion, Chrétien still believed "it was the right thing to do."

This is what disappointed most: Chrétien closed his eyes to the larger, truer picture of Chavez's nature and of Chavez's policies.

And that is how antisemitism – or any bigotry and prejudice – in all its hateful, dangerous aspects slowly, insidiously edges closer toward the mainstream of social and political discourse even in fair-minded societies: good, decent people find a way to close their eyes to it.

We cannot leave the subject of closing one's eyes to the evils encouraged by others without pointing out that Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan must have been stunned by the strong reaction to his statement last month that Zionism was a "crime against humanity."

For he clumsily, and not very convincingly, tried to recant.

"Everyone should know that my criticism [is about] certain cases, particularly Gaza and the settlements, and directed against Israeli policy," Erdogan told the Danish newspaper *Politieken* via email, ahead of his visit last week to Denmark. "It is quite natural for us to continue to criticize Israel, as long as it has not abandoned its denial of the Palestinian state's right to exist."

We could believe Erdogan's apology was sincere if it too did not contain more lies within it. But, alas, it did.

We will not, however, close our eyes to the true picture of Erdogan's nature or of his policies. **–*MBD***

SeeJN

ERUV EVENT

The Toronto Eruv Committee hosted an event last week attended by Mayor Rob Ford, second from left, and eight city councillors to celebrate the proposed expansion of the Toronto Eruv into the downtown area. Pictured with Ford, from left, are Councillor Doug Ford, Councillor James Pasternak, Rabbi Moshe Lowy and Mordechai Mandelbaum. *[Jeremy Melnick, Melnick Studios photo]*

Out of Cold program helps homeless create art

Vicky Toblanah
Special to the CJN

In the basement of Beth Sholom Synagogue, homeless people from all over Toronto gather every Tuesday night during the winter to eat, sleep – and paint.

That's how Paul Shields, a homeless man living in Toronto, turned into an artist. Shields, who had a stroke and suffers from other medical conditions, began to rebuild his confidence by painting, learning that he could change his path in life.

The program, run in conjunction with Beth Tzedec Congregation, is part of the larger citywide Out of the Cold volunteer initiative, for which synagogues, churches and other faith centres open their doors to the city's homeless one night a week, during the coldest months of the year.

But some places like to offer more than just a mattress and a plate of dinner. For volunteer Melanie Cheskes, it's also a place to let the guests' worries subside, at least for one night. That's why she runs the Art Circle, a program that allows guests to do artwork when they come to Out of the Cold. The paintings are later framed and sold at the annual Out of the Cold Art Show in April. All the proceeds are split between the artists and Out of the Cold.

"You can see their confidence when they come in," said Cheskes, who has a background in fine arts and is now pursuing social work. "For them, it's an escape from the week, but for me as well."

From left are Freddie, Virgil and Sharon, who meet at the weekly Out of the Cold program at Beth Sholom Synagogue. [*Marni Wolf photo*]

That's how Peter T. feels. He says he was hesitant to get involved in painting at first, only coming for a warm dinner and a place to sleep. "I thought, 'Oh, I'll never be able to do this,' but I don't know what it is. Everyone has their hidden potential," said Peter, 53. "It allows me to refocus my energy that might have been spent thinking about my problems."

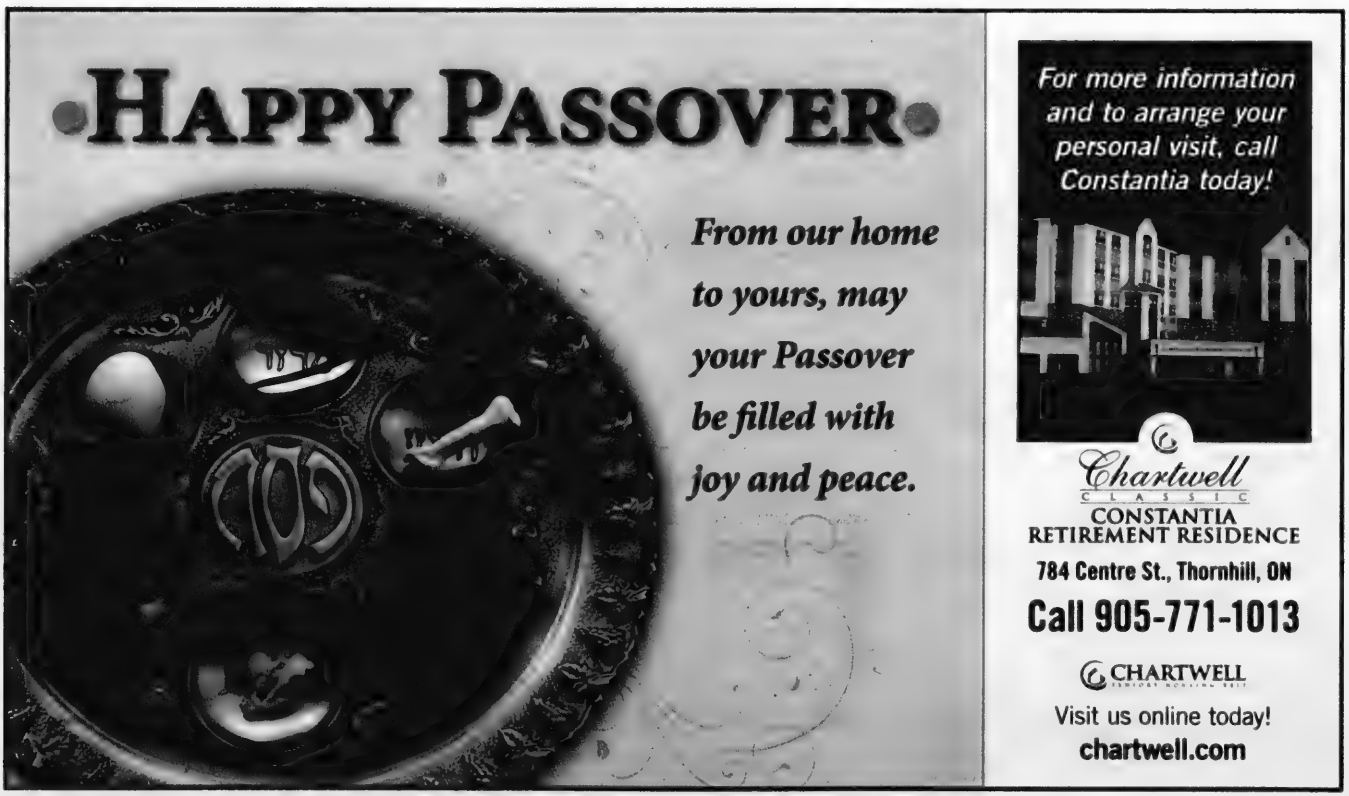
The artists don't do it to make money, said Cheskes – some paintings will sell for around $50 at the art show – but rather to feel as if they contributed to something, and have created something they're proud of. The majority of the artists are homeless or living in extremely impoverished circumstances, but that doesn't stop artists like Michael from refusing to take a penny for his work. "I always push him to take the money."

When Shields' painting sold at the art show last year, he said it changed his life. "I've been disadvantaged for many years," he said. "It told me, maybe I can do something. I think I was lost. It opened a door for me." As a result of his success, he sold a few more paintings and now designs and sells greeting cards, too.

It's these positive experiences that drive the volunteers, especially Brenda Berger and Maureen Tanz, who run Beth Sholom and Beth Tzedec's Out of the Cold program, now in its 14th year. The ability to help the less fortunate is what encourages them. "I like the satisfaction of helping others. I get a chance to talk to them one on one and make them feel special," said Tanz.

On average, 150 to 200 people show up for dinner at Beth Sholom, but there's only room to sleep 55. "The number has definitely increased," said Tanz. "They come back year after year, and you really get to know them."

The Art Circle's fourth annual art exhibition and fundraiser takes place on April 14, 1 to 3 p.m. at Beth Sholom, 1445 Eglinton Ave. W. It's open to the public. To volunteer or donate clothing, contact Beth Sholom or Beth Tzedec. For more information about the Art Circle, visit http://ootcartcircle.wordpress.com.



Is CIJA better or worse than what came before?

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

It's been two years since Canada's mainstream Jewish advocacy groups were amalgamated under the umbrella of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

As part of that process, venerable institutions such as the 90-year-old Canadian Jewish Congress and the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) – which had both been effectively controlled by CIJA's predecessor organization since 2004 – disappeared as independent entities.

Community Advocacy

First of a two-part series

The Quebec-Israel Committee, National Jewish Campus Life (Hillel's parent organization) and the University Outreach Committee were some of the other groups that were absorbed by CIJA.

The aim of the changes, as stated by community leaders in 2011, was to save money and streamline pro-Israel and Jewish activities by speaking with one voice on both domestic and foreign affairs.

But is the Jewish community better off now than it was before?

Proponents of the changes pointed to a need to reduce overlap among existing groups and to "clarify and unify" Jewish advocacy here and abroad.

Shimon Fogel, CIJA's CEO, told *The CJN* at the time that "the lines and distinctions between what they used to call 'the domestic agenda' and 'the Israel agenda' have blurred so much that it's impossible really to tell one from the other. When is it anti-Zionism? When is it antisemitism? This is the nature of where things have gone internationally."

Fogel said these distinctions had become "increasingly artificial," to the point where it became difficult for Congress and CIC to determine which agency should respond to what issues.

"We had an opportunity to integrate and consolidate all the thematic agendas – campus, antisemitism, Israel relations, social policy agenda at the local community level – all of those things could be brought into one holistic institution," he said.

Critics, however, said the changes were made undemocratically at the behest of large donors who wanted a greater say in how the community responded to a perceived increase in delegitimization efforts against Israel.

Many also bemoaned the loss of long-standing and highly respected agencies, particularly Canadian Jewish Congress, whose leadership was elected from among member groups from across Canada through regular regional and national plenaries.

The critics say the new CIJA structure doesn't employ the same democratic process and note that CIJA's board is appointed, not elected.

Mira Sucharov

Sally Zerker, a professor emeritus at York University, is still angry about the way Congress was dismantled.

"It was a totally undemocratic process. Congress wasn't shelved – it was destroyed. There was no foundation for the decisions [that CIJA] made. The problem for CIJA, as far as I'm concerned, is that they don't represent the Canadian Jewish community," Zerker said.

"CIJA has no basis to exist other than for some connected men getting together and making a decision," she added.

"I have no objection to any group of people organizing any kind of organization and supporting it themselves. However, these organizers of CIJA speak as if they're representing the community, but they don't. There was a time, not long ago, when we used to vote for the head of Congress and its directors. That has gone by the wayside."

Other critics, mostly on the left, argue that some pro-Israel voices are being excluded in the new environment.

Mira Sucharov, an associate professor of political science at Carleton University in Ottawa and a progressive Zionist, said CIJA has presided over a "narrowing in the type of dialogue" about Israel that is restricted to what the organization deems to be appropriate.

"My vantage point is college campuses, and there I see a disturbing attempt to police the kind of discussion that Jewish students may engage in within the auspices of their Hillel organizations," she told *The CJN*.

For example, Sucharov said Jewish students at Carleton were discouraged from meeting with Peter Beinart, a controversial Jewish journalist and academic from the United States who favours a boycott of products made in the West Bank and is a harsh critic of Israel's policies towards the Palestinians.

Continued on page 7

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CIJA seen as both positive and negative

Continued from page 6

"A prime example of this was CIJA's official 'recommendation' to Hillel organizations to refuse to engage with Beinart –who is undoubtedly one of the most prominent North American voices of his generation regarding contemporary Zionism and U.S.-Israel relations – when he came on a three-city tour of Canada last fall," Sucharov said.

"The organizers of his trip – the New Israel Fund, Ameinu [a progressive Zionist group] and Canadian Friends of Peace Now – approached Hillel organizations to see if the students would like to meet with Beinart, and they were told no."

Sucharov also believes CIJA has shifted the Jewish community's official advocacy position to the right on the political spectrum.

"CIJA's actions have made groups like the ones I mentioned above experience their form of 'pro-Israel' advocacy as outside the tent of official Canadian Jewish organizing," she said. "And this, I think, is very unfortunate for the health and vigour of the Canadian Jewish community as it relates to Canada-Israel and Diaspora-Israel relations."

Harold Waller

CIJA spokesperson Steve McDonald categorically denied that his organization instructed Hillel to stay away from Beinart. "We don't tell Hillels what to do. Hillels work out their advocacy programming locally in concert with their federation. We provide national support, particularly in the form of training, resources, and advice," he said.

McDonald added that tour organizers asked multiple Hillels if they wanted to host Beinart, shortly after he wrote an article in the *New York Times* advancing his boycott argument. "Those Hillels in turn asked us for advice, to which we shared our own policy and encouraged Jewish communal organizations to adopt a similar policy. Our position that we don't provide a platform for [advocates of boycotts, divestments and sanctions against Israel] – i.e., sponsor or host, and in turn use our communal resources to promote – is utterly different from 'don't speak to or engage with.'"

Harold Waller, a political science professor at McGill University and a longtime observer of Canada's Jewish communal structures, says CIJA's impact has been both positive and negative.

"There are undoubtedly some members of the community who believe that the present arrangement imposes excessive community discipline… [but] on the positive side, the community purportedly speaks with one voice to other Canadians and even those beyond Canada's shores," said Waller, who sits on the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research's academic council.

"Presumably this enables us to husband our resources and deploy them in a more cost-effective way."

Another benefit to the CIJA-led advocacy structure has been "the opportunity for a more rational allocation of resources devoted to advocacy and… presumably clearer statements of community positions," Waller said.

As well, CIJA now has access to more federation resources and funds from "private benefactors," he said.

But, Waller added, there's been criticism about CIJA's perceived lack of democratic accountability, as well as its "presumptions regarding being the main spokesperson" for the Jewish community.

Furthermore, there's been a lack of "any forum or mechanism [within CIJA] to work out disparate points of view on the issues that we must address."

In addition, Waller highlighted the lingering resentment among some community members who believe Congress was abandoned too easily.

"The advantage of Congress was that it represented a wide range of Jewish organizations, so it could speak authoritatively. CIJA basically comes from the federation movement. It can also claim to have wide backing from all the individuals who donate to their local [federation] campaigns, but that kind of representation is far different from what Congress claimed to have."

CIJA could also do a better job in making itself known to the community, he said.

"I am sure that people in government and politics know what CIJA is, but I doubt that members of the general public really understand its significance," Waller said, noting that the Jewish community likely understood how Congress functioned, given its long-standing role.

Still, he believes that most Canadian Jews are "satisfied" with CIJA so far, and that there are fewer dissenters today than in 2011, although they're still outspoken, particularly those who are passionate about Congress' legacy.

When asked whether Congress' absence and CIJA's ascendance have helped other community advocacy organizations carve out a more prominent role for themselves, Waller said he doesn't think so.

He said CIJA's only real rival is B'nai Brith Canada, but in his view, its efforts have been unaffected by CIJA.

"I don't know of any other Canadian Jewish community organization [aside from B'nai Brith] with a truly national presence that can claim to be an alternative to CIJA," he said.

Asked whether he thought the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center Canada (FSWC) has had a greater impact as a communal organization since Congress' demise, Waller said no.

FSWC "appears to be a small-scale operation with a limited range of concerns," he said.

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Secure the chain

Continued from page 1

"Jews were the first to make the momentous claim that history has meaning. It is not merely a sequence of disconnected events, but the long story of humanity's response to, or rebellion against, the voice of God as it echoes in the conscience of mankind," Rabbi Jonathan Sacks writes.

The Exodus from Egypt is the pivotal moment of collective Jewish history. And though we recount that moment countless times in our daily prayers, it is around the seder table that we do so as a community of family and friends.

The importance of doing so cannot be overstated. The American scholar Jacob Neusner has elegantly explained why. "Civilization hangs suspended from generation to generation by the gossamer strand of memory. If only one cohort of mothers and fathers fails to convey to its children what it has learned from its parents, then the great chain of learning and wisdom snaps."

It is fitting, therefore, during this prototypical occasion for teaching, that we embed Neusner's statement deep in our hearts.

We are – all of us – the guardians of the great chain of the learning and the wisdom that we call Judaism. We dare not let the chain snap. We dare not let it fall from our hands.

And yet the evidence is overwhelming that so many of the links of the chain are not holding. There is a palpably loosening sense of community among younger Jews here and abroad that bodes ill for the civilization that has been our treasure, our heritage and our future.

The surest way to strengthen the gossamers of our collective memory, to protect that great chain is by building a comprehensive, communal infrastructure of education. We do not have that. We have a fine system for some, a partial system for a few and no system for too many.

Our community must re-examine, rethink and revise the current educational infrastructure. It is no longer adequate to the urgent needs of our time. The utter unaffordability of a day-school education for the vast majority of families is only one of many pressing education issues. But it's not the only one.

The fraying of the chain should stab at the collective conscience of our community. That it does not is unpardonable.

We must not be the cohort of mothers and fathers that fails its children. Indeed, why can we not be the cohort that rises above the defeatist resignation that says nothing more, nothing different, can be done?

Perhaps it was for this reason we were born at this time? To show it can be done. To build an infrastructure of education for everyone engaging each person according to his/her ability. To secure the chain in our community for all time.

Chag Samayach.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Jewish groups were outraged after a *Toronto Star* editorial praised a controversial speech by external affairs minister Joe Clark that criticized Israel's response to unrest in Gaza and the West Bank. The *Star* said it was "a necessary reminder to members of the Jewish community that they're citizens of Canada, not Israel."

Dry Bones

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A message from the premier

On behalf of the government of Ontario, I am delighted to extend warm greetings to members of the Jewish community as they mark Pesach. Religious pluralism has played a major role in shaping our unique identity as a province. I would like to thank Ontario's Jewish community for enriching our multifaith society, and to acknowledge its invaluable contributions to the social, cultural and economic life of our province.

The story of Passover is one of redemption and freedom, themes that are central to this important family celebration and much-loved holiday. And it is a festival that is rich in meaning and in ritual, evoking, among other things, fond memories of seders past, the joy that only a gathering of family can bring and the passing down of cherished traditions from generation to generation. I wish all members of our province's Jewish community a Pesach filled with happiness. Chag Kasher v'Samayach!

Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

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Cost of Jewish education

Given all of the attention being paid to Jewish day school tuition, and rightly so, it might be of interest to some people what other communities outside of the Jewish community have to say about tuition. I recently attended an Ontario Federation of Independent Schools (OFIS) seminar and spoke with several principals and board members from Christian schools. The discussions were enlightening.

The fact that Rehoboth Christian School had tuition that was about one-third of our typical elementary Jewish school and that their university placement rate is equivalent to our schools and that they also bemoan the lack of government funding, as we do, was not surprising. Rather, what astounded me was that these individuals took great pride in their successful efforts to keep tuition low, resulting in the growth of one school to approximately 600 children, in a small community!

This sensitivity and understanding of the benefits of keeping tuition low seems to have been lost or at least moved down the totem pole pretty far below most other considerations in our community. In fact, the argument that the quality of our education is paramount seems somewhat perverse. As our schools engage in a race to the top of the quality ladder, the barrier to entry rises, enrolments decline and fewer parents can keep up. Surely we can do better.

A communal response is long overdue to this most pressing problem. New initiatives are taking place across the border in Jewish schools, while we in Ontario boast if our tuition only rises a few percentage points above inflation. Everyone is in favour of top-quality Jewish education, but the question we need to be asking is: at what cost? We need some fresh new ideas – now!

Ira Walfish
Toronto

LET THEM GO...
Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Palliative care

In reference to the question about whether palliative care takes into account halachic restrictions that would force interventions during end-of-life treatment, we need to ask ("Palliative care," letter, March 14):

- What is in the the patient's best interest?
- Can the use of these interventions return the patient to his previous life that was not full of suffering?
- Is artificial nutrition associated with unnecessary suffering that provides little clinical benefit?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein stated, "For a patient with pain and suffering who cannot be cured and cannot live much longer, it is not obligatory to administer medical therapy to prolong life."

In Baycrest's palliative care unit, antibiotics and morphine are administered to enable the patient to breathe more easily. Decisions are made using a multi-disciplinary approach that includes family, geriatric doctors, psychiatrists, the ethical department and clergy to sustain life as long as possible with as little pain as possible.

Evelyn Burns-Weinrib
Palliative Care Volunteer, Baycrest
Toronto

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Did Obama and Netanyahu narrow the gaps?

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

Remember May 2011, when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu humiliated U.S. President Barack Obama by delivering what the *Wall Street Journal* called a "rare public rebuke" of the president, telling him, in the Oval Office, in what amounted to a public lecture, that Israel cannot withdraw to the 1967 lines? Remember when, later that year, Obama was overheard saying to Nicolas Sarkozy that the French president might be fed up with the Israeli leader, "but I have to deal with him even more often than you"? Or remember, last September, when Netanyahu came to America to speak to the United Nations but Obama couldn't find the time to meet him?

After the first day of Obama's first presidential visit to Jerusalem, any previous disagreements between him and the Israeli premier seemed so distant, from so different an era, it was almost as though they had never existed.

If Obama's goal was to launch a charm offensive rather than to kick-start the peace process or kick anything else, he was hitting all the right notes with his good friend "Bibi." And Netanyahu was giving him the warm "Barack" treatment straight back. Settlement freeze? Never heard of it. Arguments over Iran? Please, our positions could not be closer.

Quarrelling in public was in the past. Today, we have two leaders who were recently re-elected and would have us believe they've realized they have little choice but to get along for the next few years. Might as well make nice and try to get things done amicably.

Obama got right into it. "*Tov lihiyot shuv ba'aretz*" — It's good to be back in Israel, he said, right at the beginning of his first speech, minutes after he emerged from Air Force One. He then hurried to remedy the glaring omission from his 2009 Cairo speech, in which he seemed to imply that Israel's right to exist is based on the Holocaust, as opposed to the then-unmentioned Jewish nation's ancient historic sovereign connection to the Land of Israel.

"More than 3,000 years ago, the Jewish People lived here, tended the land here, prayed to God here," Obama reminded us and himself, (though unfortunately probably not much of the Arab world, which doesn't tend to tune in to Ben-Gurion Airport welcome ceremonies). "And after centuries of exile and persecution, unparalleled in the history of man, the founding of the Jewish State of Israel was a rebirth, a redemption unlike any in history."

Such words even pleased right-wing Jewish Home leader and Economics and Trade Minister Naftali Bennett: "It's an important speech that recognizes the deep historical connection between the people of Israel and the Land of Israel," he declared soon after.

After affirming the Jewish nation's indigenousness to the region and calling Israel a "Jewish state," Obama waxed biblical: "Today, the sons of Abraham and the daughters of Sarah are fulfilling the dream of the ages – to be masters of their own fate in their own sovereign state. And just as we have for these past 65 years, the United States is proud to stand with you as your strongest ally and your greatest friend."

In this first speech, what's more, Obama did not so much as utter the words "Palestine" or "Palestinians," merely speaking of "your neighbours."

Later, at the President's residence, Obama termed Jerusalem "the Eternal City" – a nice epithet, although he unsurprisingly stopped short of calling it Israel's capital. He did, though, throw in an anecdote from the Talmud, about a man who plants trees for his children.

Subsequent photo-ops with children – and there were plenty of them at the President's residence – are the easy part of trips like this. The difficult part is where two world leaders, who have very different political convictions, grapple with the real issues of life-and-death import to their nations.

But throughout the day, even after hours of such talks, the president and the prime minister sounded like best friends, joking about Obama's fake mustache and Netanyahu seeing red lines everywhere. When Obama quipped that Netanyahu's "very good looking" sons clearly got their looks from their mother, Netanyahu instantly responded: "Well, I could say the same of your daughters." What a double act.

U.S. President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stroll together after the president's arrival in Israel last Wednesday. ***(Israel Sun photo)***

There were also sombre personal moments, such as when Obama quoted Netanyahu's fallen brother, Yoni. They only underlined the effort to show how much relations had improved. Netanyahu later said he was very moved by the gesture.

Heck, they even looked like best friends, easy in each other's company, especially when the prime minister followed the president's lead and they took off their suit jackets as they strode around Ben-Gurion Airport.

"Thank you for the investment you have made in our relationship, and in strengthening the friendship and alliance between our two countries. It is deeply, deeply, appreciated," Netanyahu told the president at a joint press conference in the evening, cementing the tone of partnership.

It's not yet clear what exactly was or was not resolved during the five-hour talks in the prime minister's residence regarding steps toward Palestinian statehood and steps to thwart Iran's nuclear drive. It's more than possible that the BFF display simply means the two have grown up and learned to grin and bear their differences.

But when they did discuss matters of substance, there were signs of a narrowing of gaps.

"Israel remains fully committed to peace and to the solution of two states for two peoples," Netanyahu said, giving Obama an explicit endorsement of Palestinian statehood that will rankle with many members of his own new coalition.

And the president "very much welcomed Bibi's words." He also admitted that he could have been "more deft" during his first term in trying to tackle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "It takes a confluence of both good diplomatic work but also timing, serendipity, things falling into place at the right time, the right players feeling that this is the moment to seize it.

"There have probably been times where when I've made statements about what I think needs to happen. The way it gets filtered through our press, it may be interpreted in ways that get Israelis nervous," Obama added.

Does that mean he's not going to try to twist Israeli arms? Let's not get carried away. But for now, he said, he's following his mom's advice – to listen before he talks.

On Iran, too, the rhetoric suggested a greater co-ordination.

"I'm absolutely convinced that the president is determined to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons," Netanyahu said.

But don't you and the president have different timetables, reporters asked?

His response sought to explain "a misunderstanding."

Manufacturing a nuclear weapon would indeed take about a year, he said, echoing Obama's stated timeline. The red line he drew at the United Nations in the fall hasn't been crossed yet, he added. His concern is over Iran completing the enrichment stage so that it can more speedily break out to the bomb.

"But we do have a common assessment on these schedules, on intelligence," Netanyahu asserted. "We share that intelligence and we don't have any argument about it. I think it's important to state that clearly."

Obama concurred. "There's not a lot of daylight between our country's assessments in terms of where Iran is right now," he said. The Israeli prime minister "is absolutely correct" in saying that each country "has to make its own decision when it comes to the awesome decision to engage in any kind of military action. And Israel is differently situated than the United States. And I would not expect that the prime minister [would] make a decision about his country's security and defer that to any other country."

So we're all on the same page then? Again, let's not go too far. Obama is still talking up diplomacy, and Netanyahu is still praising the president for acknowledging Israel's right to protect itself as it deems necessary. That sounds like more than a little daylight.

Concluding the press conference, Netanyahu expressed the hope that all Israelis "should get to know President Obama the way I've gotten to know him."

Such niceties continued on Thursday morning, when Obama marvelled at ancient Bibles and super-modern nanotechnology.

In his speech on Thursday, Obama set out his vision for peace. When Obama returns home, internalizes what he's been listening to, and starts talking, we will know more about how much his vision is consistent with that of Netanyahu.

Timesofisrael.com

Let's hope the coalition succeeds, for Israel's sake

My mom tells me I should write more positively about Israel in this column, because there are too many people denigrating Israel incessantly. My usual response is that I'm not responsible for hasbarah (propaganda) and prefer to tell things as I see them from here in the Holy Land.

But I also want to make my mother happy (don't we all), so this time I'll try.

I had very low expectations going into January's Knesset elections. Polls showed no real change in the offing and that we were heading for another four to five years of stagnation on issues of importance to many of us Israelis.

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

True, the outgoing government succeeded on some fronts. Working hand in hand with the Bank of Israel, the country weathered the global economic meltdown better than most western countries. It accelerated important national infrastructure projects – major highways and new railways. Cellphone rates dropped because communication minister Moshe Kahalon broke the industry cartel. And in the wake of nationwide protests during the summer of 2011, the government now subsidizes certain preschool tuitions, saving money for young families.

But Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's previous government didn't deal with several issues that were the focus of popular discontent, most significantly the sentiment of many non-haredi citizens that they alone bear burdens central to the being of this country. Nothing irks these Israelis more than the thousands of exemptions from military service given annually to haredi young men.

He also didn't do enough to advance dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians aimed at reaching a solution to the decades-long stalemate at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

While pre-election polls forecasted a slight drop in support for Netanyahu's Likud-Beitenu, they generally predicted a larger plurality for the right, projecting an especially strong showing for the hawkish, Orthodox Bayit Yehudi (Jewish Home) party under the leadership of its young, charismatic leader, Naftali Bennett.

The election results were, therefore, a genuine surprise, particularly the showing of newcomer Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid (There is a Future) party, which won 19 seats and became the second-largest Knesset faction. It was supported by many disillusioned midstream voters looking for something different. Lapid put together an eclectic list of potential MKs from very divergent walks of Israeli life, many of whom came with impressive personal track records of their own.

But Yesh Atid wasn't the only faction to bring hope for a different Knesset in the form of a cadre of young, motivated and talented individuals. All told, 48 of the 120 MKs are completely new. Yesh Atid's rookie MK Ruth Calderon, a secular female Talmud scholar, made a maiden Knesset speech that was watched by tens of thousands on the Internet. It brought tears to my eyes with its promise of a better Israel, unlike the one many have become disheartened with.

Soon after the elections, President Shimon Peres tasked Netanyahu with forming a new government. He immediately began negotiations with the different factions, and it quickly became clear that Lapid and Bennett (whose Bayit Yehudi received 12 seats) had created an alliance without which no government could be formed. It also became clear they were changing the rules. They banded together to ensure a new government would actually deal with haredi army enlistment, keeping both haredi parties out of the coalition. And they united in demanding fewer ministers in the new government, in line with Lapid's pledge during the election campaign.

When the proverbial white smoke finally came out of the negotiation room after six weeks of talks (on the same day actual white smoke emerged from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel announcing the selection of Pope Francis), Israel got a new, slimmed-down government and some genuine hope for a better future.

Critics and cynics abound. The new government is too right wing and won't move peace talks with the Palestinians forward. It has too many inexperienced ministers, particularly with a huge budget cut on the books. Beyond the haredi enlistment plan, the Lapid-Bennett alliance won't hold water.

Perhaps these detractors are right. The new leader of the Opposition, Labor party head Shelly Yachimovich, and her own capable cadre of new Knesset members will try to prove that they are.

To paraphrase a saying my mom taught me: the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. Good luck to us all!

Politics, Pharaoh and Passover

The biblical account of the Exodus, recounted every year at the Passover seder, tells us that the Israelite slaves departed in triumph after the entire Egyptian nation – from top to bottom – was decimated by the 10 plagues, including the killing of the first born. While Moses and Aaron went through the motions of negotiation with Pharaoh, they did not engage in real dialogue, seek to understand the inner motivations, culture and psychology of the Egyptians, or offer any significant concessions. No third-party mediators were invited to encourage compromise and co-operation, and if groups like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International (and a few "independent" Jewish voices) had been around, they would have published reports and held press conferences condemning Moses as a war criminal.

In somewhat more modern terms, the story of the Exodus and the Jewish Bible in general reflect political realism, and what philosopher Thomas Hobbes described as "war of all against all" in the anarchy of politics among nations. Indeed, Hobbes incorporated significant parts of the biblical analysis and Jewish history, including the precept that when faced with the threat of destruction, one must arise early and attack first.

In the 21st century, however, this recognition of the need for security and power – military, economic, diplomatic, and in other forms – to survive in a world filled with hate and violence has been erased by the myth that political conflicts are simply the result of misunderstanding, psychological stress and cultural differences. Sadly, Jewish intellectuals and academics with personal axes to grind and only a shallow knowledge of their own history are often at the forefront of this false political religion. Modern-day Pharaohs, oppressors, and terrorists – particularly among Arab and Islamist leaders – are portrayed as victims (the late PA Authority president Yasser Arafat was a prominent example), while the application of military force is automatically condemned as "excessive," "illegal," and "immoral."

Similarly, the concept and understanding of justice that is essential to the Passover story has been distorted and twisted beyond recognition by the high priests of today's political correctness. The events of the Exodus begin with the enslavement of the Israelites followed by the inhuman drowning of male babies, while the plagues and suffering visited on the Egyptians ("indiscriminate force," according to Human Rights Watch) were necessary for justice to prevail. There was no other way to end the enslavement and defeat the tormenters. It was not the suffering of the ordinary Egyptians that was celebrated as the Israelites left, but rather their own taste of freedom. Indeed, on Passover, we are enjoined to abbreviate the celebration in the *Hallel* prayer (psalms of exultation) out of respect for the dead Egyptians, also acknowledged as God's creatures.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

However, in today's world of public relations, political propaganda, and invented "narratives" instead of history, the connection between cause and effect is often lost. The emphasis on, and sympathy for, the "suffering of the Palestinians" that is widely embraced, even by many well-meaning Jews, erases the racist Arab rejectionism and brutal attacks of 1947-1948, and six more decades of terror and war. And telling the story of Israeli "occupation" and "settlements" without the history of the 1967 war and then-Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's efforts to "push the Jews into the sea" is like reciting the Passover Haggadah without enslavement and Pharaoh's inhuman order to drown Israelite male babies.

Now, as then, the use of force against violent aggressors and oppressors is sometimes a necessary evil for achieving freedom, justice and insuring human rights. In 1948 and1967, if Israelis did not fight for their freedom, we would not be here. And today, we need only to look across our borders, particularly at Syria, to observe the violent "state of nature" in full force.

Jewish tradition, despite the emphasis on caring for the needy, orphans and other weak members of society, does not seek to run away from these political realities. Indeed, the Passover story and the commandment to teach it to our children in every generation are reminders that in political terms, little has changed in 4,000 years.

Syrian civil war turns spotlight on Golan

Israel is preparing for the possibility that major changes are likely to occur in Syria, its bitterly hostile northern neighbour, in the not-too-distant future.

With a civil war consuming Syria, a country "falling apart in front of our eyes," as Israel's former defence minister, Ehud Barak, put it, Israel can hardly be certain of what lies ahead.

Not too long ago, the Golan Heights – captured by Israel during the Six Day War in 1967 and formally annexed in 1981 – were remarkably tranquil. But in the past two years, as peaceful protests in Syria have degenerated into fierce fighting pitting the Syrian government of President Bashar Assad against a diverse collection of Syrian rebels backed by western powers and Middle Eastern nations such as Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, tensions have flared on the Golan, which has been patrolled by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, or UNDOF, since the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

In May 2011, shortly after the eruption of the uprising in Syria, the Syrian regime, in a crude attempt to divert attention away from its mounting internal problems, encouraged Palestinians living in Syria to test Israel's resolve. About 100 Palestinians breached an Israeli security fence along the border and reached the Druze town of Majdal Shams before being arrested or shot.

More recently, as Syrian villages and a military intelligence facility in the demilitarized zones have been seized by the rebels, the war has spilled perilously close to or into Israeli territory on the Golan, which is populated by 20,000 Jewish settlers and an equal number of Druze, some of whom have taken Israeli citizenship. Since the waning months of 2012, stray Syrian bullets, mortars and tank shells have landed harmlessly near Israeli settlements and military outposts. In one case, an Israeli soldier was injured by an errant bullet, prompting Israel to launch a retaliatory missile strike on a Syrian army encampment.

After the latest incident on March 5, in which three mortars crashed into an empty field adjacent to the moshav of Ramat Magshimim, in the deepest penetration of Syrian fire into Israeli territory in years, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Ron Prosor, warned the UN Security Council that its patience was wearing thin and that further violations of the truce, signed by Israel and Syria in 1974, would not be tolerated.

Shortly after Prosor delivered this warning, a group of UNDOF peacekeepers, all Filipino nationals, were kidnapped by Syria rebels, in the first incident of its kind in nearly 40 years. The 21 Filipinos were eventually released, but the abduction prompted commentators to wonder whether it would undermine the UN mission on the Golan, which has played a role in stabilizing the peace.

On a much broader and deeper level, two major concerns preoccupy Israel as Syria descends further into chaos.

Much like in Libya, one of the Arab countries whose autocratic leadership was toppled by the rebellions of the Arab Spring, Islamic fundamentalists from all corners of the Muslim world have poured into Syria to combat the Syrian regime.

Israel, the United States and the European Union fear that Islamists, having hijacked revolts in Egypt and Tunisia, may emerge triumphant in Syria as well.

It goes without saying that an Islamist regime in Syria would be as hostile to Israel as Assad's secular nationalist regime. In recent weeks, Syria, which has fought four wars and numerous skirmishes with Israel since 1948, has accused Israel of arming the rebels in collusion with neighbouring nations – Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey – and reportedly shot down an Israeli drone close to Syria's border with Lebanon.

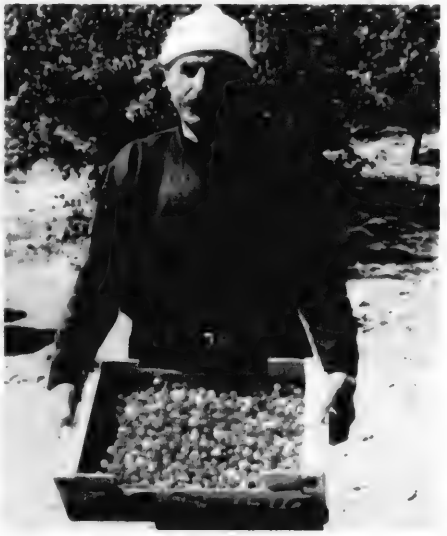
The rebels, be they Islamists or secularists, are belligerent toward Israel, notwithstanding the fact that the Israeli government recently admitted seven of their wounded fighters for medical treatment in a hospital in Safed.

The Free Syrian Army, which has borne much of the burden of the rebel offensive against Assad's regime, has accused Israel of tacitly backing Assad. The accusation is implausible, particularly in light of Israel's recent air strike on a Syrian military research institute and its bombing of a North Korean designed nuclear reactor in Syria in 2007.

Still more serious, the newly installed leader of the rebel coalition, Mouaz al-Khatib, has described Zionism as a "cancerous movement." It is true that his comment appeared in an essay six years ago, long before the revolt broke out in Syria. Nonetheless, Khatib's malicious view of Zionism doubtless remains unchanged and reveals an anti-Israel mindset shared equally by the rebels and the Syrian regime.

Apart from the concern that post-Assad Syria could be an incredibly destabilizing force in the region, Israel has expressed fears that Syria's stocks of chemical weapons may fall into the hands of Assad's loyal ally, Hezbollah, which fought a war with Israel in 2006 and has vigorously thrown its support behind the Syrian regime in both political and military terms.

Israel does not appear to believe that Syria's chemical weapons pose a clear and present danger, as Moshe Ya'alon, the minister of defence, and Gen. Benny Gantz, the chief of staff, have said in assessing Syrian intentions.



A Druze farmer sells fresh cherries on the Golan Heights. *[Sheldon Kirshner photo]*

But Israel is taking no chances, having upgraded its forces on the Golan and announced that a five-metre-high border fence is currently being built along the 100-kilometre length of the ceasefire line with Syria, and that a third Iron Dome anti-missile battery has been deployed as a precautionary measure in the Galilee.

Under the current circumstances, Israel will hew to the status quo on the Golan, a strategic region rich in water resources. Last October, the Israeli daily *Yediot Achronot* published a report claiming that Israel had agreed in principle to withdraw from the Golan after having conducted secret indirect talks with Syria in 2010. The report, based on documents written by U.S. diplomat Frederick Hoff, suggested that Israel would pull back to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, the pre-1967 border, in exchange for a peace treaty with Syria.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office immediately denied the report, and the then foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, declared that the Golan would remain in Israeli hands. "The Golan Heights," he said, "are like Tel Aviv."

So much for the notion that the Golan is up for grabs. Israel will not negotiate with a regime whose days are numbered.

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2004	9.8%	2009	8.7%
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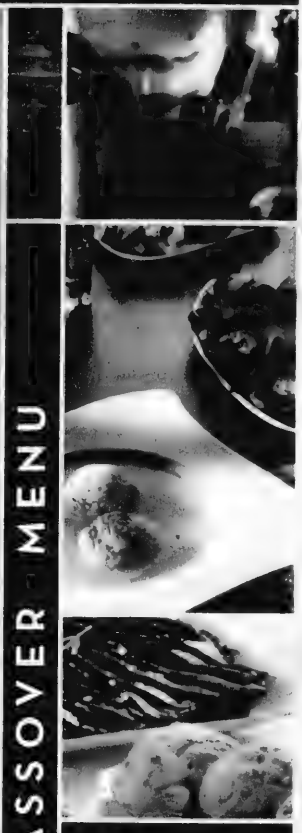

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Why settlers won't drive the coalition bus

In the March 11 *Ha'aretz*, editor-in-chief Aluf Benn wrote a column on the formation of the new Israeli government that appeared to be a declaration of outrage rather than the careful analysis for which he is well respected. "Now the game has ended and real life will begin. The third Netanyahu government has one clear goal: enlarging the settlements and achieving the vision of 'a million Jews living in Judea and Samaria.' This magic number will thwart the division of the land and prevent once and for all the establishment of a Palestinian state."

In subsequent days, others at *Ha'aretz* echoed a similar line. A number of western journalists who frequently look to *Ha'aretz* as a major source of analysis of Israeli government policy reflected the same position.

To put Israel's new government in perspective, According To Reports spoke to veteran Mideast analyst Jim Lederman.

• • •

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presents his new government to the Knesset *(Israel Sun photo)*

ATR: Is it fair to say that Israel's new government will be promoting the settlers' agenda, as some in the media have reported?

JL: The media are behaving like sportscasters. They assume that the higher the numbers, the stronger a team is. This has encouraged the already triumphalist settlers to believe that they have seized control of the government's agenda. That is rubbish. It is as though nobody has read *Moneyball*. Translating baseball strategizing to Israel politics, it's not the number of ministers you have, but which portfolios they control.

ATR: How can you be confident that the pundits are so wrong?

JL: It's obvious. The pundits fail to take into account that the other coalition partners and the opposition have in effect created a new approach to Israeli governance, something that Netanyahu did not anticipate and that the pundits still don't understand.

ATR: New approach?

JR: This change has included adopting a new system of checks and balances. Labor, for the first time, is acting like a real, forceful opposition party, instead of begging to be included in the coalition.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Israeli politicians have always rejected adopting a set of constitutional checks and balances, believing that everything should be negotiable. In practice, in the past, this approach led to coalition agreements that divided power among sectoral interests. This time, though, the parties have aimed not just at getting power, but also at getting cabinet positions that will enable them to prevent the other coalition partners from acquiring unrestricted power for themselves.

ATR: But don't the more centre/centre-left members have fewer cabinet positions?

JL: Even though they now have fewer ministers and deputy ministers, the non-Likud coalition members were able to negotiate control over those ministries that will affect the other coalition partners' demands and plans. For example, Justice Minister Tzipi Livni is now in a position to halt or delay any legislation affecting the settlements, while Finance Minister Yair Lapid is in almost total control of the settlers' access to government funding.

ATR: Are there other factors to bear in mind about how the government will set its priorities?

JL: Definitely. The government had a budget deficit of 40 billion shekels last year and will probably have a deficit of 50 billion shekels this year. There are going to have to be massive spending cuts – including the budgets for the settlements. The settlers will be unable to claim that spending more on settlements is an urgent national priority. And maybe most of all, Habayit Hayehudi's leader Naftali Bennett believes he can attract the support of "traditional Jews" living within the green line and not just Orthodox settlers and their supporters. But to do so, his party is going to have support spending legislation designed to cope with the social and economic issues that led the Israeli middle class to take to the streets almost two years ago. There is no way that he can do that and also support increased spending on settlements.

• • •

Lederman's insightful analysis offers important nuance to a public conversation that is all too often simplistic and one-dimensional.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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Murray and Sol Goldkind had a vision: a state-of-the-art home selling environment in an environment that felt like... well, *home*.

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"When we brainstormed about the type of facility in which to accommodate the growth of our sales force, the one thing we kept coming back to is that the new home for our agents and brokers should be more than just another four-wall office environment," says Broker of Record Murray Goldkind. "It occurred to us that most of the new real estate offices being built to sell more homes don't feel like home themselves."

Muray Goldkind
Broker of Record

"A great salesperson will be successful regardless of his or her surroundings," says Sol, "but creating an office environment that feels like home puts everyone in a home-selling frame of mind."

A growing number of talented agents and brokers agree. The spike in Sutton Group Admiral's growth curve since the opening of the new Centre Street office attests to the fact that "if you build it, they will come." In recent months, Sutton Group Admiral has welcomed aboard numerous industry stalwarts such as **Andrea Halpern, Essie Sher, Eleanor James** and **Daniel Fisherman.**

Andrea Halpern
Sales Representative

Halpern, formerly of Remax Realtron, has settled into her new digs without skipping a beat.

Except she doesn't *settle*.

"Never" says Halpern. "My customers don't settle for less than the best, nor do I. Sutton Group Admiral provides a level of technical and administrative support that allows me to maintain a singular focus on my customers' needs. As a salesperson, I can't ask for anything more."

This eye-on-the-prize philosophy is nothing new at Sutton Group Admiral. "It's always been about the customers," says Murray. "Their needs come first."

Serving those needs means getting sellers the best return on their property and buyers the best value.

"Our people can only do that if *all* of their energies are directed towards facilitating transactions," says Murray. You can't operate at a productive clip if you're looking for paper clips."

"Since Day One," says Sol, "we have always asked ourselves, "How can we be better tomorrow than we are today? In this business, if you're not two steps ahead of the game, you're behind it."

Evelyn James
Sales Representative

"Two steps ahead" might understate the innovations at the new Centre Street facility. Its 15,000 square feet of state-of-the-art office space houses the kind of cutting-edge services and facilities that Admiral agents need to further enhance the top-drawer service they give their clients.

This is the Sutton Group Admiral formula in action: maximizing opportunity and minimizing hassle for its agents and brokers.

The record-breaking sales achieved by its ever-growing team — now over 250 agents and brokers — has allowed Sutton Group Admiral to not only consolidate its niche atop the residential resale market, but also to further its presence in the highly competitive field of new home construction sales.

Murray prides himself on his ability to read and respond to the needs of home buyers and sellers: "Today's home buyers are looking for one thing: VALUE. The agents and brokers who give them maximum value for their hard-earned dollars will earn their business. Those who don't, won't."

Sol Goldkind
Sales Representative

In its dual capacity as reseller and new home purveyor, Sutton Group Admiral's access to both resale homes and new construction allows it to offer home buyers the best of both worlds, says Sol. "Whether you're looking for a resale home or a new one, you can now explore ALL your interests and options with us."

One thing that hasn't changed, says Sol, is Sutton Group Admiral's commitment to work "24 hours a day to earn your trust and ensure your satisfaction."

Essie Sher
Sales Representative

The 250 + agents and brokers of Sutton Group Admiral Realty wish you a Happy, Healthy & Peaceful Passover

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Ancient synagogue mosaics portray Samson

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

High-quality mosaics adorning the floor of an ancient synagogue in the Galilee have been found by archeologists representing a consortium of six North American universities, including the University of Toronto.

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The 1,600-year-old mosaics, some of which depict biblical scenes, were described as "spectacular" by the lead archeologist, Jodi Magness, in a recent interview.

Magness, a professor of early Judaism at the University of North Carolina, was in Toronto in mid-March to deliver a lecture on the excavation.

The synagogue, from the Roman-Byzantine period, was uncovered on the site of Yaquq, an Arab village near the Sea of Galilee whose residents fled during the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948.

The site was then taken over by the Israeli army and used as a training base. The ruins of the village were bulldozed in 1968.

Yaquq was also populated by Canaanites, Romans and Jews, being known as Hucuca during the Roman era and as Huqoq by Jews.

In addition to uncovering a synagogue, Magness and her colleagues dug up a ritual bath.

The remnants of dozens of ancient synagogue buildings have been uncovered in Israel and Jordan in the past few decades, said Magness.

Jodi Magness

What is unusual about Huqoq are the biblical mosaics. Only a very small number of late Roman synagogues decorated with such mosaics have been excavated, she added.

The dig in Huqoq, begun in 2011, is expected to be finished in 2016.

The mosaics will either be removed from the site and exhibited in a museum, or be left there within a new national park.

She hopes that the authorities choose the second option.

Apart from the University of Toronto, members of the consortium are the University of North Carolina, Brigham Young University, Trinity University, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Wyoming.

The University of Toronto team is under the direction of the Archeology Centre and the Centre for Jewish Studies.

Calling the synagogue building "monumental," Magness saved much of her enthusiasm for the fourth to sixth century CE mosaics.

They portray a dedicatory inscription in either Hebrew or Aramaic, two female figures with lotus flowers in their hair who may well have been synagogue donors and the figure of Samson taking revenge on the Philistines.

"He has a thick red belt around his waist, and is dressed like a Roman soldier," said Magness, who appeared at the interview with Michael Chazan, the director of U of T's Archeology Centre.

Continued on page 15

The End of the Shul as We Know It?
Crisis and Renewal in North American Synagogues - Part 2

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Panel featuring Rabbi Michal Shekel and Rabbi Aaron Levy

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Lawrence Hoffman is an ordained rabbi and the Barbara and Stephen Friedman Professor of Liturgy, Worship and Ritual at Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

Michal Shekel is Executive Director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis and the Rabbi of Or Hadash in Newmarket, Ontario

Aaron Levy is founding director and rabbi of Mishpat: Creative Downtown Judaism

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Samson, the biblical figure, as portrayed in an ancient synagogue mosaic found in the Galilee.

Samson was a local hero

Continued from page 14

Portrayals of Samson in synagogue mosaics are quite unusual, she pointed out. But in Huqoq, he was clearly seen as both "a local hero" and a "shield of Israel."

In rabbinic sources, however, Samson is negatively regarded because he lusted after non-Israelite women, she noted.

During the Roman-Byzantine period, most of the inhabitants of Palestine were Christians, Romans and pagans. The majority of Jews living in villages in the eastern Galilee and on the Golan Heights were farmers. She does not know how many Jews lived in Palestine during that time.

And while she is not certain how many more ancient synagogues in the Galilee may be found in the future, she said that German archeologists working near by are also in the midst of excavating a synagogue.

Prior to Huqoq, Magness was involved in excavating the Roman siege works in Masada. "No one had ever done it," she said.

She also worked in two other sites.

She excavated a late Roman fortress in Yotvata – the present site of a kibbutz in the Arava desert – and dug up the remains of two churches in the former Christian village of Khirbet Yattir, near Hebron.

Magness does not believe in using archeology for political ends.

"I have no political agenda," she said. "People who do so misuse archeology. I'm a scientist, not a politician."

Arts funding a 'hard-hit area'

***CowJews and Indians* opens this year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival**

Continued from page 3

"There are a lot of charities and non-profits asking people for support. We're not saving lives or curing diseases, but what we are trying to remind people to do is remember the importance of arts and culture, and of protecting this heritage of the Jewish experience through the years around the world that's been amassed on film," she said.

Werner noted that funding for the arts over the last few years has been "a hard-hit area."

Longstanding funders such as UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and other private donors have given less as the economy has forced cutbacks across the board, she said.

The archives project is in the "development phase," Werner said.

The 2013 TJFF (www.tjff.com) runs from April 11 to 21. Its advance box office opens on March 28.

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New U of T president son of Holocaust survivor

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The new president of the University of Toronto is the son of a Holocaust survivor.

Meric Gertler, whose appointment was announced in early March, will be the school's 16th president in its nearly 200 years of existence. He will succeed incumbent David Naylor later this year.

Gertler, who joined U of T 30 years ago, is a professor of geography and planning. He holds the Goldring Chair in Canadian Studies at University College and is currently dean of the faculty of arts and sciences, a position he has held since December 2008. Prior to this, he was vice-dean of graduate education and research.

Gertler's father, Leonard, an urban planner, was the founding director of the University of Waterloo's School of Planning.

His mother, born in what was then Czechoslovakia, survived the Holocaust. Gertler declined to provide her name or details of her experiences during the Nazi occupation.

Born in Edmonton, Gertler grew up mostly in Toronto and Waterloo and spent periods of time in St. Catharines and Ottawa.

He earned an undergraduate degree at McMaster University and a post-graduate degree in city planning at the University of California, Berkeley. He received a PhD from Harvard University, writing his thesis on "Capital Dynamics and Regional Development."

In an interview, Gertler said his Montreal-born father, who headed a major study that led to the establishment of the Niagara Escarpment Planning Commission, kindled his fascination with cities. As he put it, "The talk at the dinner table revolved around cities and urban issues for as long as I can remember."

He added, "Today, with such a large and growing proportion of the world's population living in cities, and with city regions emerging as the most important sites of innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, my interest in the economic dynamism of cities is very timely. So, too, is my fascination with the relationship between the university and the city around it – an interest I am now able to pursue from both a scholarly and a practical perspective."

Meric Gertler

As dean of arts and sciences, Gertler redesigned the structure of undergraduate education to emphasize "core competencies" such as writing, critical thinking and quantitative reasoning.

He also increased enrolment in doctoral programs by roughly 50 per cent and created a series of new graduate programs.

"One example I am especially proud of is the Centre for Jewish Studies, which has continued to develop and thrive in recent years, attracting large numbers of undergraduate and graduate students to its courses, and putting in place a vibrant new master's program to complement its PhD program," he said.

Gertler described the Centre for Jewish Studies, directed by Jeffrey Kopstein, as "a truly dynamic interdisciplinary centre" that promotes the study of Jewish thought, philosophy, history, culture and classical Judaism.

Gertler made a surprise appearance at the centre on Feb. 25, talking in general terms about U of T.

He was introduced by Kopstein, whose featured speaker, Trinity College professor Samuel Kassow, delivered a lecture on the Warsaw ghetto historian Emanuel Ringelblum.

Almost two years ago, Gertler went to Israel to deliver the Arie Shachar memorial lecture and seminar on urban studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. After the lecture, he co-hosted an alumni reception at which several members of U of T's faculty were present.

Israel's success in start-up technology makes it an example to emulate as U of T's Munk School of Global Affairs develops its new Innovation Policy Lab, Gertler said.

"The emergence of the 'start-up nation' phenomenon in Israel makes it a natural case study for this kind of work, alongside other standout cases such as India, Brazil, China and others," he observed.

"In this context, our strong partnerships with the leading universities in Israel, as well as other top universities around the world, will be a major asset."

He intends to "hit the ground running" when he takes over from Naylor.

"I have worked at U of T for my entire academic career and have spent the last eight years in senior academic administration," noted Gertler, whose research has attracted $8.4 million in external funding. "This has given me a very detailed knowledge of how U of T works. And I have strong working relationships with many colleagues across the university."

Students bring cheer to retirement home

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Coby Segall says, "Let's go everybody," as he runs around the room, dancing to the tune of *Am Yisrael Chai* playing in the background.

He stops to hold a guest's hand and begins jumping up and down with his hands in hers, as she smiles back at him from her wheelchair.

Segall is dancing and singing with a group of students and the residents of Cummer Lodge, a long-term care home in Toronto. "I try to inject spirituality into their lives," he said, at the Purim-themed event earlier this month. "I'm reminding them what it feels like to feel joy."

Ronny Segall plays piano to Cummer Lodge residents.

Segall has been running monthly Jewish-themed programs at Cummer Lodge for almost nine years. It all started by accident, he said. In 2004, the rabbi who used to run Shabbat services at Cummer Lodge was away for a few months, and so Segall, newly observant, decided to lead the program. After the rabbi returned, he asked, "What can we do to keep this going?" That's when Segall decided to commit one Sunday morning a month to Cummer Lodge.

Since then, he's gathered a team of about 15 volunteers – high school and university students and young professionals – who wake up at 8 a.m. on a Sunday and head to Cummer Lodge. It takes them two hours to go to the different residents' rooms and ask if they're interested in coming downstairs for the program. Usually, about 60 residents will join. Then, he places all their wheelchairs in a large circle, so he can see everyone. The music starts playing, and Segall and his team of volunteers start interacting with each resident.

At first, many don't want to stand up or even hold hands with the volunteers. But after a few songs, and after Segall has broken into a wide smile and has danced with many of the residents, the mood shifts. The residents smile, waiting for their turn to dance with a volunteer. One man who was moving his wheelchair back and forth in the corner, to the tune of the music, suddenly moves to the centre of the room, his lips mouthing the words of the song. Toward the end, one resident stands up and says, "This cheers me up. Thank you."

He's not the only one to feel that way. Sylvia Marsch has been living at Cummer Lodge for four years. She said she loves coming to the program because she gets a chance to interact with other people.

"I'm alone, and I like to be with people and share my thoughts," said Marsch, 90. "I like the things [the volunteers] are doing. They're helping people."

For these residents, it's a chance to feel like someone cares. "We're empowering them, and bridging the generation gap," said Segall. "There's so much learning that we can do from the people that are here."

One of these people is David Jacobs, a Holocaust survivor who says he was liberated by then U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower. He attends the programs with his wife. He came to Canada in 1948. "I was a tailor," said Jacobs, who will turn 95 in July. "They [Canada] started to take people in. They needed tailors." At one of the programs a few months ago, he brought pictures of him and his family, and other artifacts from the Holocaust to show the other residents. "I like it here. They know me."

The volunteers end up forming a relationship with the residents so it can be hard to let go. "Sometimes people pass away. You miss people. You know their face. Then they're not here, they're gone," said volunteer Eldad Ben Hamo.

The impact the program has on the volunteers is clear. "Seeing where life can take you, you go from dependence on parents to dependence on children," said Julia Segal, another volunteer. "It puts all those trivial disagreements in your own family into perspective."

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Notes from an aliyah pilot trip

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Our recent trip to Israel was like no vacation ever: a "pilot trip" for our planned aliyah this summer. Just my husband and I – no kids, and a jam-packed agenda of 11 cities in 12 days.

Half the cities were in the central part of the country and half in the north, where there's a push to resettle immigrants and native Israelis. Not all were contenders, like Jerusalem, with its high cost of living and scarce jobs.

Our story probably isn't typical: many olim know where they're heading, near family or friends, or areas popular with other Anglos (if you speak English, you're an Anglo). "We'll know it when we see it," I said of our future hometown. I hoped so, since even our "short list" was dauntingly long.

The plan was to get around on buses, cabs and trains, because that's how we hope to live, given that new cars are taxed at 100 per cent and gas prices can triple those here (who does Israel even buy gas *from*?).

Based in a funky hostel in central Jerusalem, we scooted around the centre of the country that first week, soaking in what each place had to offer.

After an obligatory Kotel visit the first night, we hit the ground running: hopping a bus next morning to Ramat Beit Shemesh, sometimes dubbed "Thornhill East" for its many English speakers.

Teddy and and Jennifer MacLeod seen overlooking the city of Karmiel

Surprises awaited us everywhere: Hebrew is essential even in Beit Shemesh; Ma'aleh Adumim is a city, not a "settlement"; the Weizmann Institute particle accelerator is a "geek-cool" highlight of any tour of Rehovot – which also has a great mall and an authentic shuk across the street.

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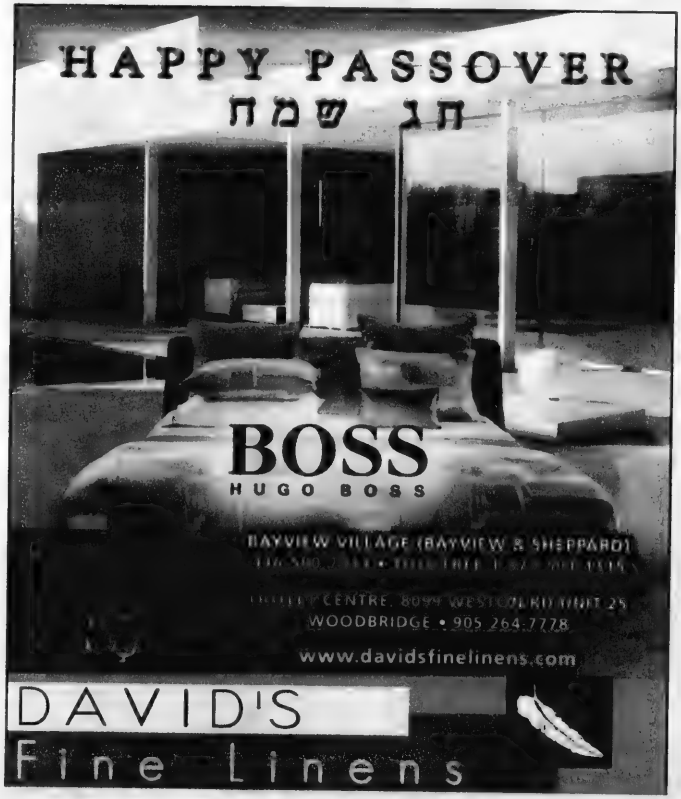

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Great malls can be found everywhere!

Continued from page 18

Actually, we found great malls everywhere – each with its own Aroma Espresso Bar and kosher bakery. This would be a tough decision.

Shabbat might have been a restful break, but we decided the hilly streets of Jerusalem's Har Nof would be most scenic. Six flights of stairs down from our hosts' home at the very top of the city, we reached the fir trees that surround the neighbourhood and gazed down at picturesque hillsides dotted with red *kalaniyot* (poppy anemones) in bloom – then sighed and began the shlep back up.

On Sunday – an ordinary workday in Israel – we wound northward by train to join a group pilot trip with Nefesh B'Nefesh, an organization that works with the Jewish Agency to promote aliyah.

In a small land, with hostile neighbours, going north

Outside Karmiel City Hall: closer to Lebanon than Jerusalem.

can be unsettling. We were headed for Nahariya, a seaside resort about 10 minutes from the Lebanon border. Still, on a Sunday night in February, it was heady to gaze from our hotel room over a perfect Mediterranean sunset.

Joining the group, we went from lone rangers, boldly navigating bus fares and street signs, to a dry-land "cruise ship" – all-you-can-eat kosher buffet, head counts, name badges and the ongoing spiel of "on our left, we're passing…" Everybody said we were lucky to see the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) almost full after a rainy winter – but coming from Lake Ontario, I couldn't exactly ooh and ahh, no matter how much I knew this was "very good for Israel."

All 36 of us (from the United States and Canada) are planning aliyah soon. Beyond that, we were a mixed bag: religious and non-religious; born Jews; converts; non-Jewish spouses; young married couples and retirees.

Beyond some scenic lookouts, our no-nonsense tours included apartments, industrial parks and clinics. We visited two city halls and saw countless playgrounds, schools, malls and *kupat cholim* (health care plan) offices.

Everywhere, we met locals – recent olim living in the north. Due to the limitations of cramming in 36-plus visitors, we mainly saw how the comfortable half lives (I wasn't alone in wondering how their homes compared to what we could actually afford). They all had great things to say, but our hosts were also very honest about adjusting to a language and to a culture with which we may share common roots, but which is way different from what they were used to.

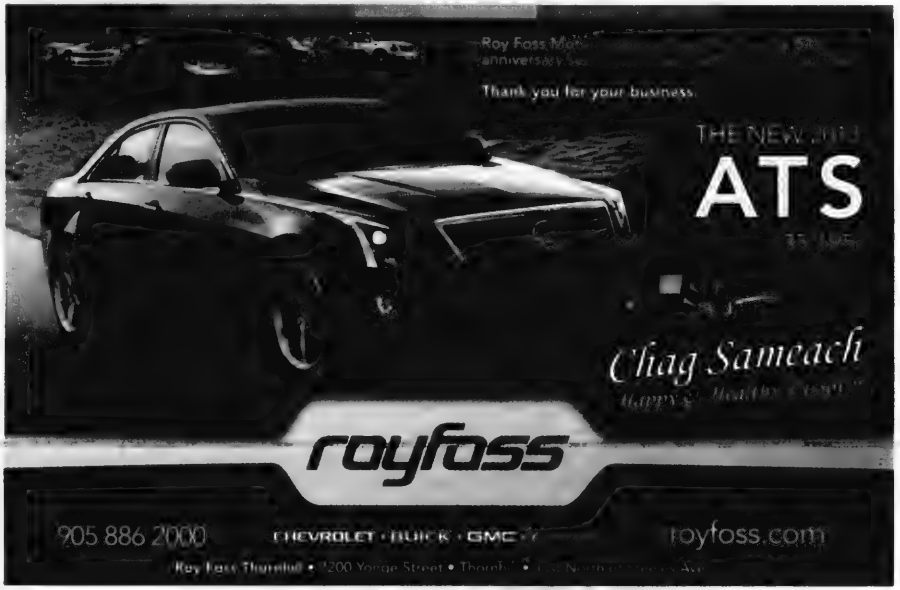
Between tours, we worked hard, aided by delicious local citrus to keep our strength up, through workshops on real estate, employment, shipping, education and health care – all in three days!

Our last night, my husband and I each made a secret list, ranking every city we'd seen: B'nei Brak, Har Nof, Jerusalem, Karmiel, Kfar Vradim, Ma'aleh Adumim, Ma'alot, Nahariya, Raanana, Rehovot, Rosh Pina and Tzefat. A few dropped to the bottom immediately, but shuffling the Top 5 was tough. Every city had something wonderful to offer.

Then we swapped lists, and through a process I still don't understand, eliminated every choice but one: Karmiel, in the north, with its balance of green space, city feel, affordable living, mixed religious community, culture, shopping and car-free transportation options.

Is Karmiel (the "K" and I differentiate it from the better-known Carmel) the only place with these things? Nope. But while some people take more than one pilot trip to choose among many good choices, we want to get on with the business of actually living in Israel.

Heading out, with time to kill, we stopped for supper in Tel Aviv, adding a lucky 13th city to the itinerary. Dinner was so awesome it took a real effort to get back on the train and catch our flight. But coming back to Toronto felt OK, not bittersweet at all. We have a job to do – it's time to pack up and move on. And somewhere out there, our next home is waiting.



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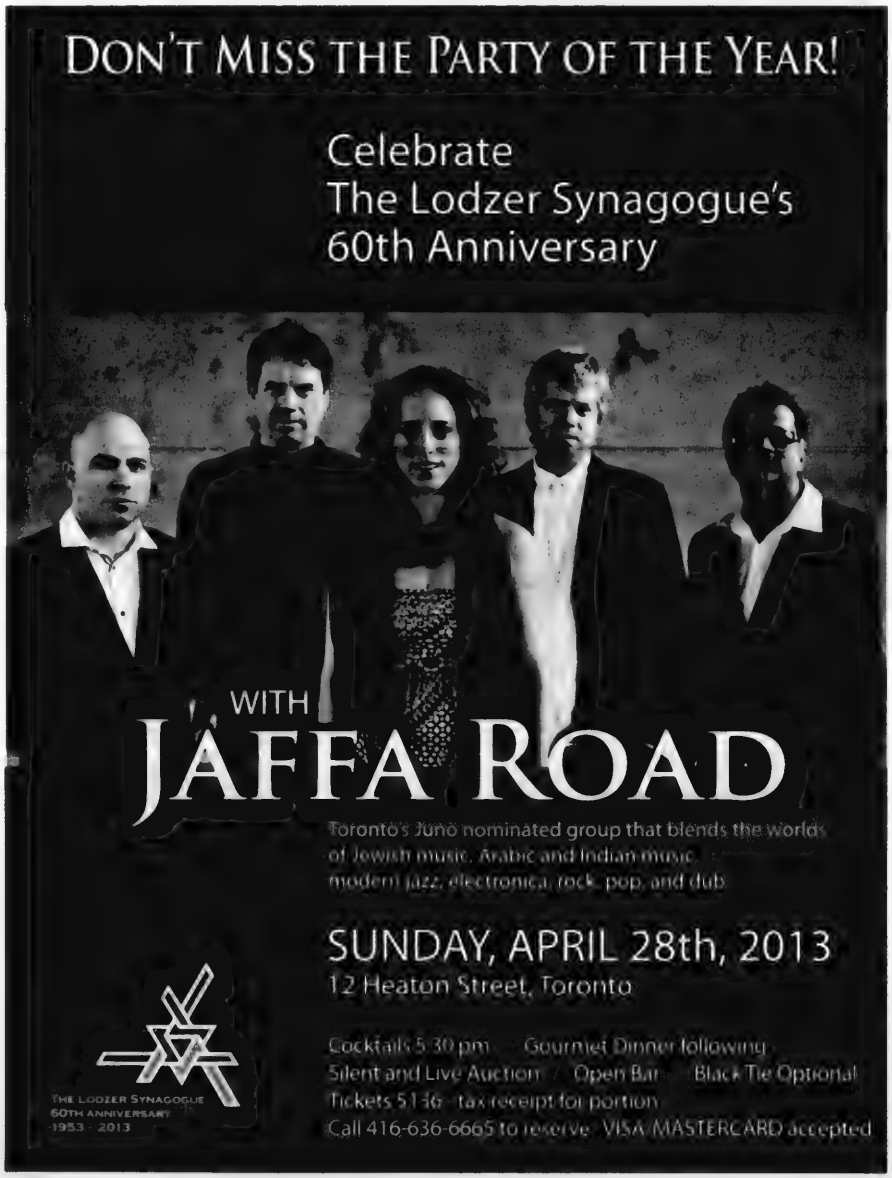
Jewish education – key to Jewish continuity:

Sara Dobner

Guest Voice

This year marks the end of our family's 17-year journey with Jewish day schools in Toronto, as our youngest daughter is about to graduate from TanenbaumCHAT. For many Jewish families, sending their kids to Jewish day schools is a natural part of Jewish life in the Diaspora. However, this is not the case for many Israelis who live abroad. Generally, Israelis (especially non-observant/secular) have a hard time understanding the concept of Jewish community life in the Diaspora, and accepting the need to make the efforts and monetary sacrifices to preserve their Jewish identity and culture. This includes sending their kids to private Jewish schools, belonging to a synagogue and supporting the Jewish community and its institutions. Living in a Jewish state 'releases' Israelis from the need to be 'active' Jews; thus being Jewish is taken for granted and, to some extent, loses its meaning.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Therefore, as non-observant Israelis who want to maintain a Jewish identity in the Diaspora, we need to understand and recognize that while our Jewish identity is mostly premised on our connection to the State of Israel, the Hebrew language and contemporary Israeli culture, it lacks a substantive connection to the rich and diverse Jewish heritage and culture that developed over thousands of years prior to the modern State of Israel, and continues to develop to this date. We also need to understand that developing a stronger Jewish identity is not only important to building bridges to the local Jewish community, but is also essential to maintaining our connection and our kids' connection to the State of Israel.

The maintenance and nurturing of the two identities (Israeli and Jewish) for us and for our kids is challenging for Israeli parents in the Diaspora, but can be an extremely rewarding process that leads to a win-win situation. On one hand, strengthening the Israeli identity and pride of our kids is crucial in maintaining a common ground for parents with their kids through a common culture. Even more so, our children's connection with the amazing story and history of the State of Israel, Zionism and the Hebrew language, are a huge source of pride and richness, and are vital in the development of their identity as Jews, Israelis, and human beings.

On the other hand, supporting the development of the kids of former Israelis' Jewish identity will give them a good chance in integrating into, and belonging to, the local Jewish community. Given the lack of strong Jewish identity among secular Israelis, attending Jewish schools may even be more critical for their kids than it is for the kids of Jewish Canadian parents. Attending Jewish schools is the key to ensuring that kids of former Israeli in the Diaspora will not only grow up to be proud Jews/Israelis, but also, given their Israeli background, these kids could be well positioned to act as leaders in the community, and play a crucial role in building bridges between Israelis and Diaspora Jews, by bringing different perspectives of Israel to the Diaspora, and vice versa.

In appreciation and gratitude to the Jewish day schools' priceless contribution to the Jewish identity and pride of my two daughters over the last 17 years, I would like to share my perspective on the key benefits of sending kids to Jewish schools, from a point of view of Israeli non-observant secular parents:

1. Reducing the gap between emigrant parents and their children:

The generation gap between parents and their children may be larger among families of immigrants. Children who are raised in a different country/culture from that of their parents may develop a different set of values from those held by their parents. Jewish schools help to bridge this gap by providing values and contents that are more familiar to Israeli parents and possibly their kids, than the ones provided in public schools. This includes Jewish heritage, love of Israel, the Hebrew language, and Zionism.

2. Reconnecting with Jewish content/values: Israeli students (from secular background) have an opportunity to gain important knowledge of Judaism, reconnect with the traditional Jewish roots and values of justice, modesty, peace, democracy, ethics, love of learning, tikkun olam, tzedakah and family values. This learning is essential in the development of strong Jewish identity and pride.

Continued on page 21

An Israeli-Canadian perspective

Continued from page 20

3. Facilitating easier integration: The immersion in the Jewish school system helps Israeli students integrate into the local Jewish community. Children learn the Jewish community 'way of life', the mentality and concept of community building that can be foreign to Israelis. They connect with local Jewish kids and build relationships for life. The exposure to Jewish schools also helps Israeli parents learn about Jewish life in the Diaspora and supports easier integration.

4. Supporting leadership: Studying in a Jewish school, where the Hebrew language and the connection to Israel are central, gives Israeli kids an advantage and a great tool they can use to enrich and support their peers as well as take leadership roles.

5. Acting as ambassadors for Israel: With their knowledge of Hebrew and special connection to Israel, Israeli kids many times are the best ambassadors for Israel. They can bring a different perspective of Judaism to schools in the Diaspora that can strengthen, for non-Israeli kids, the understanding and pride in Israel, the appreciation of the Hebrew language and connection to different aspects of Judaism. This special and important role that Israelis kids can play in the life of the community is an immense source of satisfaction for these kids.

6. Educating to excellence: Jewish schools provide their students with key Jewish values, such as diligence, desire to learn and drive for accomplishment and excellence. In Jewish schools it is 'cool' to excel academically. For example, it is known that graduates of CHAT have superior study habits, which are most beneficial when they move on to university.

7. Jewish ambiance ('Ruach'): The Jewish warm ambience is a central part of many Jewish schools. Jewish values of respect and mutual help, decency and integrity are central to the culture and experience.

The Israeli emigrant population in the Toronto GTA has been growing steadily over the last few decades, reaching approximately 50,000, by some accounts, or approximately 25 per cent of the local Jewish population. As they become more established in the community, Israelis understand that Jewish schools do not necessarily mean religious/Orthodox but can be more pluralistic and tolerant. They recognize the relevance of Jewish education and its vital importance in Jewish continuity, and accept the reality and need to pay for Jewish education when outside Israel. As a result, students from Israeli homes are becoming more visible in Jewish schools. At TanenbaumCHAT (one of the largest and most well-respected Jewish high school in North America), over the past 10 years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of students coming from Israeli homes. Elementary day schools, such as Associated Hebrew Schools, Leo Baeck Day School, Bialik Hebrew Day School and Robbins Hebrew Academy, have also seen upward trends in attendance of students from Israeli homes in recent years.

Other Jewish educational options, such as Jewish/Israeli supplementary schools, have experienced meteoric growth in recent years demonstrating the unfulfilled pent-up demand that existed in the community prior to their opening. Kachol Lavan, the Centre for Hebrew and Israel Studies, was founded in 2006, and offers Sunday classes to Israeli and non-Israeli kids, on Hebrew, Israeli culture and Jewish heritage. The number of students at Kachol Lavan has grown from 80 students in 2006/07 to 400 in 2012/13 (400 per cent increase in six years).

In spite of the recent positive trends of increased participation in Jewish/Israeli education, the majority of Israeli parents choose to send their kids to public schools and do not send their kids to Jewish/Israeli day schools or Sunday schools, for numerous reasons. These include, but are not limited to, financial reasons, other priorities, misperceptions and resentment towards Diaspora mentality, or because they believe that their kids will stay Jewish given that they speak Hebrew at home.

Jewish education is a cornerstone in maintaining the Jewish identity. This applies even more so to secular Israeli Canadians than to local Jews, as secular Israelis' connection to Jewish institutions, is relatively weak. Full integration of Israelis into the Jewish community cannot be achieved without going through the Jewish education system.

Sara Dobner is a member of the board of directors, TanenbaumCHAT, a member of the advisory board of Kachol Lavan, and the chair of the Israeli identity program, Hamifgash Program, Schwartz/Reisman Centre, UJA Federation.

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Is IAW still relevant?

For many in our community, it must have been enormously reassuring to read that, according to an "analysis" by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "[Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW)] is a non-event, in general media terms" (*CJN*, March 10). In the same article, it's reported that this epiphany apparently mirrors "monitoring" of IAW activities by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). We're informed about how "CIJA always considers [their] strategic advocacy efforts through the lens of [their] target audiences." Accordingly, CIJA explains that "as a starting point, this means understanding that most students and faculty members devote very little (if any) consideration to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

This notion is a little difficult to digest. As we're only too painfully aware, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is featured in the news almost every day, so students and faculty, regardless of the apparent cloistering that CIJA seems to attribute to them, undoubtedly participate in, and often take the lead in, much of the discourse that's relevant to the conflict.

And while accepting that the results of CIJA's "monitoring" may have application to some campuses (usually those in Toronto, Montreal or Ottawa), the overall assertions do not necessarily reflect IAW experiences at many other centres across Canada.

Also, CIJA's apparent attempts to downplay the impact of the anti-Israel demonstrations at our universities, and its frequent discouragement of grassroots initiatives to actively counter them, convey an unmistakable message of insensitivity and lack of support to those in our community who've decided, because of the special needs of their particular campuses, to assert themselves in ways that might not

My View

Lawrence Hart

conform with what's widely seen as the top-down, cookbook, approach that the CIJA leadership tries constantly to impose.

Ironically, though, there may be a kernel of insight into the assertion that IAW has become "a non-event." What we're now needing to confront is not just the pernicious problem of this one week designated as IAW, but something that's far more pervasive.

This relates to the particular terminology that underpins the international campaign to demonize, delegitimize, and ultimately destroy the State of Israel, which has – in no small part as a result of IAW – become firmly entrenched in our day-to-day, year-round conversations on campus. The term "Israeli apartheid" is heard all the time, as though it were fact rather than odious fiction.

Moreover, since IAW first embedded itself in the academic calendar in 2005 – at the University of Toronto – tens of thousands of graduating students have already been subjected to its vocabulary. As a consequence, it's likely that many will leave the academy with a certain modicum of suspicion that Israel is responsible for at least some – perhaps much – of the turmoil that it's blamed for. This will be the true legacy of IAW, long after the week itself has given way to the next fad that serves to galvanize Israel-haters on our campuses.

The obvious time to have eradicated the tumour was at its source nine years ago, but even then, the overriding view of segments of our organized Jewish community was that IAW did not merit serious attention. As could easily have been predicted, we've paid a high price for such inertia.

Goodbye Passover, hello Mimouna

Even if your family hails from Plonsk, Pinsk or Minsk, imagine they come from Tangiers, Fez or Marrakesh: That way you can take part in the Jewish Moroccan holiday of Mimouna. Right after Passover ends, those Jews usher in a celebration of liberty, community values, friendship and hospitality.

Mimouna has a connection to the final day of Passover when the Israelites finally reached the Red Sea. Many of the day's traditions reflect that connection such as going to the beach and putting (sometimes live) fish on the table in remembrance of the splitting of the sea. **[http://bit.ly/mimouna1]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

In marked contrast with the seder night, when congregants hurried home from the synagogue to begin the Haggadah, congregants on the eve of Mimouna take the time to wish each other: *tarbah* (success), the special Mimouna blessing: *Alallah Mimouna, Ambarka mas'uda*, and to enjoy some *mahya*, a honey-based drink. **[http://bit.ly/mimouna2]**

"Some believe that Mimouna represents a symbolic new beginning of freedom from slavery, and so sweets are set out on a table with a white tablecloth decorated with flowers and wheat sheaves which is the centerpiece of the Mimouna Day. In the sense of Mimouna being a new beginning, eating these sweets symbolizes a sweet year." **[http://bit.ly/mimouna3]**

What about the name "Mimouna?" It may allude to the word *emunah*, faith. Perhaps the celebration can be traced to the anniversary of the death of Maimon Ben Joseph of Fez, the father of Maimonides. **[http://bit.ly/mimouna4]**

Not so fast, says Yigal Bin-Nun. The holiday's Moroccan origins are actually pagan, "a feast day designed to appease a local she-devil, and contained no religious components. In Israel, however, its pagan origins have been ignored." Bin-Nun adds that "there is nothing to keep future generations from investing old holidays with new-old meaning. Particularly worthy of note is that over the generations, Mimouna eve became a night for young people and lovers, as well as a symbol of Jewish-Muslim solidarity. Because the Jews could not keep chametz in their homes during the Passover holiday, it was customary to give all their flour, yeast and grain to their Muslim neighbors." **[http://bit.ly/mimouna5]**

Regardless of its origins, the preferable way to spend the day is at family picnics. What to pack? Daniel Rogov provides a recipe for mofleta (or moufletta) which is the first leavened bread eaten after the Passover holiday and for a Nougat Ice Cream with Honey and Figs (that calls for honey, sugar, figs and the "heaviest possible sweet cream.") **[http://bit.ly/mimouna6]** And since the holiday is a remembrance of the splitting of the Red Sea, fish is popular, like baked whitefish (Moroccan-style.) **[http://bit.ly/mimouna8]**

For those of us whose lineage can only be traced to north of the Mediterranean, did you know that we also have our own (very obscure) post-Pesach tradition? As the holiday ends, Ashkenazi Jews can take pride in *Rumplenacht*, literally the "night of transferring" back into storage our Passover plates and cutlery and reintroducing the regular chametz wares. **[http://bit.ly/mimouna9]**

And in my family, *Rumplenacht* just wouldn't be *Rumplenacht* without the traditional trudging to the bakery at two in the morning to wait for the first batch of steaming bagels to emerge fresh from the oven.

Highway@rogers.com.

שישאר ביניינו

גידי קורן וחברים

ישראל, אביב 2013

אובאמה מגיע. מדינה שלמה תהיה בכוננות ובירושלים לא יוכל איש לנוע או לזוז. כל החזאים והפרשנים בדעה אחת שאין שום סיכוי להסדר עם הפלשתינאים שאינם מוכנים לוותר על זכות השיבה, ולדבריהם אין אובאמה מתכונן להשקיע מאמץ אמיתי בנושא הזה.
בישראל הוקמה השבוע ממשלה שיותרה על החרדים, דבר שמשמח מאוד את הישראלי הממוצע. אבל זו גם ממשלה שיש בה רוב ברור לאי החזרת שטחים בגדה המערבית, ומטבע העניין תמשיך לבנות ישובים באזורים פלשתינאיים. העולם קרוב לוודאי יגביר את החרם כלפי מוצרים מהתנחלויות, כמו גם את החרם האקדמי נגד ישראל.
הישראלי ברחוב איבד כל אמון שיכול להווצר שלום עם הפלשתינאים, וכל מה שהוא רוצה זה ביטחון. וברקע ממשיכה איראן בהתקדמות לפצצה גרעינית. רק מזג האויר שקט ונעים, כמו שקט שלפני סערה.
אבל שישאר ביניינו.

ילדי הגן

כל ביקור שלי בארץ מתחיל בהופעת בגני הילדים של הנכדים ונכדות שלי. הם שרים וצוחקים ומקשיבים לסיפורים, וקשה להם להאמין שהזקן הזה היה ילד ממש בגן הזה וממש בכיתה שלהם לפני ששים שנה. הם פוערים עיניים גדולות ומוקסמים על איך אצבעותיו הנקניקיות של הסבא הזה רצות על מיתרי הגיטרה. ואני, הסבא, הילד שבי קם לתחייה ומשתטה איתם. אני שר להם את השפן הקטן במילותיו ההפוכות :
"השתן הקפן סגר לשכוח תדלת
והם השתוללים מצחוק והגננות מביטות בתמיהה כי מעולם לא ראו אותם מתגלגלים כל כך מצחוק.
ואז אני נפרד מהם ומבטיח לבוא שוב, ועוטף בתוכי את תחושת הכיף הזאת שתלך איתי בשבועיים הבאים, שחלקם יהיו הרבה פחות נעימים.

"פרוזאק בייבי"

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אני מבטיח לספר לכם יותר וגם להשיק את הספר בטורונטו בחדשים הקרובים, אבל שישאר ביניינו.

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikoren.com

Passover and ego

Rabbi David Cadoch

Passover is at hand, and it seems Pesach is everyone's favourite chag, at least for most families in our community.

To some of us, Passover is synonymous with major house cleaning in search of chametz.

This curious halachic requirement of searching for chametz is based on a biblical passage in Deuteronomy (16:4): "And there shall be no leaven seen with thee in all they borders seven days." Our sages interpret this as an active mitzvah to search for any leavening on our person, in our dwellings and in our businesses.

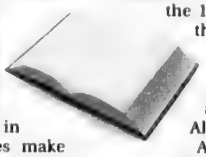
Halachah derives from this passage that possession is forbidden, but to avoid wanton destruction of products containing leavening, a document of sale is drawn up, with a non-Jewish client, to demonstrate that we have sold our leftover chametz products for a specific price.

This is an actual sales transaction, and the key to our storage room is handed over to the buyer, where he or she has the authority to consume it. However, since we stipulate a clause to buy back the products, the new owner (the non-Jew) stands to make some profit when selling it back to the original owner.

What is it about leavening that makes it central to Passover observance? Our sages have formulated profound moral lessons from this concept. They have written anecdotes equating leavening to the symbol of false pride, known in Hebrew as *ga'avah* – pride of the ego.

Pride is a healthy trait when experienced in a balanced manner – it gives us a sense of value.

Rabbinic Reflections



But what is false pride in this context? Our sages make reference to a haughty pride that makes statements, verbal or non-verbal, in a manner that's hurtful to others. This message can be read as, "I am better, smarter and richer than you." This kind of pride is a self-possessed haughtiness that makes a person think they're beyond reproach.

If anyone tries to reproach this kind of haughty person, they take immediate offence and begrudge the individual who dared possess the audacity to make such a remark. This is where the Torah places importance on the trait of humility, known in Hebrew as *anavah*.

It's interesting to note that most of the offerings made in Jerusalem at the time of the Temple excluded leavening as an ingredient, with few exceptions, such as the show bread (in Hebrew *lechem hapanim*), the 12 loaves of bread that were always present on a dedicated table in the Temple as an offering to the Almighty.

Arrogance and pride are true barriers to developing healthy relationships with society, and ultimately the Almighty.

Chag Kasher v'Samayach!

Rabbi David Cadoch is spiritual leader for Shabbat and chagim at Beth HaRambam Synagogue, Donald Berman Maimonides Hospital in Montreal.

Chief rabbi teaches inclusivity

For the past 21 years, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has served as the chief rabbi of the Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth. He is not, however, an authority for Masorti, Reform or liberal Judaism. A remarkable personality, he is the award-winning author of more than 20 books, a profound and original thinker and an eloquent and persuasive orator. As a recipient of a life peerage, he occupies a seat in the House of Lords.

As a sympathetic exponent of modern Orthodoxy he has denounced religious extremism. In his book, *The Dignity of Difference* (2002), he writes, "Fundamentalism has burst into our society like a dinosaur at a cocktail party." He warns that when it is coupled with nationalism it often leads to wars of religion. Religious extremism, he asserts, is all too often bound up with obscurantism, oppressive legislation and terror, which inevitably alienates those who might have been attracted to religion.

Rabbi Sacks, who is retiring later this year at the age of 65, advocates a "counter-fundamentalism based on the conviction that God has given us many universes of faith." He insists that there is no exclusive way to God and that we must recognize the image of God "in the person not like us... Religions do not need to be authoritarian to possess authority, nor exclusive to be authentic."

In his latest book, *Future Tense* (2009), a keen analysis of Jews, Judaism and Israel in the 21st century – he makes clear that "Jews have friends among many faiths, and among secular humanists, and that we should cherish them all, making common cause with them in defence of freedom, human dignity and moral responsibility. We should rest secure in our unparalleled past and face the future with vigilance but without fear."

Bookmarks

Bernard Baskin

His Jewish outlook is inclusive rather than exclusive. "I know that not every Jew is Orthodox, and not all believe in God, and find some aspects of our faith unintelligible at best and many find fault with Israel, and others with Diaspora Jewish life. Yet every Jew who stays loyal to his or her people and contributes to it in some way thereby adds something to the story of the Jewish people and becomes an agent of hope in the world, God's partner in redemption."

It should come as no surprise that the rabbi's views have aroused the ire and opposition of the haredi community which refuses to accept his interpretation of Judaism. When *The Dignity of Difference* appeared in its second edition, the Rabbi made redactions to please opponents, but refused to remove the book already in bookstores.

In his book *Another Way, Another Time*, British journalist Meir Persoff maintains that "the Orthodox circles that [Rabbi] Sacks seeks to placate will never consider him Orthodox enough no matter what he does."

Evidently there is no easy road to the New Jerusalem.

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Wife unaware of husband's record

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 31 years

Question. I am 35 years old. I got married last year. It was an arranged marriage. After about two weeks of marriage my husband came home drunk one night and assaulted me. When I ran out yelling a lady next door phoned 911. The police arrived and took my husband away. I later discovered my husband had several previous criminal convictions including assault and robbery. Now that I am aware of his criminal background, I do not wish to live with him any more.

I am from a respectable family and now want to divorce him. Should I wait for one year from the date of marriage or separation to file papers for divorce? Is his previous criminal record enough grounds for a divorce? I have little or no income. Can I claim maintenance monthly or in a single lump sum for damages he caused to my life? Can I seek free legal aid for a divorce case? If so to whom should I apply? Please reply in detail and help me as I am clueless. Thank you.

Answer. You don't have to wait one year from the date of separation to file for divorce. It's just that the Court cannot actually grant the divorce until you have been separated for one year — unless you claim that you are asking for a divorce on the grounds of spousal cruelty.

It appears that you may have such grounds because your husband was violent towards you. So long as you have proof of the assault, you could be divorced earlier. If you had the right to claim for spousal support, you would not need to wait for the final divorce trial or judgment, even if you based your divorce claim on one year's separation. In such a case, you could even file within the year and claim in Court for damages (called "assault and battery") and obtain a temporary order pending the final divorce order for spousal support based upon your husband's yearly income.

Unfortunately, your cohabitation was so short (two weeks), you would not likely get any spousal support — whether monthly or lump sum. Furthermore, it is unusual for courts to award lump sum spousal support. At trial, depending on how badly hurt you were, the Court may well award some money in damages for the assault. Call Legal Aid Ontario at 416-979-1446 or toll free at 1-800-668-8258. You may be eligible for Legal Aid if you financially qualify.

Question: I was married and divorced outside of Canada (both were in the United States). Do I still need to go through the same process as people who married in Canada and divorced elsewhere when I remarry? Or can I just apply directly for a marriage license because both events happened outside of the country?

Answer: You can still get married in Ontario, but you require a legal opinion from an Ontario lawyer in a certain form that needs to be filed with the Ontario Registrar General that your foreign divorce is recognized under Canadian Law. For instance, under Canadian law, you can't just fly to Las Vegas, get a "quickie" divorce, come back to Toronto and then remarry. You must stay in Nevada for one year and then get divorced there before Canadian law recognizes the Nevada Court's authority to grant such a divorce.

Question: I was married to my ex-husband for 11 years and separated from him in 1995. We are not legally divorced as of yet. Six years ago, I got a collection agency on me about a satellite dish we had purchased. It even went as far as filing court papers. It also said that it could not pursue my husband because he lives on a reservation. We are both natives. Now I have another company that is coming after me for furniture that was purchased in 1994 or 1995.

Answer: If the purchase pertained to a joint debt, such as for an item purchased on a joint credit card (not a card of which he is the main cardholder and you are only a supplementary cardholder) then you have a legal obligation to pay it. However, once the debt is due, the law only permits creditors two years to sue. Accordingly, in most cases the Ontario Limitations Act will prevent any lawsuit against you. It is therefore likely that any claim on you for the furniture debt going back to 1994-5 will not succeed. If it is not a "joint debt" but a debt solely of your spouse, then you may have an obligation to pay your spouse's unpaid bills for "necessities of life." Depending on the item, furniture may be a different matter.

To all my readers and from my family, Garfin Zeidenberg and I, we would like to wish you a "chag kasher v'sameach!"

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzdlegal.com*** *Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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Sponsored by the Community for Jewish Culture of B'nai Brith Canada

Centenarian Susan Shore is seen with her grandchildren, from left, Jordanna Helfand, Tara Olivo-Moore and Jesse Shore.

Centenarian still exercises every day

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

There is an old saying that you are only as old as you feel.

Susan Shore, who celebrated her 100th birthday on March 19, is proof of this adage.

"I'm a very ordinary person," the centenarian told *The CJN*, standing straight, her face alit with her indelible smile – but her family and friends disagree.

"My mother is an exercise nut," her daughter, Ronnie Helfand, said. "Since I remember from the time I was a child, she always exercised and still does every day.

"It was not a surprise to me, when I came to visit in the morning, to find her standing on her head."

To celebrate her 100th birthday, 60 members of her family and friends gathered at Toronto's Forest Hill Place, where Susan has been a resident for eight years.

"Susan has a wonderful spirit and family support that allows her to enjoy our Forest Hill Place community and a variety of programs on a daily basis," said Paul Pinkus, executive director of the residence.

Welcoming the guests to the celebration was a large sign, "Celebrating 100 years of Living, Loving and Exercising." Below the sign were pictures taken from every decade of her life.

Her son, Harold Shore, and his family came from Calgary. Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren came to celebrate along with family and friends from Montreal, New Jersey, Minnesota, Vermont and Maryland.

At an interview with *The CJN*, Susan spoke with joy of her early life. "We were very poor when I was a child, but we didn't know it. We lived through the Depression."

She attended the Central High School of Commerce so that she could get a job and help the family.

She met Louis Shore at a social. He was working at the post office during the day and studying at the College of Art at night.

"In those days," Susan recalled, "a Jewish teacher had difficulty getting a teaching job.

"So we moved to Pelee Island and then to Owen Sound where he found positions teaching. We moved back to Toronto with our two children, and he taught at the Central High School of Commerce until he became the director of art at the Toronto Board of Education."

This gave them the opportunity to travel during the summer, she said. "We enjoyed the opera, symphony, ballet and many cultural events."

Sadly, she added that her husband died at the age of 63, six weeks after he retired.

"My mother continued to travel, and she went to more than 40 countries," Ronnie said. "She always studied the countries before she went there and always came back with fascinating stories and pictures.

"And she would have slide shows for friends, with a commentary."

Ronnie added, "My mother walks with me at Lawrence Plaza every day, as long as the weather permits. Then we go for coffee where she tells me countless stories."

Although she is legally blind, Susan said she always loved reading and today she reads books on CNIB disks and from the library.

Looking back, she spoke of the many courses she took, her volunteer work at Mount Sinai Hospital and her lifelong love of gardening.

She was described by a family member as "strong, independent, fearless and an intrepid woman. A real lady."

Asked what she looks forward to in the future, Susan replied, "I just want to do the same things I'm doing now and enjoying my close family and friends."

MOMS AND DAUGHTERS:
Ulpanat Orot's chesed committee held its annual Mother Daughter Night March 5. The evening included a shiur by Lori Grysman, a performance by the Ulpanat Orot Choir, dessert, dancing and a raffle. All proceeds from the event will go to Misholim – The Jerusalem Expressive Arts Therapy Center, a therapeutic centre for children and youth. Pictured are the committee chairs with their mothers, from left, Talia and Mindy Shiel, Leora and Rivital Grunbaum, Maytal and Ronitte Friedman, and Kathy and Sarah Laszlo. *(Rebecca Ansel photo)*

FRENCH SPEAKERS:
Grade 7 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School took part in a French public speaking contest recently. Pictured, from left, are winner Oliver D., runner-up Daniel C., teacher Helen Gurofsky, and third-place finisher Louis C. Students presented a speech on a current topic to an external judge who considered fluency, pronunciation, expression and the ability to effectively convey meaning. All students prepared and delivered speeches, with two finalists from each class making the final.

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Mazel Tov
מזל טוב

Mazel tov to Al & Zelda Nisker on their 65th anniversary. With love from their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Happy 80th birthday Bubbie Niunia (Anne) Knecht. We look forward to spending many more with you! Love from your grandchildren, Dashiell, Evening and Ryan

Mazal tov! Proud Grandma Sarah Bendayan with her two handsome grandsons who recently celebrated their bar mitzvahs – Jaime Elkeslassy and Sam Oziel.

Mazel tov Eta Golt, who celebrated her 90th birthday on Feb. 16. Love from your children, grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren.

Happy first birthday Orrie Rothman, shown with his mom, Noa Rothman, at the party to celebrate the occasion. Hugs and kisses from family and friends.

Happy champagne birthday Sammy, who turned two on Saturday, March 2. Love from David & Michelle Winter.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Festival Schedule Available in the April 4th CJN
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What's New

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Deadline reminder: Deadlines will change because of Passover. March 28 is the deadline for the issue of April 11. April 8 is the deadline for the issue of April 18. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 28

COMMUNITY CONCERT

A community choral concert featuring the voices of Beth Radom Congregation, Holy Blossom Temple Singers, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir, Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir, Toronto Jewish Chorus, Temple Emanu-El, Temple Shaarei-Beth El, Toronto Jewish Male Choir and Kol Rina Women's Choir, presented at 7:30 p.m., Beth Radom Congregation, 18 Reiner Rd. $20 suggested donation, proceeds to local Jewish charities.

RESUMÉ CLINIC

JVS Toronto offers resumé coaching, 540 Finch Ave. W. By appointment only, 416-649-1700. Free.

PIRKEI AVOT

Rabbi Cory Weiss leads a study of Pirkei Avot, Thursdays at noon, Temple Har Zion.

DOC POMUS

Doc Pomus Retrospective. Enjoy an evening of music and soul with **Jordan Klapman** and **John Mays,** 8 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. For more information, visit www.beby.org.

BOOZE AND VIEWS

Oraynu Congregation's young adult group discusses "Jews, Booze and Views: Circumcision," Pauper's Pub, 539 Bloor St. W., 7:30 p.m. RSVP **Denise**, 416-854-0133.

BIBLICAL CURRENT EVENTS

Rabbi Michael Dolgin discusses "Understand Modern Israeli Society," 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

Friday, March 29

MATZAH BALL

Temple Har Zion hosts a "Matzah Ball," with Israeli dancing after services, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 2

SPRING SERIES

Rabbi Michael Stroh begins his series of lectures, tonight, April 9, 16, at Temple Har Zion, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 4

YOM HASHOAH

George Gedeon discusses "Anti-semitism in Greece during the Holocaust," 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

Other News

THEATRE TRIPS

Beth Emeth Synagogue is offering theatre trips to Stratford and Shaw festivals this summer. To book, call 416-633-3838 or theatre@beby.org.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

Registration is open for Temple Emanu-El's lecture series on Mondays, 2 p.m., April 15- May 13. April 15, **Mike Daley** on "The Life and Music of Pete Seeger"; April 22, **Elizabeth Legge** on "Constable and Turner"; April 29, **Jill Lazenby** on "Science, Controversy and Social Justice"; May 6, **James Lockyer** on "Wrongful Convictions"; May 13, **Sergei Plekanov** on "The New North." $45 for the series/$10 lecture. Call 416-449-3880.

LUNCH & LEARN TUESDAYS

Register now for Lunch and Learn talks at Beth Tikvah Syna-

Continued on page 27

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Continued from page 26

gogue. April 9, **Ellen Roseman** on "Identity Theft and Credit Card Fraud"; April 16, watch the film, *I Was There in Color.* Single tickets $20, series $119/$139. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

YIDDISH CONVERSATION

A Yiddish conversation group starts April 8, 1:30 p.m. at the Prosserman JCC and April 10, 7:30 p.m. at the Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. To register, call United Jewish People's Order, 416-789-5502 or the Prosserman JCC, 416-638-1881, ext. 4235.

TORAH TOTS & KINDERCAMP

Registration is now open for Torah Tots, which is offering a full daycare program and Kindercamp, for children ages 2 to 6. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 227, for daycare or ext. 221 for camp or www.kindercamp.ca.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Meals on Wheels needs volunteers to deliver meals to seniors. Call **Karen Sacke**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

BIBLE STUDY

Mitch Parker teaches a course on "Loners and Outsiders in the Tanach," 7:15 p.m., starting April 18, Holy Blossom Temple. Sponsored by the Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning. Advance registration required, 416-789-7400.

Mitch Parker teaches a course on "A Psychologist Looks at the Book of Genesis," starting April 9, 7:30 p.m., Pride of Israel Synagogue.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

High Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents to lessen the impact of divorce on their children. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. April 4, 6:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the next year. Starts April 4, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts April 16, 7 p.m.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 27, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m.; April 25, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers +65: A 6-session group for men and women over 65 who have recently lost a partner or spouse, starts April 18, 1 p.m.

Younger Widows/Widowers: A 6-session group for people under 60 who have recently lost a spouse, starts April 23, 7:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Function in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals about higher-order thinking skills and children, April 24, 7 p.m.

Adult Children Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts April 30, 7:30 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Bingo, April 9, 12:30 p.m.; Casino Rama, April 17; Sunday dance, April 21, 7 p.m.; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. An archeology class, "The History of Ancient Israel," taught by **David Lipovitch**, begins Thursdays, April 4, 1 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starting in May. Become a more informed patient, a better caregiver or a more competent guardian of your well-being. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Baycrest is offering a falls-prevention course for older adults living in the community who have fallen or have a fear of falling. OHIP covered. Course starts April 15. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

Hadar Senior Citizens Social Club is looking for new members. The club meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Call **Phyllis** 905-889-5722.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. **Corey Keeble** speaks about synagogue architecture in North America, April 4 and 11, 1:30 p.m.

Osnat Lippa presents "Influential Jewish Artists and Their Art," April 16, 23, 30. $36.

Circle of Care/Baycrest Day Centre for Seniors provides a secure Jewish environment for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

A Support Group for Russian-Speaking Seniors is offered by Circle of Care. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Rabbi Jay Kelman discusses what Jewish texts have to say about contemporary ethical challenges, April 23, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale. Registration now open for spring courses.

Courses offered: Borsht Belt and Bubbameises starts April 8; Bridge levels 1-3 start April 8; Mah-jong evening class starts April 8, daytime class starts April 10; Advanced bridge starts April 11.

"Europe United and Divided," taught by **Hugh Innis**, starts April 9; "What's So Funny: The Complex World of Comedy," taught by **Kevin Courrier**, starts April 10; "Influential Jewish Artists," taught by **Osnat Lippa** starts April 11; Yoga with **Dorry Korn** starts April 11.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Registration for spring classes is now open.

Rabbi Aaron Levy teaches "From Barley to Psychology: Evolving Approaches to the Omer," April 3-24, 7:30 p.m. Ext. 154.

What Is Toronto? A performance curated by Toronto historians and civic thinkers will be presented April 5, Al Green Theatre. Pre-show chat 7:30 p.m., show at 8 p.m.

Zuzana Sermer, author of *Survival Kit*, gives a Yom Hashoah lecture, April 7, 11 a.m.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

The Women's Chorus with conductor **Gillian Steyck** meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. No auditions needed.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets April 10, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

Baruch Sienna teaches "Introduction to Judaism," April 11- May 2, 7:30 p.m.

Nurture: Stories of New Midlife Mothers is in the gallery until April 21.

Young Frankenstein presented by the Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre, April 11-21. 416-324-1259.

Call for submissions for the Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition 2013. Deadline is July 2, 2013. For guidelines, see www.mnjcc.org/CJPC.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

StrollerFit classes for mothers and babies start April 11. Call **Tonya**, ext. 3028.

Registration now open for the centre's big band, starts April 10. Call **Staci**, ext. 3037.

PJ Library time with a Yiddish twist, May 5, 3:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 46

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New head of Ottawa federation assumes duties

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Andrea Freedman, the new president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa (JFO), officially assumed her duties on March 11, succeeding Mitchell Bellman, who held the position for the past 15 years.

"The first week has been great. People have been terrific, incredibly warm and welcoming, and very committed to the community," said Freedman.

Coming from Toronto where she was vice-president of philanthropy and operations at the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation, Freedman is a Montreal native who previously lived in Ottawa while a student at Carleton University. A circuitous career path has brought her full circle, back to the city.

Following her graduation from McGill University with a degree in political science, Freedman spent a year in Israel with Project Otzma, which offers young Jewish adults the opportunity to live and volunteer in Israel. On her return to Canada, she enrolled at Carleton University for a master's program in political science, intending to go on to law school and volunteer in the Jewish community.

An application she made for a summer job was passed along to the executive director of the Jewish Community Centre in Springfield, Mass., who hired Freedman as a full-time youth director, a job that lasted for the next two years and forever changed her career path. She returned to school at the University of Michigan for a master's degree in social work and Jewish communal work, and the rest, as they say, is history.

After a six-year stint back in Montreal, working for Federation CJA, Freedman moved to Toronto, beginning as associate campaign director at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto; then director of special initiatives for Jewish Toronto Tomorrow; then national director of planning and development at Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA, the national umbrella organization of Canada's Jewish federations.

Andrea Freedman
[Michael Regenstreif/ Ottawa Jewish Bulletin photo]

Freedman's immediate goals in Ottawa include meeting as many people as possible and beginning to build relationships. "Top of my list is reaching out to our donors, heads of community organizations, board members, rabbis and members of the community," she said. "I hope to create a more integrated and holistic fundraising effort," between federation and the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation (OJCF).

"There is an excitement, enthusiasm and real positive energy that I feel from the community and that I am ready to contribute to," said Freedman. "To focus on issues that are meaningful to you – it is a privilege to be able to do it for your job."

The community is equally enthusiastic in welcoming Freedman to her new position. "From the moment outgoing CEO Mitchell Bellman announced his resignation in August, the federation board has worked tirelessly to ensure that the organization would find the best possible candidate for the job, a superb new leader to help take us forward. In hiring Andrea, we have accomplished our goal," said federation chair Debbie Halton-Weiss.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Mel Brass	Mar 7/13	302 Silvana Crescent
Fay Geltzhals	Mar 8/13	74 Renondo Drive
Dr. Ian Wexler	Mar 8/13	7 Overdale Road
Harold Goldman	Mar 7/13	1500 Steeles Ave. West
Zelda Epstein	Mar 10/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Bernice Goldberg	Mar 10/13	2 Neptune Drive
Marion Starr	Mar 12/13	2 Rostrevor Road
Anne Goldberg	Mar 10/13	605 Finch Avenue West
Barbara Dean	Mar 12/13	31 Hopperton Drive
Khaya Gakman	Mar 14/13	120 Promenade Circle
Sylvia Miller	Mar 15/13	355 St.Clair Ave. West
Martin Clenman	Mar 9/13	3303 Don Mills Road
Max Pinkus	Mar 16/13	34 Nassau Street
Doris Miller	Mar 15/13	131 Chiltern Hill Road

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Ida Wahba	Mar 7/13	429 Wahner Road
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Imam builds bridges with shul

OTTAWA — A group of Muslim students and congregants accompanied Imam Mohamed Jebara for a friendly and educational visit with his friend Cantor Daniel Benlolo at Congregation Beth Shalom earlier this month.

Jebara, the headmaster at Cordova Academy and Andalusia College, and his group were warmly welcomed to the synagogue March 10 by Benlolo for an afternoon of sharing, of both information and more tangible gifts.

Benlolo presented Jebara with a shofar, a menorah, a kiddush cup and a book about the history of Beth Shalom.

Jebara gave Benlolo a carved wooden Qur'an holder and several copies of the Qur'an, as well as a prayer rug and a string of prayer beads.

"We are collecting Jewish artifacts and books, which will be used to educate our students at Andalusia College and Cordova Academy. We still need tfillin, a tallit and a yad for our display," said Jebara in an email to *The CJN*. (He had been suffering from a throat infection and was unable to speak at the event).

Benlolo and Jebara both emphasized the similarities between their two religions.

"The visit to the synagogue was a fascinating experience for all my students and members of my congregation who were present," Jebara said.

"It was so heartwarming to sow the seeds of friendship with members of our elder-sister religion, a religion with which we share so many beliefs and practices. In fact, there is not a religion on earth more similar to Islam than Judaism."

Cantor Daniel Benlolo and Imam Mohamed Jebara at Beth Shalom

Both clergymen have been involved in interfaith dialogue with various other local religious groups, and they're united in their goal to further learn from one another.

"We would like our collaboration to lead to understanding, respect, friendship and ultimately love. Furthermore, we would like to organize classes for each other to learn about each other's beliefs, practices, ceremonies and rituals. Picnics, community service and joint charitable work are also in the forecast," Jebara said.

Benlolo said other ideas include mixed sports teams for university students, such as hockey or basketball.

"Each team would consist of students from both groups, so they would learn to interact in a friendly manner," he said.

"[Beth Shalom's] Rabbi [Scott] Rosenberg and I have been working together to promote interfaith experiences in our synagogue. We greet and encourage many school and religious groups to come through our doors at Beth Shalom, to teach and learn from each other, thus building bridges in the community," Benlolo added.

—D.K.

Threats loom in Iran and Syria: columnist

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Jonathan Spyer confirmed what others before him have been saying: if the United States and the West don't show strength against Iran's development of nuclear arms, then Israel will have to act alone to stop the threat.

Speaking to an audience at Beth Israel Synagogue in Halifax on March 14, the senior fellow at the Global Research in International Affairs Centre, Herzliya, Israel, and *Jerusalem Post* columnist, said, "If the U.S. doesn't rise to the occasion, and it appears it won't, as [President Barack] Obama wants to do more with his domestic policy than his foreign policy, Israel might have to accept a nuclear Iran or act unilaterally.

"Talk can only go so far. Without a credible threat from the West, Israel has to step up or Iran will move forward."

Spyer was concluding a week-long speaking tour that covered Toronto, Hamilton, Fredericton, and Halifax. The event was sponsored by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs with the Maritime portion assisted by Atlantic Jewish Council.

While in Halifax for one busy day, Spyer also met with media and addressed students of Dalhousie University's political science and Centre For Foreign Policy Studies programs, as well as the Dalhousie Law School.

At Beth Israel, Spyer noted that the Arab Spring, the tumultuous overthrow of despotic regimes in Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and Egypt, has presented advantages to Israel.

"The Sunni-Shia ongoing conflict in Iran and the civil war in Syria have kept these nations busy internally," he said.

"And while Iran has the wealth to finance its own military and other programs, countries where Sunni Islamists have taken control are broke financially. The Sunnis are weak and disorganized, with massive problems of illiteracy and feminist uprisings so have internal struggles. That's a benefit to Israel."

He stressed Israel can defend itself against its enemies because "we have a wonderful economy and a strong military that is capable of overcoming the threat of the Sunni Islamists."

He gave an overview of the Syrian civil war to the Dalhousie political science and foreign policy students."

He said Syrian President Bashar Assad told the *Wall Street Journal* in early 2011 that Syria wouldn't be affected by the Arab Spring because he wasn't elected and didn't represent the people.

After he failed to crush demonstrations that started in March 2011 and then spread, Assad offered some concessions that didn't work. A month later, he was trying to forcefully allay confrontations, but they escalated into armed revolt that continues two years later.

The fighting has led to a military stalemate, but with the loss of almost 100,000 lives and 1.2 million Syrians fleeing to other Middle East countries.

Jonathan Spyer speaks about Middle East issues at Beth Israel Synagogue in Halifax. *(Joel Jacobson photo)*

"The regime of Assad has lasted longer than anyone thought it would," Spyer said. "He has suffered no losses of core people around him, and his security forces have remained in place even though many lesser officials and rank-and-file people have left him. Meanwhile, the rebels have been dogged by an inability to unify into a single structure, without a defined leader."

Spyer said he's been in northern Syria several times during the conflict and has seen the suffering of the Syrian people.

"Conditions are dreadful. Even if the [Assad] regime falls, don't assume things will go back to normal. The various Sunni elements will struggle to decide who will be the new boss. It will lead to new conflicts."

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Apr. 9
Ellen Roseman is a journalist and teacher who has advocated for Canadians' consumer rights for the past 35 years. Ellen is a personal finance and consumer affairs columnist with The Star's business section. Ellen will cover areas such as
Identity Theft and Credit Card Fraud

Apr. 16
In honour of Yom Haatzmaut come watch the movie: I Was There in Color. Extraordinary never-seen-before colour 16mm footage by American Fred Monosson, taken while on lengthy adventures in Israel, as early as 1947. A strong supporter of Israel, his passion led him behind the scenes with encounters with Golda Meir, David Ben Gurion, the kotel and more
Today lunch will begin at 11:45am and the 90 minute movie will begin at 12:10pm

Apr. 23
Jordan Klapman JUNO-Award nominated musicologist/pianist Jordan discusses and performs some of the greatest songs written by Irving Berlin, the Gershwin brothers and more!
The Jewish American Songbook

Apr. 30
Larry Aniklewicz is a film reviewer who specializes in Jewish films and videos. He is a frequent columnist for the CJN and many local newspapers. Larry served as Programme Director of The Toronto Jewish Film Festival for 8 years and is currently a member of the Programming Committee of the Toronto Jewish Film Society.
The Evolution of Jewish Films

May. 7
Alison Pick's novel Far to Go was long-listed for the Man Booker Prize. Having won the Jewish Book Award, Far to Go has also been optioned for a film. Set in Czechoslovakia on the eve of WWII, Alison will discuss the book and its personal ties. Far to Go

May. 21
Avrum Rosensweig is the founder of Ve'ahavta, Canada's only Jewish humanitarian organization. Through his leadership, the Jewish Community has worked with Canada's homeless and indigenous populations as well as people in dire need around the world. With Hockey Night in Canada's Ron MacLean, Ve'ahavta has launched a school for the homeless called the Ve'ahavta Street Academy.
Inside Ve'ahavta

May. 28
Frank Dimant is the Executive Vice President of B'nai Brith Canada and CEO of the organization's Institute for International Affairs and the League for Human Rights. Frank is publisher of The Jewish Tribune and Chair of the Department of Modern Israel Studies at Canada Christian College and its School of Graduate Theological Studies. Frank will bring insight into
The Relationship between Jews and Evangelical Christians

Jun. 4
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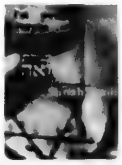

Megillat Hashoah:
The Shoah Scroll

A Community Commemorative Service at
Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am
55 Yeomans Road, Toronto
Sunday, April 7 at 7:30 p.m.

with Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, Rabbi Philip Scheim
Cantor David Edwards, Cantor Marshall Loomer, Cantor Alex Stein
The Renanim Youth Singers, *Susan Michaels, Director*
Josef Peleg, *Violin* and Judith Peleg, *Piano*

Untold numbers were forced out of their homes, torn from their families, trampled in the dust, worked to death.... Countless trains stuffed with human cargo sped to the camps, where from chimneys smoke ascended to God. Megillat Hashoah 1:8-9,13
Never will I be able to forget, and never will I have the power to understand.... For these do I weep... for those who sanctified God's name and the name of the people of Israel, refusing to be subdued, fighting to the death... for infants who never learned to say "Mommy," for boys and girls whose youth was stolen from them. Megillat Hashoah 5:13,15

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Talmud Torah plans $20M expansion

Vancouver school has population of over 500

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — Cathy Lowenstein is the first to admit that Vancouver Talmud Torah (VTT) is really cramped for space.

As head of school, she's seen enrolment numbers rise considerably in the decade she's presided over Vancouver's largest Jewish elementary school. There were 409 students in the 2004-2005 school year. Today, there are 508 occupying a building originally constructed for a maximum of 450.

"Without expanding the school, we won't be able to continue productively," she says. "We'd have to take our enrolment down and deny some families a Jewish education. This expansion project is urgent."

Lowenstein is referring to the $20-million capital campaign to finance the two-part project. One will be the construction of shared underground parking with neighbouring Congregation Beth Israel, and the second will be the addition of 42,000 square feet of space to the school and the revitalization of the remaining 38,000 square feet.

The school has received a $5-million gift from the Gordon and Leslie Diamond Foundation, contingent upon raising the remaining $15 million. As of earlier this month, $10.9 million had been raised – excluding the Diamond gift – and the capital campaigners were focused on the final $4.1 million, which they hope to raise by the end of next month.

If they can do it, the VTT can begin the expansion in June 2014. If not, the school will have to wait an additional full school year before it can break ground.

"We need the community to support us, whether their gift is $18, $1,800 or $18,000," says Sue Hector, fundraising co-chair. "Eighty per cent of donations will come from our top major donors, but we really need the community to pick up 20 per cent of the campaign."

The expansion will be tailored to support 21st-century learning skills, which means supporting students in a more project-based, collaborative environment, says Andrea Wilkinson, VTT's director of development.

"Twenty-first-century learning is very different. It's not about sitting in rows of desks. It's built around creativity, collaboration and communication, with an eye to the fact that learning happens anywhere."

While space for collaborative learning is not available right now, students have been ingenious about finding it, Lowenstein says.

"They find it under stairwells, in the washrooms, alcoves and the gymnasium. But we need more space so we can take future enrolment of up to 650 students, so that we can accommodate a preschool that's tripled in size over the last 10 years and so that we can continue to support over 170 students who require remedial or enrichment programs. Not having the space to do that properly is really impacting us."

Wilkinson agrees. "We're crammed to the hilt here," she says. "We've been innovative about making space, but we're at a point where we have to expand."

Vancouver Talmud Torah

Last summer, VTT erected a portable structure on its playground to accommodate the Grade 4 class, which had previously been housed at Beth Israel. Another small piece of playground is being used for temporary parking for faculty. That means the playground is only 44 per cent of the size recommended by the province. The expansion will enlarge it, remove the portables and redesign the playground in a way that enhances play.

Hector, a VTT parent for the past 13 years, emphasized that a gift to VTT is a gift to ensure the future of Vancouver's Jewish community.

"For me this expansion means kids in Vancouver's Jewish community will always have a community school that will be open to them. We're doing this to make sure everyone's kids and grandkids get to experience how wonderful VTT is."

Without the expansion, she adds, the school will have to revert back to 450 kids. By the time the 80 children currently enrolled in Grade 2 reach grades 6 and 7, the school won't have room for them.

"We can't afford not to do this," says Michelle Gerber, co-president of the VTT board. "This is a once in a generation project, the right thing to do for the future. There comes a time when we have to do what needs to be done, and this is that time."

Chabad of Winnipeg unveils new mikvah

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Chabad Lubavitch community unveiled its new mikvah and a donor wall of honour at the south Winnipeg Chabad Jewish Learning Centre.

Art and Soul, as the March 13 event was called, also featured an art exhibition and sale of the works of internationally known artist Michoel Muchnik, who designed the wall of honour.

The evening began with the unveiling of the wall. The scene, Muchnik explained, is set on a backdrop of fields and rolling Jerusalem hills and depicts a couple planting spiritual "aleph" seeds. Dispersed throughout the bas-relief are mosaic tiles adorned with decorative designs, plants and fruits of Israel. The building in the background has three arched windows representing avodah, Torah study and charity.

On either side of the painting are two large white Jerusalem urns with greenery rising out of them, representing prosperity and growth, "the fruits of our labours," Muchnik said. The names of donors who helped fund construction of the Chabad centre, which opened during Chanukah 2011, are on plaques attached to the painted urns.

Rabbi Avrohom Altein, executive director of the Chabad Jewish Learning Centre, said that the Rebbe stated that those who are gifted with artistic talent have a responsibility to transform scenes from the material to the spiritual, to combine art with soul.

Muchnik said that he has known Rabbi Altein and his wife, Brocha, for many years. "I tried in the painting to capture what Chabad has done worldwide and what the Alteins have accomplished here," he said. "Chabad has planted seeds in Jewish communities all over the world. It is gratifying to see them taking root and growing. I pray that the seeds will continue to grow and produce beautiful fruit."

Rabbi Avrohom Altein, left, with artist Michoel Muchnik, beside the donor wall of honour he designed for Winnipeg Chabad.

In introducing the wall of honour, Abe Anhang, who served as co-chair of Chabad's capital campaign – along with Dave Rich – reviewed all that the Alteins have accomplished in their more than 40 years in Winnipeg.

"They arrived here with a mandate from the Rebbe himself to establish Chabad in Winnipeg," Anhang said. "This building, which was 10 years in the planning and construction, is the culmination of their efforts here."

In addition to providing a place for services, the building houses the Jewish Learning Institute, led by Rabbi Shmuley Altein; a preschool, which has an enrolment of 30 children this year; a kosher kitchen; a multi-purpose room that accomodates 175 people and a new mikvah that rivals some of Winnipeg's spas in elegance.

The mikvah has traditionally played a central role in Jewish communal and family life. Rabbi Altein organized the building of Winnipeg's first Chabad mikvah in the north end on Hartford Avenue and McGregor Street more than 35 years ago. That mikvah is still in use.

There is also a community mikvah in the Asper Jewish Community Campus.

At Art and Soul, the importance and mysteries of the mikvah were brought home through a short film and thoughts on the subject by some of the women who will be volunteer staff at the new mikvah.

Guests attending the Art and Soul evening were encouraged to tour the women's mikvah. There is a separate mikvah for men.

It's important that Jewish children be born and grow up in the right soil if they are going to remain observant Jews when they become adults, Rabbi Altein said. "Mikvah is a very important part of that. That is why we wanted to make sure this mikvah is built with class and offers a warm atmosphere.

"We hope more people come and use it."

British ex-pat plans Jewish Expo

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The first ever Everything Jewish Expo, is set to take place April 14 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Richmond Hill Golf and Country Club.

The family-friendly event, organized by Jeremy Ansell of Ansell Publishing Inc. and sponsored by the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, RBC and BMO, will feature exhibits and vendors showcasing rich Jewish culture and business diversity in the GTA.

Exhibitors range from providers of Jewish education to camps, musicians, travel agencies, financial services, food companies, caterers and retirement homes.

Ansell, 42, a native of England, who moved here via Israel, said he organized the expo "in the heart of York Region so it would be close to the growing Jewish population north of the city.

"With such a large community here today, the need to produce such a showcase has been growing over the past few years."

The show will have something for everyone, he said, regardless of age or religious affiliation.

The show emulates the British Jewish Living Expo, held at Wembley Stadium in London, he said. "They have 300 vendors and attract 10,000 visitors.

"Admission to our event is free, and we expect a large turnout."

He plans on running the expo twice a year, with the next one set for October.

For more information, visit everythingjewish.ca.

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Toronto sisters raise money to aid homeless youth

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Jaime and Alexandra Eckler have been on a mission to raise money for Toronto's homeless youth, one glass of lemonade at a time.

The sisters, ages eight and six respectively, held their first lemonade stand in 2009, after Jaime encountered a homeless man sitting under the Gardiner Expressway.

"I went to a basketball game when I was four years old, and on the way home I saw a guy sitting under a bridge. I asked my dad who he was and why was he sitting there. He told me he was a homeless man. I felt bad so I gave him the apple I had," Jaime said.

Later that summer, inspired by the man she helped, Jaime wanted to start raising money for homeless people.

Their mother, Sharon Zohar, had heard the story of Amanda Belzowski, a teenager who has raised more than $200,000 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation since holding her first lemonade stand at two years old. Zohar took her daughters to meet Belzowski, and Jaime immediately decided she wanted to raise money the same way.

Over the last four years, the Eckler sisters have raised more than $13,000 for various homeless organizations, including Raising the Roof and Eva's Initiatives.

Now, for their fifth annual fundraiser, the Ecklers have mobilized their entire school, the Montessori Jewish Day School, to take part in their charity.

Jaime, left, and Alexandra Eckler

The students, along with Jaime and Alexandra, will mount a photography exhibit on May 5 at Beth David Synagogue, with all proceeds going to Ve'ahavta, a Canadian humanitarian relief organization. The exhibit has been registered with the Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival and will include the children's original digital photography that revolves around the theme of homelessness.

The festival of pictures, which runs from 2 to 5 p.m., will feature music, games and plenty of lemonade.

"I thought it would be fun to include my friends in all the work because it's so much fun," said Jaime. "They seem to really like doing it. I can tell by the smiles on their faces."

Zohar said her family hopes to attract hundreds of people to the event and create media attention. "The more people who know about the work the girls are doing, the closer we can get to reaching our goal of raising $10,000 this year. I also hope our school community is recognized and rewarded for their hard work and participation. Jaime and Alexandra are very proud of their school and are happy to share this event with them."

To show their appreciation for the girls' accomplishments, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Toronto Mayor Rob Ford have sent personal letters to Jaime and Alexandra. The sisters were also invited as special guests to several engagements, including Furniture Bank and the Ontario Triullium Foundation to talk about their cause.

More support came in the form of donations and offers to build the girls a free website (www.jaals.ca). One particularly interesting proposal came from a medic who wanted to promote the cause at the London Olympics by wearing a Jaime and Alexandra T-shirt during the games.

Though Jaime and Alexandra are young, Zohar said they show a strong interest and dedication to their cause. "I am very proud of the work the girls have done and most importantly their commitment to want to do it year after year. It's not easy for kids to keep their attention on one project for so long."

They're learning that "doing something" can make a big difference, she said. "As much as they may want things to change, they know nothing will happen if they don't put in the effort."

Jaime said she wishes homeless people "could have a life like ours because they are people just like us."

To express her feelings about being charitable, Alexandra said, "I love doing this event every year because it's so much fun and it brings out all our friends and family. I love seeing everyone so happy on this day."

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Tzioni Dati day school in the Greater Toronto Area seeks experienced teachers for Limudei Kodesh positions in elementary and middle school for September 2013. Candidates must personally reflect school philosophy, be able to teach fluently in Ivrit and must be able to teach Tanach, Talmud, Mishna, Dinim and Ivrit. Successful classroom teaching experience is required. Responsibilities may include co-ordination or involvement in special school events. If you are a motivated, eager individual, please email resume and cover letter to Rabbi Diamond at rabbidiamond@netivothatorah.com.
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APR 22	**WITCHCRAFT, SUPERSTITION** *and the Occult*	8:30 PM
APR 29	**THE SPIRITUALITY OF GIVING** *How Generosity Uplifts Us and The World*	8:35 PM
MAY 6	**DREAMS:** *A Jewish Perspective*	8:35 PM
MAY 13	**WHAT DID THE RABBIS TEACH** *About Jesus?*	8:35 PM

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KEEPING JEWS JEWISH

The Jewish General Hospital

JGH earns high marks from rating agencies

Compiled by CJN Staff

MONTREAL — Despite a projected deficit this year of $17.5 million, the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) received ringing endorsements from two independent rating bodies this month.

On March 6, the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) ranked the JGH as the most administratively efficient hospital in Canada.

According to the CIHI, the JGH is No. 1 among Canadian teaching hospitals when administrative costs are measured as a proportion of a hospital's total expenses.

The CIHI, a not-for-profit organization, also places the JGH among the country's top hospitals in the quality of its care and the success of its medical outcomes.

In particular, it ranks the JGH in the sixth-best spot in "cost per weighted case," that is, the overall cost of treatment, when variables are adjusted to allow for comparisons among different types of patients and medical specialties.

More than 600 health-care institutions are listed in the CIHI report, ranked according to a total of 27 indicators – 21 clinical and six financial.

"We are very pleased that the JGH ranks among Canada's top health-care institutions, many of which are located right here in Quebec," said executive director Hartley Stern, who announced this month that he will be stepping down in October after five years.

"Quebeckers should be reassured that some of their hospitals are, indeed, among the best in the country."

More recently, on March 14, the JGH scored a near-perfect 96.7 per cent in the evaluation of its performance by Accreditation Canada, also an independent, not-for-profit organization.

The score is based on a comprehensive and rigorous investigation of the JGH's performance measured against national standards of excellence.

The JGH was found to have complied with more than 96.5 per cent of the criteria that must be present for safety and proper quality of care, including accessibility, continuity of care and good workplace conditions.

The hospital was also found to have complied with 34 of Accreditation Canada's 35 requirements in such key areas as safety, risk assessment, the use of medication, infection control, communication and work life.

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An embrace and a push in Obama's Jerusalem speech

Matti Friedman
The Times of Israel

Analysis

A speech U.S. President Barack Obama made in Jerusalem on his first official visit to Israel got an enthusiastic response from the young audience.

The March 21 speech seemed designed to woo Israelis and calm their fears, as well as prod them toward a peace agreement with the Palestinians.

The key phrase was delivered in Hebrew. "So long as there is a United States of America," Obama said, "*Atem lo levad.*" That's Hebrew for, "You are not alone."

Obama had a friendly, clearly left-leaning crowd of about 1,000, mostly university students and reporters, who applauded loudly and often. The speech was marred only once when a pro-Palestinian protester shouted from the hall.

The interruption came a moment after Obama mentioned the "lively debate" in Israeli society, and he referenced his own comment – "that's the lively debate we were talking about" – without losing his grin or his composure, earning a standing ovation from the crowd as the heckler was removed.

The cool attitude toward Israel that Obama displayed in his first term has been dramatically replaced during this visit by a warm, almost Clintonesque charm offensive that appears to be working.

"We're so easy," said Channel 2 TV's political reporter, Udi Segal, after the speech. "Twenty-four hours, a few hugs, and that's it." Not doing this four years ago might be remembered as one of the foreign policy errors of Obama's first term.

In an official response released after the speech, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu thanked Obama for his "unconditional support for Israel" and said he agreed that they must work toward a "peace that guarantees the safety of all Israeli citizens."

Obama opened his speech with a pop-culture reference, joking that his disagreements with Netanyahu – now "my friend Bibi" – had actually been a plot to generate material for *Eretz Nehederet*, or *A Wonderful Country*, a popular TV satire show. That got a laugh.

In a sign of the remarkable display of affection, genuine or not, between Obama and Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister's official response Thursday evening included a humorous reference to that line from the speech and to the closing line of every episode of the show: "Prime Minister Netanyahu," read the statement, "agrees with President Obama that we have a wonderful country."

Obama also spoke about the festival of Passover and its message of freedom.

He expressed sympathy for Israelis living with rocket fire, saying "children the same age as my daughters" went to bed with the fear of rockets "because of who they are and where they live." He mentioned the five Israelis killed by terrorists in Bulgaria, and said Hezbollah, thought to be behind the attack, should be called "what it truly is – a terrorist organization."

But Obama also spoke of the plight of the Palestinians, noting the presence of a "foreign army" controlling their movement, settlement construction, and a failure to punish violence by settlers. Just as Jews deserve independence, so do Palestinians, he said.

Given demographics, he said, the only way for Israel to survive as a Jewish, democratic nation is by the creation of an "independent and viable Palestine."

Israel needs peace because "no wall will be high enough" to keep out every threat, he said, and "security must be at the centre of any agreement."

The United States, he promised, "will oppose unilateral efforts to bypass negotiations through the United Nations." But the Palestinian "right to justice" needs to be recognized.

He quoted former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, saying that if Israel pursues control of all of the land of Israel, it will "lose it all." (He also quoted David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, and name-checked former Likud leader Menachem Begin and Labor leader Yitzhak Rabin, which, along with the reference to the satire show, achieved impressive coverage of Israel's ideological spectrum.)

He praised Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad as real partners. "There's an opportunity. There's a window," he said. "Peace is possible."

Most Israelis, even moderates, are highly skeptical of that point. Palestinian leaders turned down Israeli peace proposals in 2000, 2001 and 2008. The Islamists of Hamas now control Gaza, and could well come to power in the West Bank after any Israeli withdrawal. Few Israelis believe that a peace agreement of the kind envisioned in the 1990s is a real possibility.

But Obama wasn't specific about what he was calling on Israel to do, expressing instead a hope that Israelis will pressure their leaders to pursue peace. Earlier in the day, at a press conference in Ramallah, he made clear to the Palestinians that he opposes preconditions to talks – a reversal of his first term, when he introduced a demand for a settlement freeze that played a part in deadlocking negotiations for several years.

He reminded listeners that Israel is "the most powerful country in this region, and has the support of the most powerful country in the world." Israel, he seemed to mean, can afford to take risks.

Of Iran's nuclear program, a major bone of contention during his first term, he said, "It's no wonder Israelis view this as an existential threat." It is a threat to the United States as well, he said.

But Iran is "under more pressure than ever before, and that pressure is increasing," thanks to U.S.-led sanctions, and there is a joint interest in resolving this "peacefully," through "strong and principled diplomacy."

But "all options are on the table," Obama said: "America will do what we must to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran."

Meanwhile, in Ramallah earlier in the day, Obama indicated that Palestinians could not expect an Israeli settlement freeze ahead of talks. He said Israeli politics were "complex," and that this is "not an issue that will be solved overnight."

The warmth visible in his meetings with Israelis, however, was not evident in Ramallah. Abbas, speaking next to Obama, opened by criticizing Israeli actions, and following Obama's statement, he said that the world recognizes that Israeli settlements are illegal and that many Palestinians "do not trust the two-state solution anymore" as a result.

"Peace should not be made through violence, occupation, settlements, arrests, siege" and the denial of the rights of refugees, Abbas said.

Obama said the United States wants an "independent, viable and contiguous Palestinian state as the homeland of the Palestinian people, alongside the Jewish State of Israel." Palestinians, he said, deserve an end to occupation and the indignities that come with it, and deserve freedom of movement.

He reminded listeners that the United States is the Palestinians' biggest donor and blamed Hamas for "misery" in Gaza. The situation there, he said, came about "because Hamas refuses to renounce violence… because too often it focuses on tearing Israel down than building Palestine up."

Obama also condemned the rocket fire from Gaza last Thursday, saying it was a "violation that Hamas had a responsibility to prevent."

Timesofisrael.com, with files from Raphael Ahren

U.S. President Barack Obama addresses a gathering of students in Jerusalem.

In the company of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Obama visits a high-tech centre that specializes in biomedical applications. ***[Israel Sun photos]***

'Holocaust will never happen again'

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel does not owe its existence to the Holocaust, but its existence prevents another one from happening, U.S. President Barack Obama said on the third and final day of his first presidential visit to Israel.

"Here we hope," Obama said March 22 at Yad Vashem's Hall of the Children after touring the Holocaust memorial museum in Jerusalem.

"Because after you walk through these halls, after you pass through the darkness, there is light – a glorious view of the Jerusalem Forest, with the sun shining over the historic homeland of the Jewish people, a fulfilment of the prophecy: 'you shall live again… upon your own soil,'" he said. "Here, on your ancient land, let it be said for all the world to hear: The State of Israel does not exist because of the Holocaust. But with the survival of a strong Jewish State of Israel, such a Holocaust will never happen again."

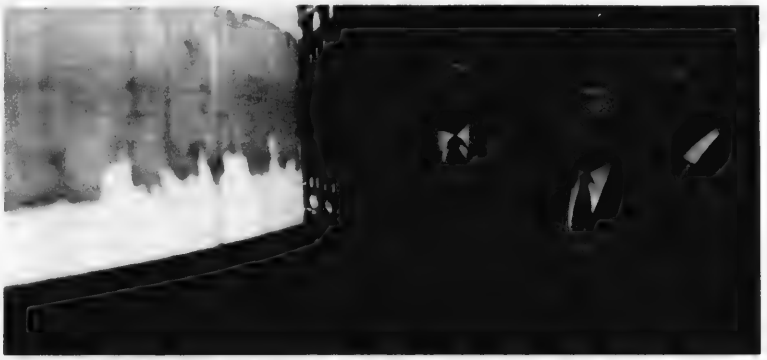
Obama, in a 2009 Cairo speech to the Muslim world, decried the proliferation of Holocaust denial in some Muslim sectors. His phrasing in that speech suggested to some Jewish and Israeli leaders that he was predicating Israel's existence on the Holocaust, although Obama's aides denied that was his intention. One of the aims of his current trip has been to roll back that impression.

Before visiting Yad Vashem, Obama laid wreaths on the graves of the founder of modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl, and that of the late Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated in 1995 by a Jewish extremist.

At the grave, Obama met Rabin's daughter, Dalia Rabin-Pelossof, and two grandchildren of the late Israel leader, whom Obama called "a remarkable man." In keeping with Jewish tradition, Obama also placed on the grave a pebble, which Obama brought from the foot of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington, D.C.

U.S. President Barack Obama lays a wreath at Yad Vashem.

Visual mementos of a presidential tour



President Barack Obama was kept very busy during his recent visit to Israel. These are a few scenes from his tour. Clockwise from top, the president visited the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem to view the Dead Sea Scrolls; he received the Presidential Medal of Honour from Israeli President Shimon Peres; at the concluding dinner on March 21, he exchanged a few whispers with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and then on the same occasion, he met Yityish Aynaw, Miss Israel 2013. ***(Israel Sun photos)***

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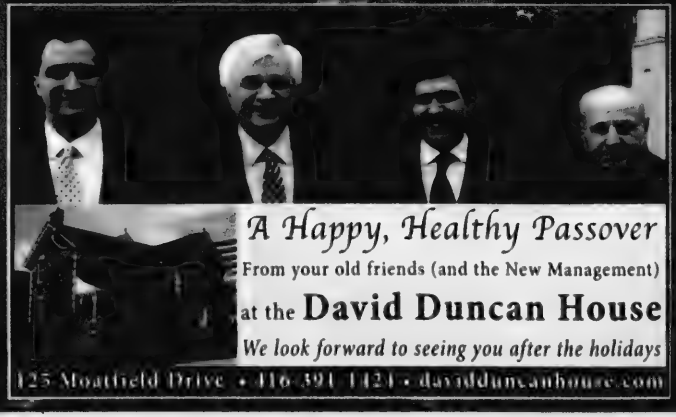
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Try stuffed vegetables – no matzah!

Eileen Goltz
Special to The CJN

You can stuff almost any vegetable, and I'm going to suggest you stuff your vegetables with other vegetables. Use fresh, if possible, and keep the cheese and meats to a minimum. Too often we think of Pesach as time when we have to do without, but if you think of it as a time to be creative, embrace the challenge and figure out a way to keep your meals light, filling and actually good for you (and as matzah free and fat free as possible)

STUFFED POTATOES

6 medium baking potatoes (6 oz. each)
2 tbsp. olive oil, butter or margarine, melted
1 tbsp. ground white horseradish (fresh or sauce), divided
1 cup thinly sliced green onions
1 large sweet red pepper, finely chopped
1/2 cup fresh broccoli florets, finely chopped
1/2 cup chopped black olives
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese, divided
Parmesan cheese to taste

Scrub and pierce potatoes. Bake at 400 for 40-50 minutes or until tender. Cool slightly. Cut each potato in half lengthwise. Scoop out the pulp, leaving a thin shell (save pulp for another use). Place potato shells on an ungreased baking sheet.

Combine butter and 1/2 teaspoon horseradish and brush over shells. Broil a few inches from the heating element for 5 to 7 minutes or until edges are crispy and butter is bubbly. Remove from the heat immediately. Don't let them burn!

In a bowl combine the onions, olives, red pepper, broccoli, 3/4 cup cheese and remaining horseradish. Mix to combine then spoon the mixture into the cooked potato skins. Sprinkle the tops of the stuffed potatoes with the remaining cheddar cheese and a little Parmesan cheese. Broil 2 to 3 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Serves 12.

Submitted by Russ Kaplan, West Pico, Calif.

CHEESY STUFFED MUSHROOMS

12 whole portabella mushrooms
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 tbsp. minced garlic
1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
1/4 tsp. onion powder
1 chopped red pepper
2 tbsp. minced parsley

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray. Clean mushrooms with a damp paper towel. Carefully break off stems. Chop stems extremely fine. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic, red pepper and chopped mushroom stems to the skillet.

Fry until any moisture has disappeared, but don't let it burn. Set aside to cool slightly and then stir in the parsley. When garlic and mushroom mixture is cool, mix in the cream cheese, Parmesan cheese, black pepper and onion powder. Mixture should be very thick. Using a spoon, fill each mushroom cap with a generous amount of stuffing. Arrange the mushroom caps on prepared cookie sheet. Bake for 20 minutes in the preheated oven, or until the mushrooms are piping hot and liquid starts to form under caps. Serve immediately. Makes 12.

STUFFED ROASTED ONIONS

10 medium red onions
1 lb. sliced pastrami or turkey pastrami cut into bite-sized pieces
3 stalks of celery cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. black pepper
1 tbsp. minced garlic
1 lb. baby spinach, trimmed and coarsely chopped (4 cups)
1 1/2 cups matzah farfel
2 cups salted cashews coarsely chopped
1 stick margarine, melted
1 1/4 cups chicken or vegetable broth

Make onion shells:

Cut a 1/2-in.-thick slice from tops of onions, discarding tops, and trim just enough from bottoms for onions to stand upright. Scoop out all but outer 2 or 3 layers from each using a small ice cream scoop or spoon (don't worry if you make a hole in the bottom), reserving scooped-out onion and onion shells separately.

Make stuffing:

Coarsely chop enough scooped-out onion to measure 3 cups.

Cook pastrami in 2 batches in a 12-in. heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring until crisp, about 5 minutes, then transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain, reserving about 1/3 cup fat in skillet. Add chopped onion, celery, salt and pepper to skillet and sauté over moderately high heat, stirring until vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and sauté, stirring for 1 minute. Transfer mixture to a large bowl and stir in spinach, cashews, farfel, 1 cup broth and pastrami. Then cool completely.

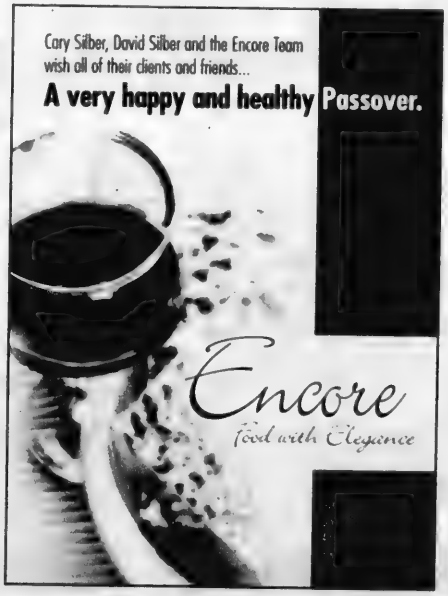
Roast onions:

Preheat oven to 425. Arrange onion shells, open sides up, in a 13x9-in. baking pan, then add 1/2 cup water and cover pan tightly with foil. Roast onions in middle of oven until tender but not falling apart, 25 to 30 minutes.

Reduce oven temperature to 350. Transfer shells to a work surface and pour off water in pan. Fill shells with stuffing, mounding it, and return to pan. Bake stuffed onions in middle of oven, uncovered, until heated through, about 25 minutes.

Cook's notes: Stuffing can be prepared and onions can be stuffed 1 day ahead and chilled, covered. Bring stuffed onions to room temperature before baking. Makes 10.

Modified from Gourmet November *2002*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Iran's Khamenei threatens Israel

The Times of Israel

TEHRAN — Iran's supreme leader threatened to destroy Tel Aviv and Haifa if Israel dares to attack his country.

"Sometimes the leaders of the Zionist regime threaten us," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in speech televised live on March 21, coinciding with U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Israel and discussion in Jerusalem of ways to thwart Iran's nuclear program.

"They should know that if they attack us, we will turn Tel Aviv and Haifa into wastelands," Khamenei said.

He also said he isn't opposed to direct talks with the United States to resolve Iran's nuclear standoff with the West, but he wasn't optimistic such talks would yield results unless Washington stops imposing sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Khamenei said the offer of direct bilateral talks is an American tactic to deceive the public and impose its will on Tehran.

He was speaking to a crowd in northeastern Iran on the first day of the new Persian calendar year.

The United States and its allies fear Iran could ultimately develop a nuclear weapon, a charge Tehran denies.

Eager to reassure Israel, Obama promised March 20 to work closely with Israel and do whatever is necessary to keep Iran from obtaining nuclear arms, "the world's worst weapons." He also pledged to investigate whether chemical weapons were used last week in neighbouring Syria's two-year-old civil war.

Obama, meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem on his first visit to the Jewish state as president, said of Iran's nuclear ambitions: "We prefer to resolve this diplomatically and there is still time to do so." But he added that "all options are on the table" if diplomacy falls short.

"The question is, will Iranian leadership seize that opportunity," he added, noting that Iran's past behaviour indicated that "we can't even trust yet, much less verify."

Netanyahu, at Obama's side during the two leaders' joint news conference Wednesday, said that while he appreciated U.S. efforts to thwart Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons through diplomacy and sanctions, those tools "must be augmented by a clear and credible threat of military action."

"I am absolutely convinced that the president is determined to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons," Netanyahu said. "I appreciate that. I appreciate the fact that the president has reaffirmed, more than any other president, Israel's right and duty to defend itself, by itself, against any threat."

TimesofIsrael.com

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Pope to seek closer ties with other religions

Ruth Ellen Gruber
JTA

ROME — When the white smoke rose last week at the Vatican, signaling to the world that the College of Cardinals had chosen a new pope, Catholics weren't the only ones waiting with bated breath.

Jews, too, were eager to see whether the new pontiff would be someone familiar with their concerns. Would he be a non-European unfamiliar with the Jewish people and the weighty legacy of the Holocaust? Would he carry on the approach of his immediate predecessors and work to further Jewish-Catholic relations?

After the new pope appeared before the masses in St. Peter's Square, it didn't take long for him to signal that he would maintain the church's outreach to Jews. Nor did it take long for the Jews to sing his praises.

> ***'The closeness between Francis and the Jewish community is special and precious'***

Pope Francis told Jewish leaders that Catholics and Jews are "bound by a very special spiritual bond."

The new pontiff also pledged to foster the interfaith dialogue begun with the Nostra Aetate decree of the Second Vatican Council.

"I thank you for your presence and trust that with the help of the Almighty, we can continue that fruitful fraternal dialogue that the council wished for," he said. "And that it is actually achieved, bringing many fruits, especially during the last decades."

Francis made the remarks during an audience with the Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Jain and non-Catholic Christian delegations that had attended his inauguration a day earlier.

As it turns out, Pope Francis, 76 – née Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina – was from outside Europe and had a long history of interfaith outreach and good relations with the Jews. He's the first pope from the Americas, as well as the first in more than a millennium from outside Europe.

The new pontiff "is no stranger to us," World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder, who met with Bergoglio in Buenos Aires in 2008, said in a statement. "He always had an open ear for our concerns.

"By choosing such an experienced man, someone who is known for his open-mindedness, the cardinals have sent an important signal to the world," Lauder said. "I am sure that Pope Francis will continue to be a man of dialogue, a man who is able to build bridges with other faiths."

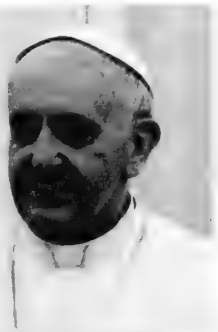
Like pope Benedict before him, Pope Francis, in one of his first official acts, wrote to Rome's chief rabbi, Riccardo Di Segni. He invited Di Segni to the papal inaugural mass and said he hoped "to be able to contribute to the progress that relations between Jews and Catholics have experienced" since the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s.

The election of Pope Francis, Di Segni wrote back, "gives us the hope that the path of friendship, respect and productive collaboration will continue."

Pope John Paul II had made outreach to Jews one of the pillars of his papacy. His successor, Benedict XVI, continued interfaith dialogue but also made several policy decisions that angered Jews, including lifting the excommunication of a renegade bishop who turned out to be a Holocaust denier.

Pope Francis projects a man-of-the-people style in sharp contrast to Benedict, who was seen as removed and cold. Pope Francis is known for living simply, taking the subway and answering his own phone. He spent virtually his entire career in Argentina, away from the intrigues of the Vatican's Roman Curia – the central governing body of the Catholic Church – and other scandals that dogged the papacy of his predecessor.

However, within days of the new pope's election, the Vatican faced questions about what Pope Francis did – and did not do – to oppose the military junta that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. Critics have said the church did not do enough to thwart the military dictatorship's Dirty War, including the kidnapping of two Jesuit priests in 1976. Pope Francis has said he worked behind the scenes to free the priests and sheltered others by hiding them at a Jesuit school.



Pope Francis

The questions about Pope Francis' past carry echoes of the Holocaust-era controversy surrounding pope Pius XII. Many Jews charge that Pius did not do enough to oppose the Nazis, but the Vatican and Pius' proponents say he worked behind the scenes to save Jews.

While a staunch conservative on social issues such as gay marriage, female priests and abortion, Pope Francis spent years working among the poor and made interfaith outreach one of his priorities.

"The Latin American Jewish Congress has had a close relationship with Monsignor Jorge Bergoglio for many years," said Claudio Epelman, executive director of the congress. "We know his virtues and have no doubt whatsoever that he will do an excellent job for the church."

As archbishop of Buenos Aires, his relationship with Argentine Jews was personal as well as institutional.

His only book, *Regarding Heaven and Earth*, is the transcript of wide-ranging conversations between himself and Rabbi Abraham Skorka, the rector of the Latin American Rabbinical Seminary. Pope Francis and the rabbi also shared billing on an Argentine TV talk show on religious issues.

Pope Francis has referred to Skorka as his "brother and friend." The then-cardinal attended services at Skorka's synagogue and also arranged for Skorka to receive an honorary doctorate from the Catholic University of Argentina.

Pope Francis is cited with particular warmth by Argentine Jews for showing solidarity with the Jewish community following the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires that left 85 dead. The attack, Francis told the Argentine media, was "another link in the chain of pain and persecution that God's chosen people has suffered throughout history."

In 2005, he signed a petition for justice in the AMIA bombing case and a document called "85 victims, 85 signatures." In June 2010, he visited the rebuilt AMIA building to talk with Jewish leaders.

"The closeness between Francis and the Jewish community is special and precious," Rabbi Gary Bretton-Granatoor, vice president of the World Union of Progressive Judaism, told *JTA*.

Bretton-Granatoor, who is based in New York but has met Pope Francis a couple of times, called the new pope "a mensch" who "gets the importance of a relationship with the Jewish community, who understands the meaning of the Shoah and has a heart in the right place on a number of issues that concern us as well."

Obviously, he added, "we will vigorously disagree with him on many fundamental issues as well – but that is part of the game, isn't it?"

Suspect in Daniel Pearl murder is arrested

JTA

NEW YORK — Pakistani security officials captured a former terrorist leader who is believed to have planned the 2002 kidnapping and murder of American journalist Daniel Pearl.

Qari Abdul Saeed, also known as Asadullah, was arrested on March 17 by the Pakistani Sindh Rangers, according to March 18 reports citing unnamed Pakistani officials. He is accused of two decades of terror activity.

Pearl's parents, Judea and Ruth, said in a statement released March 18, "We are gratified with this latest arrest and hope that justice will be served in a timely manner on all of those who were involved in the abduction and murder of our son, Danny."

Daniel Pearl

Pearl, the Wall Street Journal South Asia bureau chief, was researching a story about Islamist militants when he was kidnapped in Karachi in January 2002 and murdered a month later.

His final words as he was about to be beheaded – an act that was captured on camera and widely distributed following his death – were "My father is Jewish. My mother is Jewish. I am Jewish."

Thessaloniki remembers lost Jewish community

Gavriel Fiske
The Times of Israel

THESSALONIKI, Greece — Thousands of Greeks took to the streets in this seaside city on March 16 in remembrance of more than 50,000 Jews who lost their lives in Nazi concentration camps during the German World War II occupation of northern Greece.

The march, part of a weekend of commemorative events, began in Eleftherias (Liberty) Square, where the first Jews were rounded up 70 years ago – on March 15, 1943 – before continuing to the old railway station, where they were sent north to their fate in the camps. Most of the community ended up in Auschwitz-Birkenau and did not return.

An estimated 3,500 to 4,000 people turned up on a crisp, cold morning to participate in the march, the first public memorial event of its kind for the Jews of Thessaloniki. The city, also called Salonika or Saloniki, was once home to a thriving and ancient Sephardi community and was known as the "Jerusalem of the Balkans" due to the concentration of Jews, who before World War II made up some 25 per cent of the population.

Today, some 1,000 Jews remain, largely the descendants of the few survivors of the camps or of those who avoided the Nazis by hiding outside the city or joining Greek resistance fighters in the nearby mountains. The Jews of Thessaloniki are today a tightly knit community with three synagogues, an elementary school and close ties to Israel.

Most of the marchers were non-Jewish Greeks of all ages, including a group of anti-fascist activists, representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church, Thessaloniki Mayor Yiannis Boutaris and other government officials. In addition to Jews from Thessaloniki and other Greek communities, international representatives of the World Jewish Congress joined the event as co-sponsors, as did Israeli ambassador to Greece Aryeh Mekel. There was also a delegation of Israelis whose roots lie in the city.

The memorial events took place against the backdrop of the well-publicized rise of the Golden Dawn, the far-right, neo-Nazi and ultra-nationalist political party that made international headlines after receiving seven per cent of the vote in the May 2012 national elections, capturing 21 – out of 300 – seats in the Greek parliament.

The prominence of the Golden Dawn was addressed directly by Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, who spoke at a standing-room-only March 17 memorial event at Monasteriotes Synagogue, the only Jewish house of worship – out of more than 50 – not destroyed by the Nazis.

In his address – it was the first time a Greek prime minister officially visited a Greek synagogue – Samaras said that "neo-Nazis have appeared once again," but that there was "no room for racism and antisemitism" in Greece. As prime minister, he said, he would continue to push for legislation to limit antisemitic and racist speech and activity in Greece.

Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras speaks at Monasteriotes Synagogue in Thessaloniki. *[World Jewish Congress/Michael Thaidigsmann photo]*

"We should not be tolerant of this phenomenon," Samaras said to the packed crowd of dignitaries and Jewish community members. "Today, the government is obliged to take any measure to avoid a repetition [of the Holocaust]. Many people are naive to think that this occurred only in the dark corners of history. They are wrong.

"Our mission is to recall that the values governing society should not be taken for granted," he continued. "The Greeks fought against the Nazis… this victory is threatened by isolated voices that offend the memory of our Jewish brethren and others who lost their lives."

Ronald Lauder, president of the World Jewish Congress, which convened its annual executive-council meeting in conjunction with the memorial events in Thessaloniki, also addressed the crowd in Monasteriotes Synagogue, calling for a Greek law "that punishes effectively the denial of the Holocaust."

He said the Golden Dawn are representatives of the "same extremist, fanatic ideology that brought devastation over Europe 70 years ago" and are effectively Nazis who today have "representation in the Greek parliament."

Lauder reminded the audience that Hitler was appointed chancellor of the Weimar Republic during an economic crisis in Germany, much as the Golden Dawn achieved prominence during an extended period of economic instability in Greece, but at the time "there were not enough democrats willing to join forces against the enemies of freedom and democracy."

Modern Greece, he predicted, "in spite of the economic crisis, will be strong enough to rein in" extremist forces and will subsequently "witness a golden dawn of a different kind," as a "prosperous country that will have the affection of its people and the admiration of its neighbours."

Greek Jewish community head and Thessaloniki resident David Saltiel, speaking with the *Times of Israel* after the memorial events, said that the last few years had been a time of "great difficulty" and that "people are feeling depressed.

"After so many years," he said, speaking of the Golden Dawn, "they came back again. This is very bad for all of us." He praised the prime minister's speech and said that a combination of education and tough laws against Holocaust denial were the best way to combat the neo-Nazi extremists.

"We are not alone," he added. "We have Israel. Why should a small community be afraid?"

TimesofIsrael.com

Argentine Jews mark embassy bombing

JTA

BUENOS AIRES — The Jewish community here commemorated the 21st anniversary of a deadly attack on the city's Israeli embassy.

Nearly 1,500 people participated in the March 17 demonstration organized by the embassy to mark the attack, which Argentina and Israel blame on Iran.

On the afternoon of March 17, 1992, a suicide bomber drove a truck loaded with explosives into the front of the embassy, killing 29 and injuring 242.

Sunday's rally also protested the memorandum of understanding signed recently between Argentina and Iran on a joint investigation of the 1994 attack on the AMIA Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires. Over Jewish community protests, Argentina's congress last month approved the agreement.

The attack, which killed 85 and injured hundreds, is believed to have been carried out under orders from Tehran. Six Iranians are wanted by Interpol in connection with the bombing, including Iranian Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi.

Maria Eugenia Vidal, vice-chief of the Buenos Aires city government, told the crowd on Sunday, "The bomb exploded in the centre of Buenos Aires, in the middle of the heart of all Argentines."

AMIA President Guillermo Borger told *JTA* that the number of demonstrators this year was higher than in previous commemorations, in part because people wanted to express their opposition to the agreement with Iran.

U.S. Ambassador to Argentina Vilma Martinez also attended the demonstration. No high-ranking members of Argentina's national government participated.

In related news, Interpol will not lift the arrest warrants for Iranians suspected of involvement in the AMIA bombing, despite Tehran's supposed co-operation with Argentina in investigating the event.

Argentine Foreign Minister Hector Timerman cited a letter from the international police organization during a news conference on March 15 in explaining that the arrest warrants would remain active. Six Iranians are wanted by Interpol in connection with the bombing, including Iranian Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi.

"Some organizations from the [Jewish] community said that the agreement with Iran is a step to the precipice," Timerman said. "But this document from Interpol shows that the government is always working for the justice, the memory and the truth."

A banner in an urban square dedicated to peace in Rosario, Argentina, commemorates the bombings of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires and the bombing of the AMIA Jewish community centre. The banner shows a sum 22 + 85 (the number of deceased in each bombing) and the result, 6,000,107, a reference to the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust. The photo was taken in March 2006.
[Pablo D. Flores/Wikimedia photo]

Family clothing business closing after 55 years

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When Martin and Judith Markus started their retail clothing business on Bloor Street West, Louis St. Laurent was still Prime Minister of Canada and Dwight Eisenhower was president of the United States.

The neighbourhood was a lot different back then, home to many European immigrants, just like the Markuses.

Business was brisk and would get even brisker as the years went by and the company entered its retail heyday in the 1980s and '90s. But time stops for no one. Since then business has decreased steadily, Martin is 93, Judith 10 years younger and though their middle-aged kids, Norman and Linda, have spent years in the store, early next month N. Markus Fashions will close its doors for the final time.

Before the family shutters the store, they are planning a customer appreciation weekend from April 5-7. "It would be wonderful to have the opportunity to thank and say goodbye to as many of our customers and Toronto residents as possible who, over the span of many years, have come to our store to find the right outfit for all the various family events," daughter Linda Friedman, stated.

While for Martin the closing is a particularly sad event – "I built it up from nothing, from nowhere," he said wistfully – they did have a good, long run in the business.

The Markus family story is not atypical for postwar immigrants. Martin and Judith were both born in Transylvania, Judith in a small village, Martin in Satu Mare.

They met in Toronto – in itself a happy confluence of events. When Martin came to Canada in 1948, he arrived in Halifax by ship and was supposed to continue to Montreal. "However, he heard a conductor saying, 'Toronto train now boarding!' He liked the sound of the city's name and decided to board that train," Friedman said.

Judith had already come to Toronto as a domestic. They met and in 1950 were married. Martin worked for a time in Judith's father's coat manufacturing company, but he wanted to strike out on his own. With their knowledge of the clothing business, they opened their first store at 602 Bloor St. W. In 1976, they opened their current location at 592 Bloor. They've been on the same block, just a little west of Bathurst, for 55, nearly 56 years.

There was no secret to their success. It entailed long hours, hard work, personalized service and good prices. Martin would take the bus from their home in North York at 7 a.m. and visit suppliers before he opened the store. He built solid personal relationships with them and was able to leverage that into good prices. Plus, he became pretty adept at finding the merchandise that would sell, Judith said.

"I had a magic feeling" about their goods, Martin said. Sometimes customers would see them unpacking boxes of apparel and would buy the clothes even before he'd have a chance to put a price tag on them, he said.

Like themselves, many of their customers were European immigrants who struggled with English. One lady, Martin recalled, knew only a few words. "How much?" she would ask about an item she liked. "Too much," she said, even before he had a chance to answer, he recalled.

"Ninety per cent of the customers were newcomers," Martin said. "We got a very good name. One told another one the good things about us."

Back in the early days, customers liked to spend time and talk, Judith recalled. Some have been repeat customers for 20 or 30 years.

"Customers had pleasure from our store, the prices and the selection," Martin continued. "I carried a big stock always."

Back when the dollar went a lot further, some customers would spend $1,500, even $2,000 on clothing.

The Markus family will be closing the door of their clothing store next month. Seen here, from left, are Norman Markus, his parents Judith and Martin, and sister Linda Friedman.

Some even bought at the store's low prices and then re-sold the same merchandise out of their homes in Scarborough, Martin said, shaking his head.

Norman and Linda were at the store a lot. As kids, they'd hang around and on weekends, they'd be given money for the movies. They'd walk over to the nearby Alhambra Theatre or the Midtown Theatre (the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema today).

When they got older, they began working in the store, Linda in the children's wear section.

"It's in our blood," said Norman. "You couldn't not help. There's a lot of history here.

"One of the strengths is that my father was loved by all the suppliers, so he could wheel and deal a lot with them for price point. That's why we could compete," he said.

The family won't reveal exactly how much they earned. All Judith will say is, "It was a good, good business."

At one point they were offered a place in the new, yet to open Yorkdale Mall, but they turned it down. They didn't want to be dictated to about the store, its hours of operations and other items. "I knew [Martin] would have to be there all the time and I didn't want him to be a slave to the store," Judith said.

Since then, "the nature of retail has changed significantly," said Friedman. "With the onset of big box stores, online shopping and the changing demographic nature of the area, with fewer European immigrants and more from Asia, business hasn't kept up."

Norman said closing is the result of two factors: "financial and my health."

Sales are down 75 per cent from the peak some 25 years ago. The trend is not encouraging, and Norman is concerned that worries over the bottom line will affect his health.

Judith and Martin have lots of grandchildren, but they're busy pursuing their own careers and none are interested in taking over the family business. So, some time in April, after they've paid their respects to their devoted clientele, N. Markus Fashions will close for the last time.

Nevertheless, the Markus family will retain a connection to Bloor Street. They own the building and have a couple of tenants living above the shop. As for a prospective retail tenant, they don't have one just yet. Hopefully, said Judith, it will be someone in the clothing business.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

RANDY BACHMAN TO PERFORM AT A CONCERT FOR THE KOFFLER CENTRE

Guess who the Koffler Centre of the Arts is bringing to town to perform a concert? **Randy Bachman**, formerly of the **Guess Who** and **Bachman-Turner Overdrive**, performs a Koffler Gala concert with alt-country stars the **Sadies** and singer-songwriter **Melanie Fiona** in an evening hosted by Toronto author **Michael Wex.**

The Koffler Gala takes place at the Artscape Wychwood Barns, 601 Christie St. on Thursday May 2. Reception at 6:30 p.m., kosher dinner 7 p.m., performance 8:30 p.m. Tickets for the fund-raising gala begin at $100 (junior patron under 30) and $500 (patron) and climb steeply up to $25,000. www.kofflerarts.org

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Short Holocaust Film: *Yahrzeit* is a short film by **Eva Ziemsen** that commemorates **Rosa Schensowsky-Samuk**, the filmmaker's grandmother and a Holocaust survivor. A visit to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin is interwoven with Rosa's account of her experiences during the Holocaust and her one moment of happiness in her life. The film premières at the Women in Film & Television Short Film Showcase. Deluxe Postproduction Studios, 424 Adelaide Street E., April 4. Please visit www.cinevafilms.com/yahrzeit for further information.

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Calling All Playwrights: There's still plenty of time for ambitious playwrights to polish and perfect that first draft– so get busy. Submission deadline for the 2013 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition is July 2. The prize is a well-publicized professional play reading. For further information and submission guidelines, visit www.mnjcc.org/CJPC or 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• • •

Names in the News: Project Art is a fundraising initiative started by four young Torontonians, **Ben Cowley**, **Matthew Cohen**, **Emma Tushinski** and **Zac Cooper** after Tushinski's recent battle and victory over acute lymphoblastic leukemia. The four founders of Project Art attended Hebrew day school in Toronto (Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Bialik) and are avidly engaged with Ve'ahavta, Beth Tzedec, the Village Shul and other local organizations.

Working with the Sunnybrook Foundation, Project Art is hosting an art-focused charity fundraising evening in which local artists showcase and sell their art. Funds raised through sponsorships, private donations, ticket and art sales will be used to develop an art program for therapeutic healing at the Odette Cancer Centre.

"Our mission is to inspire, drive and encourage change through art," the founders explain on their website. Their event will also feature live music, performances, entertainment and refreshments. Burroughes Building, 639 Queen St. W., May 9, 7:30 p.m. www.project-art.org

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Synagogue Architecture: Dynamic ROM curator **Corey Keeble** delivers a multi-part visual history of synagogue architecture of the United States and Canada, from the Touro Synagogue of Newport, R.I., to the most recent progressive examples. Presented by Active Seniors & Boomers. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursdays April 4 and 11, 1:30 p.m. $4 includes light refreshments. 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

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Arts in Brief

• Golden Molten Stream, A Celebration of Contemporary Hebrew Poetry and Song is a book launch for *Mystical Vertigo*, a book of Hebrew poetry translated by **Aubrey L. Glazer**, with performances by **Jaffa Road**, **Aaron Bensoussan** and **Ernie Tollar**. The Rivoli, 334 Queen St. March 28, 7:30 for 8 p.m. $10.

• Play in the **MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble** as led by **Eric Stein** of **Beyond the Pale**. Sessions are ongoing at the Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday evenings, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Pro-rated registration available. music@mnjcc.org

• **Miles Nadal JCC's Daytime Choir** invites you to join (no audition necessary). The choir sings each Tuesday, 1 to 2:30 p.m. $5 drop-in. Also at the MNJCC, the **Women's Chorus** is for all women who love to sing (no audition necessary). Mondays, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. For both choirs please email gillians@mnjcc.org

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Randy Bachman

At the Galleries: *Nurture: Stories of New Midlife Mothers* is an exhibit of photography by **Shana Sureck** and **Tracy Clanflone**, curated by **Cyma Shapiro**. At the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until April 21.

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Six Canadian comedians walk into a bar…

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

During the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival, Yuk Yuk's founder Mark Breslin was angry over the anti-Israel protests that stemmed from the festival's spotlight on Israeli films.

He wondered what would happen if he brought a group of Israeli comedians to Yuk Yuk's. Would they picket him?

Although that idea didn't come to fruition, the Israeli Consulate in Toronto recommended instead that he take a group of Canadian comedians on a tour of Israel.

So last June Breslin took a group of six Canadian comedians – only two of them Jewish – for a week of performances in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The experience was filmed by Torontonian Igal Hecht, and the resulting documentary, *A Universal Language*, will have its première at next month's Toronto Jewish Film Festival.

"The film explores this uncompromising, uncensored tour of Canadian comics in which they put on comedy shows for Jews and Arabs and anyone who would come, and share some really good laughs with people by telling very, very, dirty jokes," Hecht explains.

The comedians pose at the Kotel during a tour of Jerusalem. From left: Nikki Payne, Rebecca Kohler, Mark Breslin, Michael Khardas, Aaron Berg, Jean Paul and Sam Easton. *(Chutzpa Productions photo)*

The tour got off to a rocky start. The first show was at a community centre in Jerusalem. Most of the guests were, as one comedian put it in the film, "Old people and their parents."

"The comedians were really freaking out," Hecht says. "This wasn't their audience."

The show went on as planned. For the most part, the comedians kept their usual filthy acts and, though some people walked out, in the end it was a success.

"That first night there was a woman with a walker," Hecht recalls. "Although she laughed and stayed till the very end."

But that was nothing compared to what was to come later at a hotel in East Jerusalem. This time, the guests included mostly Palestinians and North American NGOs. The problem was when the comedians used the word "Israel" in their acts. Some comedians got heckled. "Learn your history," one shouted. Other guests walked out.

But as Hecht points out, sadly, the problem wasn't with the Palestinians. It was the Canadians. "The Palestinians there were very warm and receptive to the comedians. It was a lot of the Canadian and American NGOs there that were leading the charge. There's a line in the film where Jean Paul [one of the

Continued on page 45

The reclusive Philip Roth opens up in PBS documentary

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The great Jewish American novelist Philip Roth tends to be reclusive and rarely grants interviews. But in a revealing PBS documentary from the American Masters series, *Philip Roth: Unmasked*, due to be broadcast on March 29 at 9 p.m., he displays a loquacious side.

For reasons that remain undisclosed, Roth – the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize and twice winner of the National Book Award – gave filmmakers Livia Manera and William Karel unprecedented access. Over 12 hours during a 10-day period, he reflected on his life and career in what is billed as the first biopic on Roth.

Happily enough, Roth, who marked his 80th birthday on March 19, is open and lucid.

Better still, his observations, at once serious and funny, are supplemented by perceptive comments from critic Claudia Pierpont, a staff writer at the *New Yorker*; the novelists Nicole Krauss, Jonathan Franzen and Nathan Englander, and a procession of Roth's friends.

With 31 novels and collections of short stories to his credit, Roth is a veritable writing machine. But as he admits toward the close of this 90-minute film, he never fails to wonder, at least between books, whether he can pull it off yet again.

Flitting between an Upper West Side apartment in Manhattan and a cottage in rural Connecticut, Roth works constantly, standing as he writes. He claims that the only reader who counts is himself, but that is not entirely true. Upon completion of a manuscript, he submits copies to trusted friends for input.

Roth, whose novels grapple with moral struggle and moral ambiguity, as Krauss points out, does not just tap into his formidable powers of imagination. Likening himself to a journalist, a comparison most creative writers would eschew, Roth says he often relies on news stories, past and present, for inspiration.

He candidly discusses the sexuality in his novels, but acknowledges that the escapades he describes so luridly and hilariously are not necessarily based on real experiences.

The film unfolds in chronological order after a heated denial by Roth that he is a "Jewish" writer. "I don't write Jewish," he declares indignantly, describing himself as an "American" writer.

He denies being a self-hating Jew or an antisemite, which some critics claimed he was following the publication of *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959), a book that gained him national attention.

As Pierpont says, Roth launched his career by drawing on his childhood in Newark, N.J., where he was born in 1933. He was the son of middle-class Jews, but his grandfather was an immigrant from Eastern Europe who spoke only Yiddish. Roth's father, whom he calls "a terrific pain in the ass," expected him to be a lawyer. However, Roth had his sights set on literature.

Although there were few books in his household, Roth began to read at the age of 12, and the Irish novelist James Joyce was one of his most formative influences. "That changed everything," he muses.

Desperately seeking to assert his independence, he left Newark at 16 to attend university. "I just wanted to get the hell away," he says.

At university, Roth turned to writing, but he dismisses his early stories. He began writing in earnest while in the army, and Franzen claims he became "the central figure" in his novels, which range from *American Pastoral* to *The Human Stain*.

There were bumps on the road. As a result of a "brutal and lurid" marriage, he developed a writer's block and his self-confidence fell away. Cured by the balm of psychoanalysis, Roth wrote the ribald bestseller, *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969).

As he mischievously recalls, he had to "prepare" his parents for its publication. True to his prediction, it was immensely popular. "Suddenly, I had money," he says. Buoyed by its success, he bought his first car and house and sent his parents on a cruise.

Given his advanced age, he dwells on the spectre of death.

A painful back ailment prompted him to contemplate suicide, he admits.

Philip Roth

The topic induces Roth to discuss the panoply of famous novelists who've committed suicide.

The prospect of death generates fear and sadness, but not rage, in him. "Time is running out," he says in a tone of resignation.

Quickly regaining his composure, he suggests that he is good and ready for his rendezvous with mortality.

Whenever he leaves this vale of tears, Roth can take solace from the fact that he has truly lived life to the full.

Comedians moved by Israeli experience

Continued from page 44

comedians, who is black) says, 'I wish white people would stop being offended on behalf of other people,' and he's right," Hecht says.

"These NGOs come there and have one specific way of looking at things, and anything else, even a comedy show, offends them. Once those people left, the show went very well."

As Breslin says in the movie, "one thing I've learned is I won't be opening up a Yuk Yuk's in east Jerusalem."

Despite some early setbacks, the tour went over well. The comedians toured Israel and incorporated some of their observations during their acts.

"Comedians are very, very smart. They look at the world very different than most people do," Hecht says. "I also found they like to drink. You'd be surprised what you can find on a Friday night in Jerusalem at 3 a.m."

The comedians were also visibly moved by the experience, especially Aaron Berg.

"Aaron really re-connected with his Jewish roots. He really started thinking about his Jewish identity and I think now goes to a synagogue which he didn't do before."

The film also shows a scene of another comedian, Sam Easton, crying outside Yad Vashem. It turned out that although he isn't Jewish, his grandfather was and his whole family died during the Holocaust.

"Sam was really moved by it," Hecht says. "That scene was an honest moment that was only brought on by the trip. It all came to the surface by coming to Yad Vashem. He was really emotionally impacted by that."

Several local Palestinian and Jewish comedians are also featured in the film, which makes observations on the differences between Israeli and Canadian comedy.

"I think Israelis don't want to talk about politics most of the time in comedy because they talk about it all the time in their lives. Israeli comedy is more about punch lines and making fun of people's backgrounds, whereas North American comedy is more about telling a story and making observations about mundane things," Hecht says.

A Universal Language is a bit of a departure for Hecht, who's developed a name for himself making controversial/political films such as *The Hilltops*, *My Flag* and *Shunned* for his company Chutzpa Productions.

"Of all the films I've filmed in Israel over the last 10 years, this was the most fun," he said. "It's not stressful, and you're not thinking of who's going to shoot me and things along those lines."

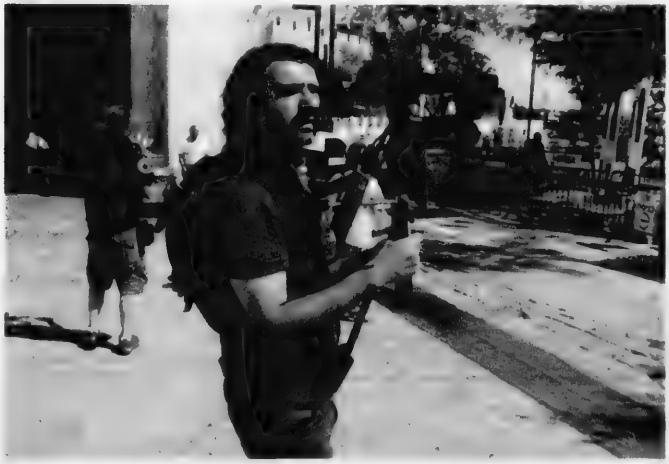
Hecht says it's been about four years since he's made a political film and will return to what he calls his "traditional Chutzpa roots" for his next few films.

"They will be provocative and political, not so much about Israel and the Palestinians but more about major issues in the Jewish world."

Hecht will miss the première of *A Universal Language* because he's filming in Israel, but Breslin and several of the comedians will be there.

A shorter version of *A Universal Language* will also air on CBC's Documentary Channel on April 18 at 9 p.m.

TJFF (www.tjff.ca) screening times have not been released at time of writing.



Igal Hecht films in Jerusalem.

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A new view of old poems of Lodz and beyond

Reviewed by

Norman Ravvin

Early responses to the events of the World War II can carry an uncanny charge. Though they are far from us as readers or viewers, they have the power to recover responses that are fresh and new to our way of thinking.

The 1960 film *Chronique d'un été*, which is characterized as the first example of cinema verité, carries this charge. Among the young Parisians the director interviews in response to the question, "Are you happy?" is a young camp survivor named Marceline. Late in the film she appears on a remarkably carless Place de la Concorde, where she remembers aloud her feelings, and her father's response to them, as their family was caught up in the deportation engineered for the Germans by French military police.

A similar charge – via a voice unencumbered by familiar phrases and ideas – can be found in the poems collected in *Exile at Last: Selected Poems*, the recently published volume of selected work by the Yiddish writer Chava Rosenfarb (Guernica Editions). Edited by Rosenfarb's daughter, the scholar and translator Goldie Morgentaler, *Exile at Last* includes poems gathered from Rosenfarb's earliest publication, the 1947 collection *Di balade fun nekhtikn vald*, from postwar publications, and, as well, poems that have not been published before.

Rosenfarb carried her earliest poems with her from the Lodz Ghetto, where she was trapped with her family, to Auschwitz, where her writings were taken from her. In a process of reconstruction begun in a German work camp, and then completed after the war in Belgium, she rewrote her early lost works.

Like so much of Rosenfarb's writing, this places a poem like *Isaac's Dream* – a rendering of the hideous period known in the ghetto as the Sperre, in which 6,000 children were taken from their parents and sent to the death camp at Chelmno – in a remarkable, possibly unique context. In the Yiddish original, a note attached to the poem describes it as having been written on a Thursday, the sixth of September, in the midst of the days-long roundup.

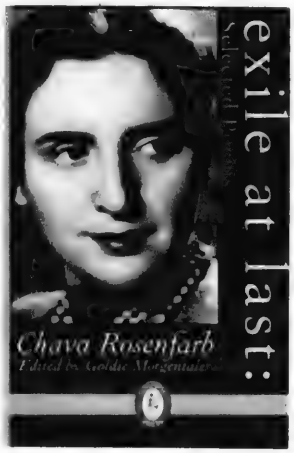
It introduces a theme that recurs in Rosenfarb's postwar work – the emptiness, or, at least, childlike quality of biblical stories in light of the horrors the author has seen. Writing to her imaginary Isaac, Rosenfarb informs him: "'Hide yourself in the Bible's fairytale land./ For your God himself walks with me and my father,/ Right now, to the altar; with us – to His end.'"

Rosenfarb holds onto characters and motifs from biblical stories, turning them to her particular ends. In *Rachel and Leah*, the wives of Jacob become symbolic compatriots of the Jews of Lodz:

Rachel plays on the mandolin
And Leah plays on the flute.
Between the two women, the Shekhina is smiling.
She now knows how each life will conclude.

Among the ghetto poems, too, are portraits, intimate, lovely and sad, of the poet's life while imprisoned by the Germans in the poorest district of her hometown:

Bats fly past the window.
Wings flutter. Dancing specters.
The sun is gone.
In the western sky
the remains of its disarrayed bed
Still warm from its body.
On purple sheets and torn pillows
lies the day and remembers.
Soon it will be gone.

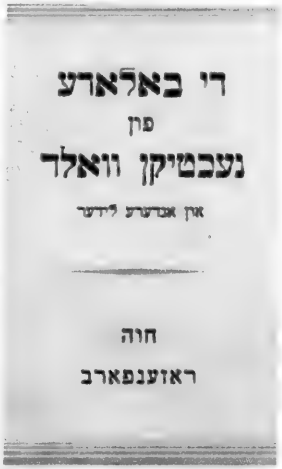


Exile at Last includes an introduction that Rosenfarb wrote in English in the early 1970s, when she was translating her poems into the language of her new home. It offers an intriguing portrait of a writer who acknowledges Canada's "magnificent air of freedom," but does "not feel at home." Rather, she is burdened by a feeling of "alienation" that she feels might be cured by her efforts at translating her Yiddish poetry for North American readers.

"I write," she asserts, "not only from the experience of being Jewish, but also from the experience of being a woman in this turbulent century." This latter theme runs through poems dedicated to describing motherhood and its challenges to a writing life: "Today my best poem's a child./ My silence sings brighter than words." In another rendering of this theme:

Children, you're my poems,
moulded to the shape of bodies,
hummed into the lines of lips and
sung into the forms of earlobes.

In light of such work, Morgentaler's commitment, as translator and editor of her mother's writing, is a final chapter in the remarkable narrative of loss and recovery, of endangerment and dedication to work that underwrites Rosenfarb's career. One feels keenly the life of the poems, the ill fortune and collaborative effort that allowed them to come down to us as readers.



Original 1947 Yiddish poetry publication by Chava Rosenfarb

Exile at Last cannot be expected to convey all the particulars of this story, some of which are bound up in the original Yiddish of the poems, and in their earliest publication by Yiddish-language publishers after the war. In the 1947 London edition *of Di balade fun nekhtikn vald*, Rosenfarb reminds her readers and herself that the German order that Jewish Lodzers enter the ghetto arrived on the eve of her birthday. The writer is in her 20s as she writes this, but the scale of her historical experience is already both a great burden and a source of writerly motivation.

Norman Ravvin's most recent publications include the novel, The Joyful Child *(Gaspereau Press), and* Failure's Opposite: Listening to A.M. Klein, *co-edited with Sherry Simon. He is at work on a conference, to be held in Lodz, Poland, which will consider Canadian, Jewish and Polish culture.*

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Winnipeg welcomes young Israeli pucksters

Myron Love
Prairies Corespondent

WINNIPEG — Mike Mazeika fondly remembers the road trips that he took as a professional hockey player.

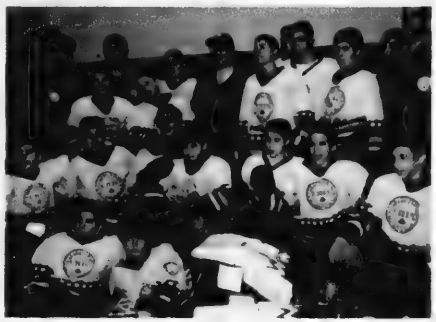
"As a hockey player, I made some of my best friends through bonding on road trips," the former Torontonian said.

That's what happened with his charges, as 17 young Israeli skaters on a road trip of a lifetime spent a week in Winnipeg March 12 to 19 at a special hockey camp funded by Toronto's Sid Greenberg, president of Astral Media.

All of them are students at the Canada Israel Hockey School, which is housed in the Canada Centre in Metullah in the very north of Israel. The Canada Centre is the only ice rink in the Jewish state.

The group of 11- and 14-year-olds included 10 Jewish kids and seven more from the Arab or Druze communities.

"This has been great for the kids," Mazeika said. "It's similar to a hockey team being on a road trip. We are seeing these kids bonding and becoming friends, no matter whether they are Jewish or Arab. And their parents have also gotten to know each other through hockey."



Israeli youngsters attend a hockey camp in Winnipeg.

The young Israeli hockey players and three coaches were flown to Winnipeg for a week-long hockey camp at the MTS IcePlex. The visit was co-ordinated by the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Chapter of Canadian Friends of Hebrew University.

"This is the first time that any of these kids has been in Winnipeg," Mazeika said. "They thought the snow was the greatest thing ever and were amazed to see people skating on the river."

Mazeika, who is originally from Toronto and has been coaching in Israel for the past year, said there are more than 400 Israeli kids involved in the Canada Israel Hockey School program.

While most live in northern Israel, some live as far away as the Tel Aviv area and Be'er Sheva. The skaters who came to Winnipeg were chosen based on their passion for the game and their exemplary behaviour.

"The kids were wonderful," said Ara Morris, principal of Brock Corydon School. Several Brock Corydon Hebrew bilingual program families – including Morris' – opened their homes to the visiting Israelis during their stay.

"We hosted two of them," she said.

"The welcome we received from the Brock Corydon School parents was unbelievable," Mazeika said. "They made us feel like Winnipeggers."

While they were here, the visiting Israelis took part in daily morning hockey practices at the IcePlex. Off the ice, they and their host families spent time playing miniature golf and glow bowling, as well as shopping, curling, visiting the Manitoba Museum and hanging out at the Rady Jewish Community Centre.

The highlight of the Israeli hockey players' time in Winnipeg was a March 17 exhibition game at the IcePlex against the Corydon Comets Minor Peewee A3 team.

DJ Schneeweiss, Israel's consul general to Toronto and Western Canada, conducted the opening faceoff as part of his first visit to Winnipeg.

The visitors kept the game close for two periods, but the home team gained the upper hand in the third and skated away with a 5-2 victory.

Afterward, in the dressing room, coach Mazeika praised his players' efforts, emphasizing that they had only been playing with each other for a few weeks and their opponents had been together for four years.

"Having their host families at the game to cheer them on made them feel like heroes," Mazeika said.

The Israelis' visit concluded with a farewell dinner March 18 at the Asper Jewish Community Campus.

"We would love to come back here next year," Mazeika said.

Usher and the Blue Raiders win Ontario championship

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When Sage Usher enrolled at St. Michael's College School a couple of years ago, he was a little unsure about the whole Jew-in-the-Roman-Catholic-school thing.

He'd been bar mitzvahed in Israel and came from a line of proud Jewish athletes.

It turns out, the religious aspect of the school curriculum was a take it or leave it proposition – which he left – and he was able to concentrate on the main reason he was there in the first place, playing basketball.

It's a game he's been pretty good at for a number of years and earlier this month, he helped the school's Varsity Blue Raiders cap off a 47-2 season with a 47-38 overtime win against their arch rivals, Father Henry Carr Crusaders, to capture the OFSAA gold medal.

"It was close," Usher said of the final, which left the Blue Raiders tops in Canada among high schools. "They were leading for most of the game. We took the lead in the fourth" but Henry Carr sunk a couple of threes in the final minute to send it to extra time. They attempted a "Hail Mary" buzzer-beater, but it was an air ball that missed the basket completely but which frayed a lot of nerves on the court. "It was a nail-biter," Usher said.

Sage Usher, top row third from left, helped the Blue Raiders to a gold medal.

In OT the Blue Raiders shut the door tight; all season long, the team had worked on its defence and it paid off in extra time, when they denied their rivals even a single point.

Usher won't say the final was pre-ordained, but all year long Henry Carr was the only team in Canada that really gave them any trouble. During their earlier matchup at the St. Michael's/Nike 53rd Annual Tournament, St. Mike's was down 16 to Henry Carr, "but we came back to win," Usher said.

"It was meant to be, to play them in the final," he added.

The Blue Raiders have been one of the city's best teams for a while, but it was a mid-winter tournament in Florida that really gave the guys confidence for the season, Usher said.

The Blue Raiders aheaded down to Orlando to participate in the Great Florida Shootout, an event that attracted teams from Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Tennessee and themselves.

They knocked off some pretty good teams and ended up losing to a team from Atlanta in the final, Usher said. "That gave us a lot of confidence the rest of the year. We knew we could compete with anybody after that."

The Blue Raiders are loaded with basketball talent, he explained. There are so many good players that the coach changes players much like they do in hockey, rolling two lines of five.

As for himself, as a six-foot-three shooting guard, Usher can boast a pretty good three-point shooting percentage; he also attributes his success to his knowledge of the game, "playing in the flow of the game," (not forcing anything, making safe plays) and his competitive spirit.

Prior to enrolling at St. Mike's, he attended Crescent School where as a Grade 9 student, he was asked to play on the varsity team with kids in Grades 11 and 12.

Even before that, in Grade 8, he played for the BJCC Blue Devils (apparently recruiting a Blue Devil was not against St. Mike's policy). Last year, that team finished fifth in the province among rep teams.

Though his high school season may now be over, basketball continues. This summer, he'll be part of the under-19 Canadian team at the Maccabiah Games in Israel. He's hoping to complete something his zaide, David Usher, couldn't. David had been named to the Maccabiah wrestling team, but for financial reasons, the team was not able to participate.

Sage's dad, Martin, had attended the opening ceremonies at the Maccabiah Games and he described the pageantry and the atmosphere of the event – in which athletes from around the world march into a packed stadium – as "amazing," Sage said.

Those stories were big motivators for him to try out for the team. "That's the reason you want to go," he said. "It's the way they talked about it."

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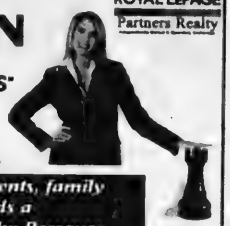

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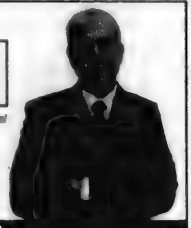

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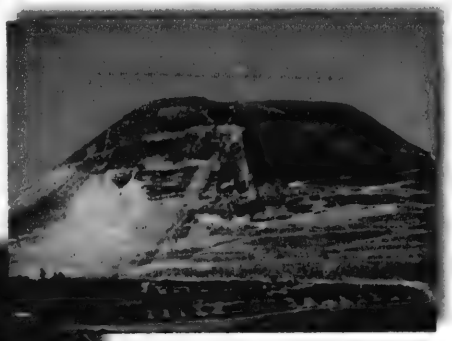


Herodium as seen from the ground

Herodium as seen from the air

The Royal Room at the theatre

JERUSALEM — It would be an understatement to say that King Herod's place in Jewish history is ambiguous.

Reviled for his cruel, harsh domestic policies, distrusted for his close affiliation with the Romans and seen as inauthentic because of his Idumean background, the Judeans did not much like him despite the relative economic prosperity he helped bring about at the time. Herod was feared and hated by the people of Judea, and respected and admired by his Roman overlords, and even by others who marvelled at the acuity of his esthetic, architectural vision.

He was a ruler on a grand scale and was responsible for vast building programs and majestic architectural structures in Judea, which at the time was but a tiny province in Rome's quite large and expansive empire.

A sense of who the Idumean King of Judea was is now on display at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem in a newly installed exhibition called *Herod the Great: The King's Final Journey*.

The exhibit opened on Feb. 12 and is attracting wide international interest and attention. The scale, pageantry and pomp of Herodium, the king's palace just south of Jerusalem, have been recreated in part for the world to see. So, too, is his final resting place, the massive mausoleum there.

Herodium is located some 12 kilometres south of Jerusalem on the edge of the Judean Desert. It was built by Herod to commemorate his decisive victory over the Parthians and their alliance with Antigonus, Herod's Hasmonean opponent, in 40 BCE. It housed a massive administrative centre, palace, fortress, theatre, sport complex and his final resting place.

Hebrew University of Jerusalem archeologist, Prof. Ehud Netzer, spent some 40 years exploring the site and eventually, in 2007, made a breakthrough discovery of Herod's tomb, an 80-foot tower-shaped mausoleum.

More than 250 artifacts, weighing some 30 tons, were collected by Netzer's team and are now on display at the Israel Museum, curated by David Mevorah, Silvia Rozenberg and Rodney Soher.

The doors of the exhibition open onto a replica setting of the calm Judean desert and from there into a series of chambers highlighting the world in which Herod lived and many of his accomplishments during his 33-year reign.

According to the museum, *Herod the Great: The King's Final Journey* seeks to provide a better understanding of this ancient figure through the monumental architecture he created and the art and objects with which he surrounded himself. The exhibition examines Herod's remarkable building projects, complex diplomatic relations with the Roman emperors and nobility, and dramatic funeral procession from Jericho to the mausoleum he constructed for himself in Herodium. A striking reconstruction of the burial chamber of the mausoleum is a centrepiece of the exhibition."

Herod had a penchant for the lavish and the opulent. A sampling of his tastes is on display in the exhibit: mosaic floors, painted frescoes, heated rooms, running water, sumptuous baths, statues, busts of Roman emperors and paintings. There is even a royal room – a VIP box – to the theatre on the premises.

He emulated the Roman Emperor Augustus Caesar and ensured that all of his palaces enjoyed the same level of luxury as those of Caesar. Mosaic floors carpeted many of his rooms.

The gathering and display of Netzer's findings is a breathtaking view of a person who was at the centre of events in Judea at one of the most critical periods of the development of western civilization.

Tragically, Netzer did not live to see the public presentation of his life's work. He died after a fall while working at the site in October 2010. The exhibition is dedicated to his memory.

The exhibit runs until Oct. 5, 2013.

Israel treats wounded Syrians

Israeli soldiers provided medical care to four wounded Syrians on the Golan Heights border. The Syrians approached the border on March 20 and were treated near the fence there, the Israel Defence Forces said in a statement. Two of the Syrians were taken to Israeli hospitals because of the severity of their injuries, according to the IDF. They will be returned to Syria following their treatment. The less severely injured Syrians will be returned to Syria "later on," the IDF statement said. Seven Syrian rebels entered Israel through the Golan Heights in February and were treated in Israeli hospitals. Six were quietly repatriated at an undisclosed location for their own safety; one was very severely injured. Several Syrian mortar shells have struck Israeli territory in recent months as the civil war in Syria rages.

Were chemical weapons used?

A senior Israeli official said March 20 that it is "apparently clear" that chemical weapons were recently used in Syria. The statement by Yuval Steinitz, the newly appointed minister of intelligence and strategic affairs, conflicted with U.S. assessments that there is no evidence behind accusations traded the day before by Syrian rebels and the Bashar Assad regime that there was a chemical weapons attack in a village in the north of the country. Steinitz, who was speaking to Army Radio, did not say how he came to the conclusion that the weapons were used. He would not comment on whether it was Assad forces or the rebels that used them, saying it was not important.

Gazans fire rockets

At least four rockets were fired at southern Israel from Gaza last week during the visit of U.S. President Barack Obama. Two of the rockets fired March 21 landed in Sderot, damaging one home. The other two rockets missed their targets and are believed to have landed in Gaza. The attack came on the second day of Obama's three-day visit to Israel, and occurred hours before he travelled to Ramallah to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. There was no claim of responsibility for the attack. It was the second rocket attack on southern Israel since an Egyptian-brokered truce ended the Gaza conflict, Israel's Pillar of Defense operation, in November, and the second in a month.

Erdogan explains statement

Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan told a Danish newspaper that his recent comments calling Zionism a "crime against humanity" were misinterpreted. "Everyone should know that my criticism [is about] certain cases, particularly Gaza and the settlements, and directed against Israeli policy," Erdogan told *Politieken* via email, ahead of his visit to Denmark. "It is quite natural for us to continue to criticize Israel, as long as it has not abandoned its denial of the Palestinian state's right to exist. On the other hand, we have recognized and continue to recognize the Israeli state within the 1967 borders and on the basis of two-state solution." Erdogan's remarks at a UN conference last month triggered condemnations from Israel, the White House, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and European leaders. Erdogan said in Vienna, "Just as with Zionism, antisemitism and fascism, it has become impossible not to see Islamophobia as a crime against humanity."

Files from JTA and Timesofisrael.com

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Ex-Torontonian stars in breakout City hit

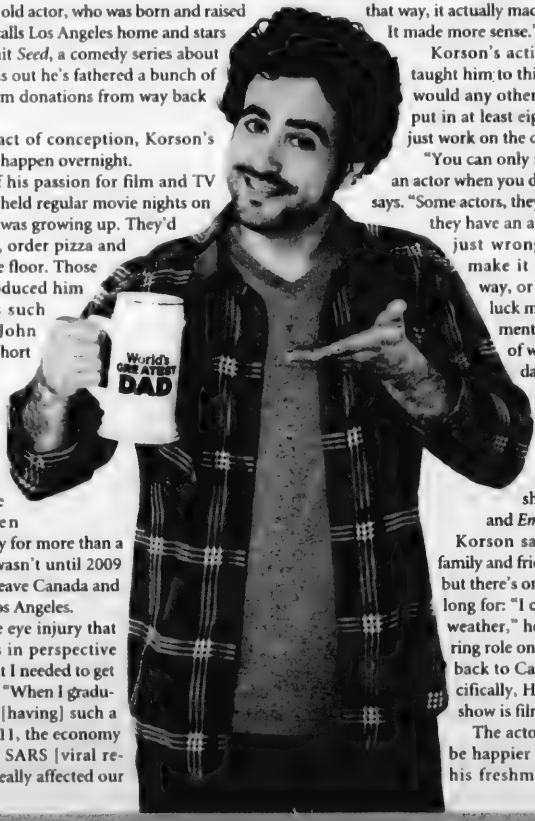
Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

Adam Korson is proof that a lot can happen in five years. He last spoke to *The CJN* in 2008, when he was producing and appearing in local Toronto plays.

Now the 31-year-old actor, who was born and raised in Thornhill, Ont., calls Los Angeles home and stars in City's breakout hit *Seed*, a comedy series about a bachelor who finds out he's fathered a bunch of kids, thanks to sperm donations from way back when.

But unlike the act of conception, Korson's success story didn't happen overnight.

He owes a lot of his passion for film and TV to his parents, who held regular movie nights on Saturdays when he was growing up. They'd often rent a movie, order pizza and have a picnic on the floor. Those movie nights introduced him to comedy greats such as Steve Martin, John Candy and Martin Short at a very early age.



Korson honed his acting chops at Toronto's Randolph Academy and got his start in Toronto's theatre scene. He's been acting professionally for more than a decade. In fact, it wasn't until 2009 that he decided to leave Canada and take a gamble on Los Angeles.

"I had a massive eye injury that kind of put things in perspective and made clear what I needed to get done," Korson says. "When I graduated, Toronto was [having] such a tough time with 9/11, the economy was changing and SARS [viral respiratory disease] really affected our film industry. People were scared to come to Toronto. It came down to 'the moment is now.' And if this is my career – which I always knew it was – the passion and dedication was real and is real, then I had to go where the work was."

Unfortunately, the work didn't come to him right away. His dwindling bank account meant he had to live in his car in the beginning. Korson remembers brushing his teeth with a water bottle in the parking lot of Mel's Drive-In on Sunset Boulevard. But "I always had a positive outlook," says the actor. "That's the school of thought, and I guess that probably comes from the way my parents raised me."

He says that aside from the friends he met there, what helped him get through the challenges was thinking of himself as a business and realizing that new companies aren't profitable in their first year.

"So really, I started looking at myself as an actor at business," he says. "You know, I'm the CEO of my own company. And I'm also an employee, and I have all these different departments… And so when I put it in that way, it actually made the move easier. It made more sense."

Korson's acting coach in L.A. taught him to think of acting as he would any other job: you need to put in at least eight hours a day to just work on the craft.

"You can only really call yourself an actor when you do it every day," he says. "Some actors, they start acting when they have an audition and that's just wrong – you'll never make it if you do it that way, or you're betting on luck more so. And so the mentality that I had was of working on it every day."

After appearing in a number of plays in L.A., he eventually booked guest roles on the shows *2 Broke Girls* and *Emily Owens, M.D.*

Korson says he misses his family and friends from Canada, but there's one thing he doesn't long for: "I can't say I miss the weather," he laughs. His starring role on *Seed* brought him back to Canada – more specifically, Halifax – where the show is filmed.

The actor says he couldn't be happier with the reaction his freshman series has received so far. "I've been thrilled," he says. "Everybody has been overwhelmingly positive, which is nice. Especially because when we were shooting the series, we fell in love with the story and with the characters and the situations – and fell in love with each other just putting it together. So the fact that people are responding in such a positive way towards it, I mean it's really all I've wanted was that kind of response."

Fans of the show have come to love Korson's character, Harry – even though he doesn't always do, or say, the right things. "When I read 'Harry' for the first time…I understood him. I got him," says Korson. "He says some things and he gets himself into situations. And a lot of times he gets into these situations and out of these situations by manipulating certain people and the situations themselves. But he does it from a purely no bad bone in his body – it's all heart."

Adam Korson stars in *Seed*. *(City photos)*

So what's next for Korson? The actor says he just wrapped up a guest stint on A&E's *The Glades*. He's also working on a website called Awkward Moments and Misunderstandings, which he's hoping to launch this April. "Every week you'll get new videos that will come up on that site, and people will be able to post their own awkward moments or misunderstandings."

Whether it is film, theatre or TV, Korson says he remains open to every acting medium. "For me at the end of the day, what's important is that I'm challenged."

Seed airs Mondays at 8:30 p.m. ET on City.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

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No do-overs

Dear Ella,

I have lost a lot of sleep and have been exceptionally stressed over the last few days. I said a horrible thing to a good friend, and I'd do anything to take it back. I fear I've lost her forever. Steph and I go way back, and although at times she can be annoying, I love her dearly. She has been by my side and my rock through some very challenging life events.

The other day, we were out together when I got a call from my overbearing stepmother, whom I have trouble standing up to. She told me that my dad and her would be coming into the city and to please clear my calendar for the weekend, because they have some important things to discuss. I automatically said yes, even though I had already booked a short getaway for some much needed rest and relaxation with Stephanie.

Ask Ella

By Ella Burakowski

After I hung up, Steph just stared at me, her head shaking and her mouth open. Before she could say a word, I jumped in first and yelled at her, "This is none of your business, so stay out of it." I knew as soon as I said it that I had screwed up. Steph turned and walked away without a word, and I haven't heard from her since. I'm so weak, I hate myself and I miss my best friend. Help!

Need a Do-Over

Dear Need a Do-Over,

Everyone has said or done something they wish they could take back. Life doesn't come with mulligans. But you don't have to let it eat you alive, either. You can be sure that Steph is not happy either, and more likely, she's hurt and angry. You must mitigate the damage. There's no easy way around this. You owe Stephanie big time for not only putting your needs above hers, but for dismissing her feelings so callously.

Clearly, you have issues with your stepmother, which you allowed to get in the way of your friendship, but what you also did is make your problems into Stephanie's problems, too. You not only ruined her vacation, but you chose your stepmother over her and then yelled at her as if it were her fault. You did that because you were angry and felt a loss of control in that situation.

Besides a sincere apology, you owe her an explanation, and you had better come clean and be honest with yourself first. Your behaviour was caused by fear of saying "no" to your stepmom. What made you react this way? Search out that answer and fix it. Promise Steph it will never happen again, and mean it. Actions speak louder than words. You will have to prove to Steph that you have identified the problem and offer her concrete proof that you're working on it. That, together with a heartfelt apology should be a good basis to begin to repair the damage.

Steph knows and loves you for who you are, so the two of you will get through this, but the ball's in your court to make the first move. It may be difficult, embarrassing and humbling, but you owe her nothing less.

People tend to forgive, but it's harder to make them forget. Too much time has passed already. Pick up the phone and make things right. Turn this situation into a positive life lesson. Go re-book your weekend with your best friend. It will give you time to talk and repair some of the damage.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: ellacjn@gmail.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

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When ready to make petit fours, remove a small amount of mixture at a time, roll into bite-sized balls, then roll into nuts and/or coconut. Place each ball on a baking tray lined with parchment or directly into muffin liners. Once the balls are rolled and coated, place tray into freezer until ready to serve them.

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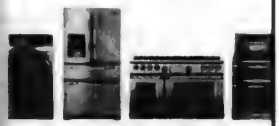

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

A group of École Maïmonide Secondary 3 students who recently travelled to Paris.

Rabbi Gilles Bernheim, chief rabbi of France, who has co-authored a book with Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, archbishop of Lyon, on Jewish-Christian biblical commentaries. Here he talks about the former pope, Benedict XVI.

French historian Michel Winock, who talks about the nature of anti-semitism in France.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says only the future will say how successful Obama's visit was to Israel.

Israel risks losing its supremacy in high-tech to India, China and other Southeast Asian countries within 10 to 20 years if its education system is not improved, said the chief economic adviser, Bank Hapoalim.

Federation CJA is hoping to register up to 1,000 participants for a mission to Israel next year. The eight-day Montreal Mega Mission is scheduled to leave May 14, 2014.

Physician-assisted suicide

There are certain "hot-button" issues that evoke very strong reactions.

Among them are abortion, refusal and withdrawal of life-maintaining medical treatments, same-sex rights and, their ultimate expression, same-sex marriage. In some jurisdictions, the issue of whether health care should be public or private or mixed can be very emotionally provocative.

Looking at various jurisdictions around the world, one observes different approaches to some of these hot-button issues, at times belying perceived local values, politics or religious influences.

Senior Side of Life

Michael Gordon

For example, abortion is legal in France, Britain, Switzerland and Denmark, and it is also legal in countries with large populations of Roman Catholics, including Hungary, Romania and Italy. In Israel, abortion is legal, despite prohibitions against it among some Jewish groups.

In some countries, it is legal and fundable through the public health-care system. In Canada, following many challenges by the renowned (or infamous) abortion activist gynecologist, Henry Morgentaler, it is legal, even though some argue that it's not as readily available as it should be.

Among the very hot-button issues making headlines again in Canada is physician-assisted suicide (PAS), in which a physician, under strict parameters, can prescribe, for a capable patient, medications for the sole purpose of ending the patient's life, as long as she or he can self-administer it. This is in contrast to euthanasia, which is legal in the Netherlands and Belgium. There, a physician may legally and without prosecution end the life of a patient under strict legislated criteria. Some critics of these more permissive programs point to evidence of insufficient scrutiny and safeguards.

In Canada, the British Columbia Supreme Court ruled that Gloria Taylor, a women suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), should have the right to access PAS, as denying this right, in the Criminal Code "unjustifiably infringes the [Canadian Charter's] equality rights." Two months after the ruling, the federal government launched an appeal to overturn Taylor's exemption. However, British Columbia Court of Appeal's Justice Jo-Ann Prowse rejected that request. In a written decision, Prowse said that revoking Taylor's exemption would cause irreparable harm to Taylor, which outweighs the federal government's interests.

In the United States, only Oregon, Washington and Montana allow PAS. An Aug. 11, 2012, *New York Times* article, *In Ill Doctor, A Surprise Reflection of Who Picks Assisted Suicide* by Katie Hafner, Dr. Richard Wesley, a resident of Washington state who suffers from ALS, feels comfort in the knowledge that he has been given a prescription that he can take when he feels that he no longer wants to live with his illness or its symptoms, which he knows will occur in the disease's later stages.

The lines of controversy are again drawn. On one side are those who are opposed, often on religious grounds or the fear of the impending "slippery slope" argument, despite evidence from those jurisdictions that allow PAS, where there has not been a dramatic explosion of requests. On the other side are those who want to protect and promote patient autonomy to the point of allowing a PAS decision, with the necessary safeguards to avoid abuse by patients, families or physicians.

How this will play out in Canada is still not clear, but since the Sue Rodriguez case in 1994, when her PAS request was declined through the legal process, much has changed in public opinion and the law, and PAS may become more palatable in Canadian society.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest. His latest book is Late-Stage Dementia, Promoting Comfort, Compassion and Care. His previous book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his memoir, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

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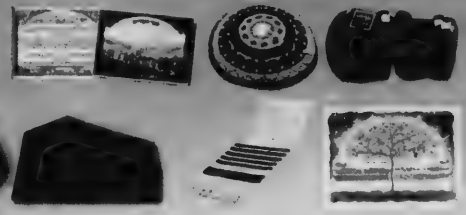

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PASSOVER GREETINGS

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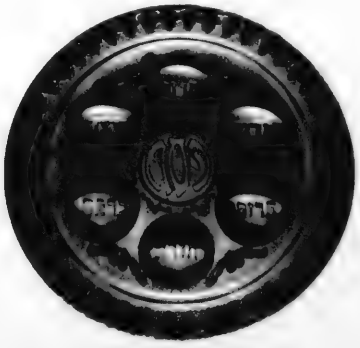

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From My Fear of the *Shtarkeh* to My Faith in Faith

By Alex Korn

So, I'm now wearing a kippah all the time.

It's a holy reminder of my sacred journey of healing from being an emotionally scarred child of Holocaust survivors to recently going to Germany for a physical healing and ultimately an emotional and spiritual healing as well.

I was born in 1942 near Alma Ata, in Kazakhstan, Russia, to my parents Lezer and Sara, may they be at peace. Both of them ran away from their homes in Poland leaving their families behind during the German invasion. All of my family, who stayed behind in Poland while believing in the basic goodness of man, was murdered by the Nazis and the lack of will to help Jews shown by most of the rest of the world. I know that I sound bitter and angry but as a child and as an adult, what I really felt was fear.

Fear of the insanity of humanity's astounding capability of inhumanity to each other—of the power of fear to instill fear in so many common folk and world leaders –that our people felt while being taken to their deaths confused and dazed by the civilized world's betrayal of us and all of humanity.

Me, I was frightened as a child of the *Shtarkeh* (the strong one). The big, strong, mindless, heartless, soulless, man with jackboots and the willingness and the ability to destroy anybody at will.

My younger lifetime was filled with constant nightmares.

When the Western world was threatened and it finally made political sense, the Americans got involved and as a united front, the world finally defeated the Nazi monsters.

We came to this magnificent country of Canada in 1948 and our family began our new life.

We forgot that just a short while ago Canada's policy was "none is too many" and recognized only that we were now really in the *Goldeneh Medineh*, the Golden Country, and a place where everybody could go and become a somebody.

My Dad was a *shneider*, a tailor and like so many other survivors, he and my mom went about creating a life starting out in Montreal and then on to Winnipeg, where my mother's sister, Lola, may she be at peace, lived.

Mr. Odwak, of blessed memory, was an angel who sponsored many Jews to come to Canada. He sponsored our family members, two sisters and their families, a brother and a cousin. As my parents slowly gathered the shreds of our families our family grew and prospered in our new Canadian home.

As we grew and prospered modestly and slowly "Good country Canada" became my father's motto.

Every Saturday night, the Greenies got together played cards and served up a little sponge cake, cookies, a shot of rye or two or more, all mixed with tearful stories of the old country, of the shtetls and of the family and friends who were no longer alive. Lots of tears mixed with some laughter and l'chaims.

With the years, the tears diminished greatly and were replaced by the laughter which was now fueled with growing families, bar mitzvahs, weddings, success in business and the most powerful decision of all, to rejoice in their new lives.

What amazing heroes these Greenies were to pick up whatever pieces were left and to build a life of purpose, love, passion, putting money in the *pishkahs* which fueled the hope for next year in Jerusalem, as well as laughter and joy at the gift of their lives being fully lived.

My fear dissolved along with my parents but I still hated the guttural sound of spoken German and the fear was still there.

I've always had an angel looking after me. As a child I always felt her presence and maybe even caught glimpses of her. She soothed me and gave me a safe place and even before I understood it, she brought me closer to God.

When you grow up with something, it becomes a part of you and for me; I had my ever-present fear and my always-available angel.

As an adult I recognized that it was my time to gather some tools so that I could live my life more consciously, so I read many books and took many courses. One of these courses was on feeling and reading energy that was given by a wonderful woman who after the class asked me if I wanted to have my energy read.

She told me that I had a guardian angel around me with an unusual name that started with a "B", it sounded like Been, no, it was Bina.

Bina was my mother's mother, my Bubbie Bina who was murdered in the Holocaust. It was so good to know who had been comforting me all of these years.

But, the hate mixed with fear of the Germans was still there until last year.

In June of 2012, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer, Stage 2, which meant that watchful waiting, the path of "you'll die before this cancer gets you," was not a viable option for me.

The panic created by the oncology doctors was primal and dropped me into a whole other emotional world. The

Continued on page B4

Happy Passover

The holiday of freedom, the festival of spring, symbolizes new beginnings. Bank Hapoalim, Israel's leading bank, wishes all its clients, friends and colleagues a Happy and Joyous Passover with blessings for peace, hope and prosperity.

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From My Fear of the *Shtarkeh* to My Faith in Faith

Continued from page B3

doctors gave me treatment options between surgery and radiation and I had to make a choice between two difficult options.

I needed to breathe into this situation; I needed to pray to God for guidance, for strength, clarity, and discernment.

Slowly over a handful of weeks, I recognized through my wife Dorry's and my endless searching the Internet, interviewing doctors, and mostly being guided by God's angels to a prostate cancer support group called "Man to Man" where I met Sam and Ezra, as well as John, Phillip, Peter and Delbert. All of these men had chosen to go to Bad Aibling, Germany to Dr. Douwes' Klinik St George for a hyperthermia treatment. I now had a viable third option.

I heard, read and recognized that the two alternatives offered in Toronto of surgery and radiation were not for me.

The hyperthermia treatment at St. George uses radio waves, which creates high heat which destroys cancer because cancer can only live at normal body temperature. This one-week-long treatment is a very tolerable treatment that destroys the cancer but does no long-term damage and does not destroy the prostate or any other organs or surrounding tissue.

After reading, talking, praying, we decided to go ahead and I placed a phone call to Frederika in Germany and wired my money and we were booked to go three weeks later.

A day or two after committing, I woke up and thought, "My God, I am going to GERMANY to be healed"!!!

The immensity of this awareness startled me.

The closing of the circle was a few weeks away. The healing of my inner child, of making peace within myself, the curing of the cancer within me all coalesced into this perfect moment of healing that I believe God created for me.

I went into my prayer, meditation room in my home and I put on my kippah, tallit, and tfillin and I gave thanks.

I gave thanks to God for all the angels who had guided me to this moment.

Dorry and I arrived in Bad Aibling, a quaint little town set in a bucolic setting surrounded by green hills and a river flowing through it. We settled in at Klinik St George, which was a former hotel and everything started the next morning. The Klinik treats up to four men with contained prostate cancer per week and this week there were three of us there with our wives, Ben and Sylvia and Ron and Wilma and Dorry and I. We became fast friends supporting each other, sharing meals, and taking walks through Bad Aibling.

The evening before my first heat treatment I prayed for a fully successful healing process and I also meditated on everything that had brought me to this point in my life. I now committed to wearing my kippah full time. It was important for me to maintain my awareness of God with me at all times and to celebrate my being a Jew.

I started my day with prayers as I do every morning and then went to the room where Dr. Douwes was ready to perform the first of the two heat treatments.

I told him about my need and desire to wear my kippah this morning to bring God into the room. I also told him about my being a child of Holocaust survivors and he said that he had heard this story many times in the 25 years his *Klinik* has been operating and that this was a new Germany and that the German people have taken responsibility for their past.

Healing comes when we recognize a problem, take responsibility of it and then take action to correct it.

This healing was a 70-year process for me.

There is so much wisdom in our Judaism that speaks to me such as: "Do not bow down to another man, only to God"; "God said that in order to elevate you, have I come to you;" "The urge towards good and evil is ever present"; "We must have and create joy in our lives"; among many more.

For me to bow down forever to the fearful ugly side of humanity is a sin. It sucks the joy out of life and denies the magnificence of light, love and God to shine through and fill my life.

To build a new life, it is important to come to some kind of peace with the old life. To forgive, but not to forget, to let go of the darkness of evil and step into the grandeur of living life to the fullest is the ultimate goal.

Shalom is a wonderful word because it means goodbye, hello as well as peace. Using this Shalom continuum, I said goodbye to the fear and I proudly said hello to my being a Jew and attained a level of peace that I have desired my whole life.

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Echoes of Life

By David Benjamin

Odd, it was only 2:15, early afternoon and the lock was being turned. Yes, odd she thought because he always arrived precisely at 6:15, perhaps 6:20 if the weather was particularly nasty. And odd because the key turned slowly, tentatively, almost reluctantly. But it did finally turn, and her husband shuffled in.

There was no doubt it was her husband as she could always feel his presence. Indeed, after over 40 years of marriage, they felt their own wholeness only when they were together. It was a closeness that came more from familiarity than intimacy, more from the grind of everyday life than exalted memories, more from duty than joy. Yet, they were grateful for the tangled roots that had become their marriage. It gave them strength to endure, to live - a strength that had slowly grown into a determination that surprised them.

It wasn't always so. Before the war, they each had been happily married with large families of their own but the war had swallowed everything. There was no one left to hug, to laugh, to love. They survived, but only in the shadows of what had been such full and hopeful lives. Lost, as strangers, they had found each other after the war, and gradually each became the project for the other. If they could save one person, perhaps that was enough.

They married and immigrated to New York. In a desperate act of optimism they tried to bring new life into their broken world but their baby daughter was stillborn. Having barely stepped out of their own graves, they both recognized it had been an act of reckless, almost irresponsible hubris. How dare they think that they could create new life after all they had witnessed?

Now, she heard him hobble slowly across the thick carpets towards the living room.

Routine over time had become their protective armour, carefully insulating their lives. Outsiders might have called it suffocation. But, to them, change was the clear enemy, fraught with danger. It happened once, it could happen again. And his tiny uptown newsstand anchored his outside life. Stoically, he would stand on the sidewalk 10 hours every day, enveloped by the latest news, although he himself was safely planted back in 1938.

The shuffling in the living room continued until she heard him collapse into his armchair. His usual, familiar, and comforting presence was somehow different. No, it was more than different - it left her strangely chilled and darkly apprehensive. And now, instead of the usual click of the remote, there was only his laboured breathing.

As he fell into his chair he sighed; at least, he had made it home. That was a good first step. He could now breathe and, more importantly, think. It was too confusing. They had grown used to their tiny, somnolent, safe world. What would they do now?

In his mind, he began to replay the day. He had left his wife in bed as he did every day, walking the two miles in the early morning dampness to his stand. As usual, the unceremoniously dumped but familiar newspapers greeted him like old friends. He knew them well. *The New York Times* stood smugly to the side. *The Wall Street Journal*, the tallest pile, waited to be snatched by anxious traders. *The Daily News* boldly titillated. And then there were the foreign papers, ready to give disoriented tourists their fix of home.

He never read them. How could anything change his life? No, his life was firmly set in the past - the present was entirely superfluous. He had no need for political assassinations, terrorist attacks, and the constant drum of war. He had already seen far too much, no room for more.

Continued on page B6

Happy Passover

Best wishes to you and your family for a happy and healthy Pesach. Chag sameach! ey.com/ca

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Echoes of Life

Continued from page B5

As always he bent over, lifted and placed each pile in its place, cutting the straps to set them free. For a brief instant he had a strange thought; if only there were straps to cut him free. Yes, strange and a most unwelcomed thought – certainly, he had no need of saving? His life was neatly packaged, tightly bound by the strings of the past.

Other than this odd fleeting thought, the day started off like any other. The early morning rush passed, followed by the steady stream of tourists. The persistent din of traffic and frenetic New York life barely penetrated his world. He stood slightly smiling, warmly bathed, as always, in memories – memories so vivid he could smell, hear and taste his life before the war; his mother's salty herring, the tenderness of his family suppers, and the laughter of children – ah, children everywhere.

Then he heard something, a voice intruding into his sheltered world, but not any voice. The voice that had always echoed in his head was now outside. But how could it be? He instinctively backed up against the wooded wall of his stall. This voice was now all that he could hear. It moved closer. The voice laughed and played. There must have been other voices as well but he could only hear that one voice.

Then suddenly, the voice stood before him. There she was - the face of his first wife – as she was the last time they looked into each other's eyes in the camp, over 40 years ago. How could it be? The face smiled and asked if he had the *Los Angeles Times*? Confused, he had always been careful to separate his dreams from his reality. This was unfair!

The Los Angeles Times, she politely asked again. Yet she spoke English, not Yiddish. He shivered. Unsteady, he lowered himself on his stool. She rushed to help. The warmth of her hands on his arms felt familiar. The past and the present strangely merged.

He looked up and haltingly asked who she was, where she came from. She always had had a special affection for the old people from the old country. This newspaper peddler especially touched her. She was eager to share her story.

She patiently told him about being a very young child in a small Polish town, Jetel. The war had changed everything. Her entire family perished in the camps but she was saved by a German guard who smuggled her to safety. She continued and, as was her way, she spent most of her story recounting her rich and full life after the war. She was adopted by an American family in L.A. She bubbled as she described her wonderful four children, whom she had just brought to New York for a holiday.

Tears that had not flowed for years, that could not flow, welled up inside him. He looked up. "Hannah, Hannaleh", his lips moved but no sound escaped, "my sweet daughter".

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Kosher For Passover Year Round

The Primrose is My Shtetl

By B. Carolyn Peters

Today was like any other day. I woke up, put the kettle on, trudged to the washroom, and then back to the kitchen for my cup of tea. As I sat on the sofa, sipping the hot tea, I started thinking about how happy I felt this week. It wasn't the kind of "jump for joy" happy; it was just a nice, warm, mellow happy. It's the week before Passover.

I guess this feeling started when I offered to make the three gallons of chicken soup for the relatives, mishpachah and friends who will be at my cousin's seder. I had just finished cleaning the chickens when I realized that my largest pot would never be big enough, so I trotted down the hall to see if my dear friend, Matylda, had a large pot to lend me. Matylda's largest pot was already filled to the brim and bubbling away with ptcha. Matylda, always gracious, gave me her largest 'unemployed' pot and I trotted back down the hall to start my soup.

Then I started thinking that the greatest arbiter of Jewish cooking in the building, my friend Frances, would definitely have a big stock pot, since she had Shabbat dinners for her large, and ever-growing, family. So I trotted down the hall again; and knocked on Frances' door. With her usual warm welcome, Frances invited me inside for tea and her famous oatmeal chocolate chip cookies. Within seconds of telling her my chicken-soup dilemma, Frances produced the biggest enamel pot I have ever seen. Frances forewarned me about the discolouration on the inside; this yellow enamel pot had been stained from more than 50 years of family cooking, especially the cholent.

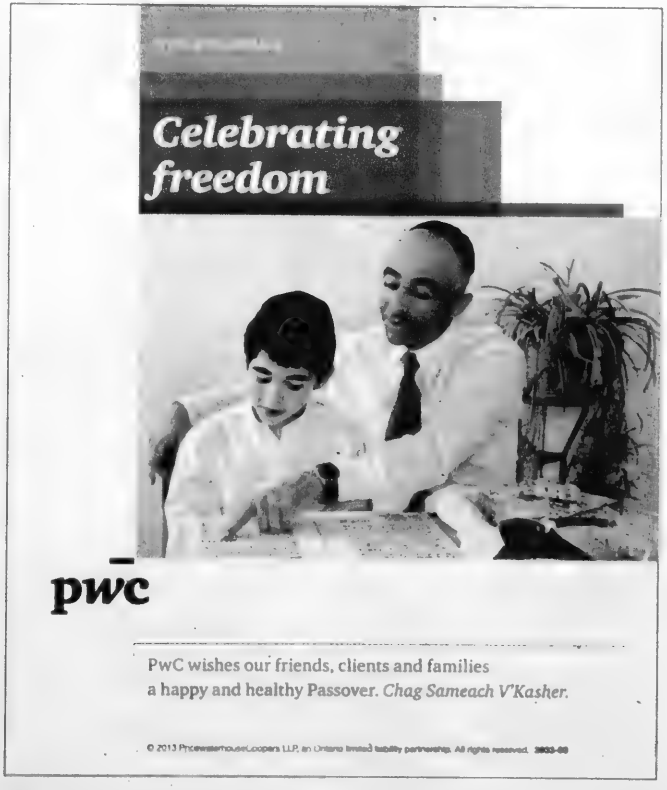
Over the next few days, I started noticing little signs of Pesach popping up throughout the building. In the elevators, fellow passengers would chat about the price of matzah this year, or how many people would be at their table, or what they were cooking. And as the elevator doors opened, there were warm smiles all around with the traditional exchange of "Chag Samayach" or "Happy Holiday".

At the underground garage door, with my keys and at least five bags of Passover groceries in hand, a car stopped and honked at me. I walked over to the driver's side – it was Rose. She wanted to wish me a happy and healthy holiday. We chatted for a few minutes about her week of cooking compared to my three gallons of chicken soup. I felt that "warm fuzzy" all the way back up to my apartment.

This week I've received telephone calls and emails and greeting cards –all with good wishes from more friends in my building. And as I pass by my open window or the doorways in the hall, I get a hint of something delicious cooking; and warm memories of my grandmother's cooking flood into my thoughts.

One hundred years ago, my grandmother lived in the Polish shtetl of Glowitz (Glowaczow). I didn't grow up in a shtetl like my grandmother, but I feel I have some understanding of what her life was like. Neighbours helped each other (like lending a pot). They always had time for a small chat about the family or the price of matzah; and they always parted with a greeting for good health or a "happy holiday". Neighbours were more than just someone to whom you said good morning on your way out the door; they were friends, in every sense of the word. They were friends who shared simchahs and sorrows and the little pleasures of everyday life.

So as I reflect on this week before Pesach, I feel happy. I feel the joy of the approach of spring and the holidays. I feel the "warmth" of the sharing, of the smiles, and of the happy greetings from friends, acquaintances and even, strangers. The Primrose is My Shtetl.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Counting the Omer with Cancer

By Barbara Center

Reaching ...

Reaching ...

Reaching for meaning ...

In the upside-down cake of my world.

I pluck a star

from my six-pointed tradition,

and ride the tsunami waves

Home to the majestic shore.

When Moses and the Jewish people crossed the Red Sea out of Egypt, they spent 49 days in the desert, spiritually preparing themselves to receive the Torah, or Five Books of Moses, at Mount Sinai. The tradition of counting the days in 7 weekly cycles continues to the present time, giving each of us an opportunity to refine our expressions of Lovingkindness, Discipline, Compassion, Endurance, Humility, and Bonding, culminating in Nobility.

Although I was diagnosed with lymphoma in 2011, I had my first chemotherapy treatment on April 25, 2012, during the weekly cycle of Compassion. Extending compassion to my own body, mind, and heart - including the cancer and chemotherapy drugs that were making me so sick - was the first step in extending compassion to the world. I learned it is impossible to walk in another person's shoes without fully nurturing and embracing my own life journey.

The week following treatment called for Endurance, knowing that I could make it through one day at a time. Survival became a state of mind, as I allowed the tsunami of physical side-effects to run its course. I was still captain of my own ship.

By the third week I began losing my hair. My challenge moved from physical to emotional. That's when the penny dropped. I was no longer in control of the image in the mirror. I had to surrender vanity for Humility. I am deeply humbled every time I touch or see my baldness. All that I took for granted is seeking love and care and nurturing now. When I catch myself spiralling into self-pity, I draw on the inspiration of friends who have had alopecia since youth. They've fashioned a radiant image for themselves that's irresistible!

My second chemotherapy treatment took place in the hospital during the Bonding cycle. I deepened connections with close family and friends who visited me and reaffirmed that I am not alone. I opened up to allow people to see me less than my best. By the end of this journey I'll proudly say I have no masks left.

As my 49-day meditation draws to a close, I reach for the last of the seven attributes - Nobility - the majesty of the human spirit that is always with me.

Reaching ...

Reaching ...

Reaching for meaning ...

In the upside-down cake of my world.

I pluck a star

from my six-pointed tradition,

and ride the tsunami waves

Home to the majestic shore.

A
Very
Happy Passover

Faigie & Rubin Zimmerman and Family

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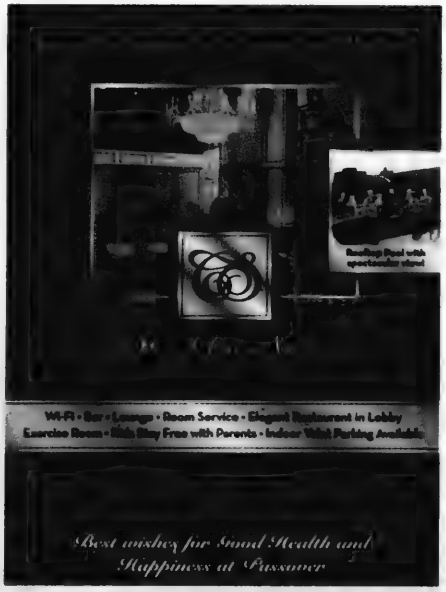
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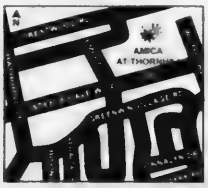

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Visiting the Place of Guilt

By Sophie Soil

I've come here to grieve.....
with the whole of me, I trek across this guilty field
of vanished flesh and bone and lives; this place of
homicidal ferocity once; of human brutality and
massacre, where death still gloats triumphant; where
the ghosts circling the semi-crimson terrain that witnessed
slaughtered dreams and humans still roam restless;

where the army of death, wearing crooked crosses on
their arms, tattooed numbers on unwilling skin, to snuff
out any shred of identity, of dignity from bleeding hearts;
where men, women, children, scared of their own shadows,
were starved and beaten and ripped apart; shot and
burned and tortured into admitting they deserve it;

where the ghosts of then are clearly seen still in
the morning fog, with their bony hands fused to
foregone faces with eyes that see no hopeful view,
and the scorn and pain they felt cuts into my own being
like a Black and Decker into living flesh.....

I know: this is not a woman's duty....but it doesn't mean
a thing when you've rammed inside yourself
incredible new rules that this place has wakened....
who else? who else has earned that right?
who's been scattered into this mournful wind of now?
who will leave a piece of me buried in this odious graveyard?

who else here and now to utter that solemn cry?
that prayer meant to lay at rest the souls of the departed?
who else is here? no one else but me, pleading with the sky.
I open the book. hear myself exhale the Kaddish:
Yit-gadal V-yit kadash Sh-mey Raba.....

they will hear.....they will forgive.....
I will not.....cannot.....

From the Bottom of the Mikvah

By Anna Gersman

From the bottom of the mikvah your puzzled faces ripple,
Young arms like doves wings encircle each other.
Your turn is next.
How could you know that it is you that brought me to this underwater place of rebirth?
Without you there is no reason to go up against my childhood of ridiculed saints and smashed Madonnas.

You gave me courage to forsake the pain of hidden Bibles and forbidden rosary beads,
To reclaim my spirit.
For you I lit candles, covered my eyes, and let my hands slowly circle the flames,
I struggled with the strange holy words, the silver goblet held high.
Sweet kosher wine mingling with sesame flecked challah,
Together we learned about the great flood, Devorah's bravery, Joseph's dreams and Moses' call.
For you I hang shimmering blue fabric pinned with colourful paper fish, a Reed Sea,
We ascend basement stairs together, the Promised Land an embroidered heirloom tablecloth laden with Ashkenazi tunes,
With you I cross over from a place of no faith,
Become rooted in a world of ritual and story, a garden chuppah, Bat Mitzvah celebrations, havdallah sunsets, strengthened for the dark shadows of grief and despair.

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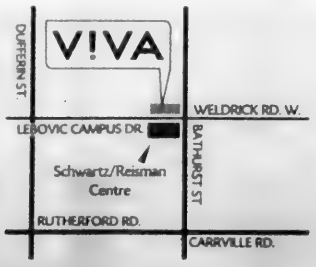

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Reflections in Shul

By Judith Ungar Weinryb

He looked at me and I could see
his life unfold as in a dream
Unraveling before my eyes
An open book of truth not lies

Remembering the wretched pain
Memories like tepid rain
flow softly down his wrinkled face
He longs to return to a far away place

Just nine years old, he could not comprehend
how the love he had cherished could suddenly end
Asleep in the forest, he had tired after play
How he'd wished he had never awakened that day

His family perished, destroyed by vile hate
He wondered why he had been spared their cruel fate
His face recalls the shock and sadness
Serenity replaced by madness

He never returned, though his heart is still there
to the small wooden cottage that went up in flames
In shul during Yizkor he utters a prayer
Seeing their images, whispering their names

At Kiddush, I see his face light up with laughter
as grandchildren run towards his beckoning arms
Sadness is nowhere, just comforting kisses
They love his great stories, are warmed by his charms

His life is like an open book
I turn away, I cannot look

Salvaged Pages

By Kenneth Sherman

They've been collected, the diaries
and testimonies written by young people
in the months and days
leading up to the camps:

Dad had called Aunt Kate in Berlin who was to pick me up.

I am in bed. Nothing from you though I think of you often.

A girl as pretty as a picture – if she could be shot
then the end of the world will soon be here.

If you read long enough you come upon the
ultimate questions:

If we are good, why this?

If there is a God, why is he silent?

Each teenager
a budding philosopher
waiting at the station
suitcase in hand.

Celebrate Passover

To all our friends, family and the entire Jewish community, we extend our warmest wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful Passover!

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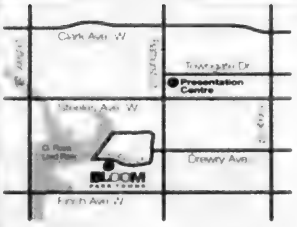

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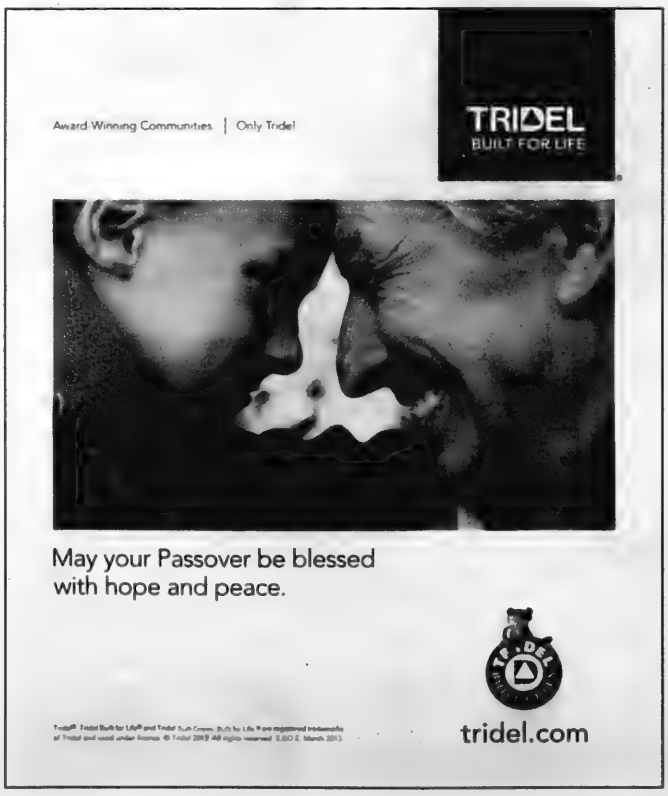
The Erstwhile Brisket

By Amy Gabriel

"Not because you are more numerous than any people
did the Lord delight in you and choose you,
for you are the least of all the peoples.
But because of the Lord's love for you,
and because He keeps the oath He swore to your forefathers,
the Lord…redeemed you from the house of bondage"
~ Deuteronomy 7:7-8

Haste, my meaty muse, and teach my lips,
Which stand the ruddy sentries of my tongue,
To chant the meat majestic's glorious song,
With fulsome stomach, hearty throat and lung.
I sing the brisket, rich and red and raw,
Which yonder peasant plunges to the pot –
A Hercules, now wreathed in flame of fire,
Most succulent, most vigorous, most hot.
So cook, my sweet; let soar your saucy smell
To tease the little boys in Hebrew school,
And ride the wind to lift the spirits of
The zeide who comes tottering from shul.
The bubbie with the babies lifts her head
When, dancing on the breeze with faeries' feet,
You pass beneath her nose and fill her mind
With visions valiant dripping with moist meat.
Cook on! Soon o'er the hot, your beefy red
Shall turn to brown, as sweet as a knish.

And now your peasant lifts his mighty knife,
And radiant slices fall onto his dish.
From thence, befriend the bold gefilte fish
And kugel grand that verge your mighty flanks,
But think not your companions on the plate
Are worthy only of the lower ranks.
For now—wait! hush!—they all have gathered round;
Now hear the murmured prayer, the blessing said.
One glass of wine, and two, and someone broke
The middle piece of the unleavened bread.
And we recall: "Not greatness, nor our size,
Impelled HaShem to choose us from above,
For we were small, and could not save ourselves,
But He is great, and all His ways are love.
In Egypt we were slaves; He heard our cry,
Redeemed us, and is the redemption still.
Without Him, we are slaves; but with Him, kings;
Grace is His erstwhile, everlasting will.
And so, bring out the food that He has giv'n!
Tonight we dine like kings from royal plates.
Brisket, come forth! And all, stretch out your hands—"
Still the third cup, Redemption, gleaming waits.
And now—your peasant lord seizes his fork
And to his lips he bears you, past his heart.
One moment, mayhap two—and you are naught,
Yet, erstwhile brisket, everlasting art.



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Moish's Last Pesach

By Paula Hurwitz

My great-granddaughter Madeline came to visit today. She has to write a story for school about a special family seder. She was struggling to come up with something based on her all of eight years' experience, so her mother brought her to me for help. Being the matriarch, I've got a bit of a reputation as the keeper of our family lore and, like usual, I don't think I disappointed.

First, I pulled out the old family photo I keep tucked away in a dresser drawer, right under my wedding picture and a few snaps of my babies. It always transports me to a seder many, many years ago - Pesach 1943. Now most people associate that Pesach with the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, but for me it's more personal than that. Not that I don't share our people's pride in those brave fighters, or mourn their eventual defeat, but I can't think of that night without grieving for my brother, Moish.

I pulled Maddy up on my lap and showed her the picture. It's black and white, of course, creased and smudged in places from years of being handled, a little torn on the sides where an elastic band dug into it. She squinted at it as I pointed to Moish. I can still make him out clearly, right in the middle of the back row, his uniform freshly pressed, his hat cocked over his right ear, standing behind my mother, his hand resting on her shoulder, the trademark grin on his face. That night we were all smiling for the camera, but we already knew about Moish's mobilization orders and you can see the tension in the way Mame's hands gripped her apron.

Tate sat to Mame's left, looking more bemused by the squirming grandson on his lap than pleased to be surrounded by his large family. We were all there, my brothers, sisters, in-laws, nieces and nephews. Maddy never knew my parents, even her mother didn't, and most of my brothers and sisters were gone before Maddy was born, but she laughed at her grandmother, a little golden-haired girl sitting on my sister Sadie's lap, her head turned away from the camera as she stared over her shoulder at the cousin in her father's arms. She was always jealous when not the centre of his attention.

That night was more than a seder, I explained, looking up as my granddaughter dragged her chair closer so she could inspect the picture too. It was a goodbye party. His training complete, Moish would be shipped to England less than a month after the picture was taken. After that, we had no idea what would happen, but the RCAF was in the thick of it, running bombing raids over Germany almost every night. So Mame had reason to be nervous, though Moish did everything he could to reassure her.

Mame was horrified when Moish enlisted, but he was young and confident, like all the boys were. Besides, though we'd only heard bits and pieces of what was going on in Europe, we knew enough. My parents, and their friends, prayed every night for the aunts, uncles and cousins left behind in Kishinev, there'd been no news in months. So all the boys in the neighborhood were signing up. I explained to Maddy how different it was back then. Now you hardly ever see a Jewish boy in uniform, unless he's fighting for Israel, of course. But then my younger sister, Baby, went dancing with a different soldier every Saturday night, and Tate wouldn't let her go with the gentile boys. Maddy laughed at the thought of her elderly great-great aunt dating and dancing. The boys all looked so handsome in their uniforms. Moish had no shortage of dates either, though at 20 he was more interested in hanging out with his buddies and flying planes.

Continued on page B16

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Moish's Last Pesach

Continued from page B15

Despite the war, Pesach preparations were the same as every year. My older sister and I cooked in our own kitchens for days then arrived carrying casserole dishes covered in stained tea towels and soup pots to help Mame feed the large crowd. On the second night we married ones would disperse to spend an evening with our in-laws, but tonight was about our family and we all slipped into our customary roles.

My oldest brother and his wife were always the bossy "know-it-alls" – and she wasn't even such a great cook, though she sure thought she was. My older sister and I were inseparable. We did everything together, putting our youngest children in the same playpen while we worked and gossiped in the kitchen. Moish was, well Moish, the handsome fearless pilot. My youngest brother was quiet, and sort of distant then. He wasn't old enough to enlist and a bit jealous of Moish. And, Baby, well I've already described her partying ways, but we were all a little to blame for that, the way we spoiled her from the moment Mame brought her home from the hospital.

As close as I was to my sisters, Moish was always my favourite growing up. Only 11months younger than I, he followed me around from the moment he could crawl. When I married, he gave the toast at my wedding, promising he'd find a wife and they'd buy the house next door so we'd always be together. Not that any of us had money for houses at the time. We lived with my in-laws for the first decade of our marriage, Moish still lived at home when he wasn't at flight school. I started to cry a little when I explained to Maddy how all those hopes and dreams can be shattered in an instant. Truthfully, I think I scared her a little bit, it's not often a little girl sees an old lady cry. She gently climbed off of my lap and crawled into her mother's.

The seder went well into the night, as they usually did when the whole family gathered around the card tables that stretched from end to end in the basement. The littlest ones fell asleep in a nest of coats on Mame and Tate's bed even before we found the *afikoiman*. But after we'd opened the door for Elijah, sang the last round of *Chad Gadyah* and raised our glasses to "Next Year in Jerusalem", my husband put our littlest one, Maddy's Grandma, over his shoulder while I kissed everyone goodbye. I saved Moish for last, as if somehow we knew this goodbye was especially important. He hugged me hard and told me he'd stop by before he left.

But, life got busy and somehow that never happened. Within the month he was based in England, flying Lancasters at night over Germany and occupied Europe. Of course we only found that out after he was gone, when two men in uniform knocked on Mame's door and told her Moish wouldn't be coming home. He wasn't even overseas long enough to send us a letter.

Mame sent Baby to get Tate at work, then to gather the rest of us. The kind officers stayed by her side until we arrived, as she cried quietly into the hanky that was always tucked up her sleeve, then explained again what happened, though it took long after that second explanation for it to sink in.

They said Moish was a hero, and I suppose he was. But like those poor Ghetto fighters he never lived to see another Pesach, and though his actual Yahrzeit's some weeks later, not another seder's passed by without my remembering my favourite brother. And since I'm not likely to partake in many more seders of my own, when Maddy left I tucked that old photo in her hand and asked her to pass it on to her children and grandchildren so that every family seder will be a tribute to my brave and handsome brother who lost his life defending our people's right to celebrate Pesach.

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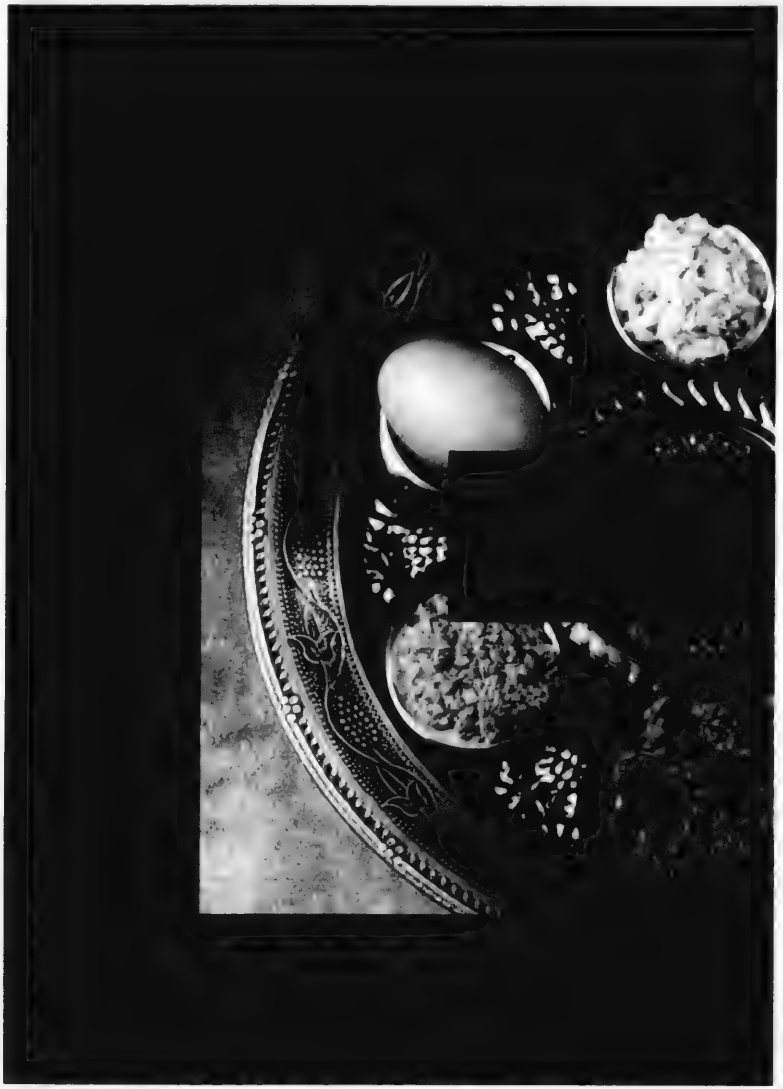

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B'H Elusive Elijah

By Ester Zirkind

Manchester, England, 1963.

The blue carpet was especially thinned near the doorways. Kasriel did not need to see where he was; the carpet's thickness told him all he needed to know. The game had become irksome. Three already out, he grew tired of winning. He pulled off the scratchy scarf from his eyes and looked about. Two brothers and one sister were sitting on the couch - waiting for him to be out; unabashed in showing their displeasure. One lone brother, still in the game, stood at the fireplace on the far side of the room. He shrugged his shoulders, threw him the scarf and left.

They had come to Manchester to get away from the fever that is London. Prestwich was a little suburb near the city where Zaida taught mathematics to the boys at Manchester Jewish High; and where Bubba could walk down her quiet little street, up a small hill at the bottom and purchase a train ticket to town to go shopping in the Arndale centre.

There would be no shopping now, not for a long time.

Kasriel went up the stairs passing two windows with thick white ledges; an overgrown African violet on one, and an orchid on the other. Both pots placed on china plates, well watered and clean. The second floor was small, much smaller than the first. Across the top of the stairs, the door to his grandparents' room was open. He peeked in. It was an elegant room. Cream colour chiffon curtains billowed in as the wind whipped at the little house. The antique dresser stood on ornate gold legs and had a marble top with a three-way mirror; lacy coverlets were draped over the chair. The cream walls matched perfectly with the wardrobes and drawers and bay windows caught the afternoon sun. As beautiful as the room was, he felt it wrong to linger. Zaida would not want to come upstairs and find someone in his room.

He went to the room next door, the room he shared with four others whenever they came up north to "get-away." These walls had been painted azure blue with a matte finish that gave the room an unmistakable coldness. There was permanent condensation on the windows that Kasriel had confused with glass. The brown furniture was clean and new. In the centre of the wall of wardrobes there was a mirror that opened to a hidden compartment. It had a small light fixture above. In a corner of the room lay a messy heap of laundry. The beds had been made by impatient hands. Here and there were strewn about books, *Jerusalem Posts* and *Jewish Chronicles*. He picked up the faded, dog-eared reprint of his bar mitzvah *maamar* from the night table, and set about reviewing.

While studying he heard the children starting a new game, but he was soon sound asleep. When he awoke it was dark outside and the smell of frying came wafting up. What time was it?

Turning to get out of bed, he rubbed his cold feet and found an extra pair of socks. The bathroom door was closed. He knocked lightly, waited a bit and turned to go downstairs.

Bubba was standing over the stovetop, gauging the gas under the hot oil and dipping her long wooden spoon into the bubbling pot. On her head she wore a *tichel* made from the identical floral material as her housecoat. As she worked she hummed, but it was impossible to hear a melody in her humming as she favoured the high notes and only the high notes.

"When's supper?"

"Oh! You startled me," she held her head hand to her chest. "Soon. Would you set the table? There's a dear." Kasriel washed his hands and began collecting crockery.

The kitchen was tiny, but functional. Every corner had been worked to capacity. One of the counters was removable. When Bubba served dairy she used the blue side, when she served a meat meal she used the red. The pantry was a little room under the stairs. It was lined with shelves that followed the pattern of the stairs, breaking off at longer intervals the further down the wall it went. The highest and shortest was the shelf where Bubba stashed the treats she had bought for when the grandchildren would come up from London. Always among her little collection was a bar of white chocolate.

The front door opened and closed quickly: Zaida's hallmark – for Zaida was a military man who had sat in the trenches during WW1 and had adopted the army's habits for life. He walked through the kitchen door still wearing his grey hat with his trench coat over one arm. He was a short man with a grey beard that was carefully groomed. "I say dear, there's quite a wind going."

"I hear it. Go get ready for supper, I'll be serving soon."

Nearing the stove he opened the various pots and inhaled. "Ah yes," he said, winking at his grandson, "that's the stuff to feed the troops!" Smiling at his own remark, he left to ready himself for the evening meal.

Later that evening, when the little ones had been put two to a bed – for that is how they slept when they came up to Manchester – Kasriel's mother, Mrs. Knecht, sat down heavily on one of the brown upholstered armchairs in the living room. The wind had picked up from the afternoon and was now howling. The neat hedges that formed the

Continued on page B19

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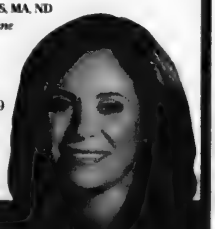

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B'H Elusive Elijah

Continued from page B18

fence around the front and back gardens swayed under its force. The rose bushes that Zaida cared for with the tenderness of an old English squire squeaked as they were driven in the direction of the blasts.

"I don't know what I am to do," the mother worriedly remarked to no one in particular. "Kasriel's bar mitzvah is less than three months away and I still have not ordered the tfillin. Last time I was more organized...."

"How come you've left it so late?" said Zaida, peering at her over his grey-rimmed glasses, his mathematics journal crinkling in his hands.

"Oh Dad, do I have to answer that question?"

"Well I suppose not...." he sighed, returning to his reading.

"Well, if you must know..."

"No I don't must know. I'm sure you had your reasons," Zaida said, apologizing to the world for having questioned his daughter. Bubba cleared her throat and sent a maddened stare towards her husband. When he did look her way she flashed a warning: "stay clear," which he heeded with the weariness of years spent under the storms of the women in his life.

"I suppose I should go back to Sampson," said Mrs. Knecht, "though I wanted to avoid going to him. My circumstances have changed so much since the last time."

"May I make a suggestion?" Bubba queried. "Why not just buy an ordinary pair from the Judaica stores? Why go to the expense of having them custom made? It's not as if you have the money right now. Maybe later in life he can upgrade...." But as she spoke, her daughter's face became more determined. With each word uttered, her eyes burned deeper and her lips knit closer.

"No! No son of mine will have just any tfillin. I went to great lengths to buy the best set for my oldest and I will not lower my standards, though it'll be harder now. Tfillin are the most important part of a bar mitzvah. It is not the party, but the tfillin that should be the focus. I will spend less on the party and will pay off slowly for the tfillin, but Mom..." she looked directly at her mother now, "...this is my decision, and I will deal with it."

A week later, back in London, Rabbi Sampson stood at his front door. "It's a bit late Mrs. Knecht. I'm not so sure that I can accommodate you this time, in such short notice." Rabbi Sampson was a big man who dressed in the traditional Jewish garb: white shirt and black pants, held up with suspenders, over which lay his tzitzit. On his head was perched a large black yamulke covering most of his flaming red hair; his red beard almost reaching his ample waist. "But come down anyway, we will see what we can do."

He invited her into the house and through a doorway that led to a staircase going down to the cellar. His head automatically bowed as he passed the lintel that otherwise would have hit him. Once down she stood riveted by the sight of a scribe's workplace. In one corner there were frames of stretched out cow skins, drying white and hard. Parchments rolled and ready were placed on shelves that lined the back wall. On an old wooden table, ink was being prepared in a slowly moving, softly humming mixer. Next to it there lay a bundle of feathers waiting to be made into quills. On the right were scrolls of the scriptures, finished and available for purchase. Above them were boxes that held various sized mezuzot to fit most doorways. To her left there were three or four Torah scrolls draped in yellowing woolen prayer shawls – talleisim. They looked like stacked people. Taped to his worktable were thin parchments containing the verses that would be placed inside the blackened boxes of the tfillin. He had been in the middle of writing. The very air breathed was of sacred antiquity. One spoke in respectful whispered tones when one entered such a place, so as not to awaken the spirits that seemed to lie all around.

"Nu, Rabbi Sampson, you've got to help me. I know it's late, but there was so much going on. You must have tfillin for my second son, Chabad tfillin, made of the best quality, just like I bought for my oldest."

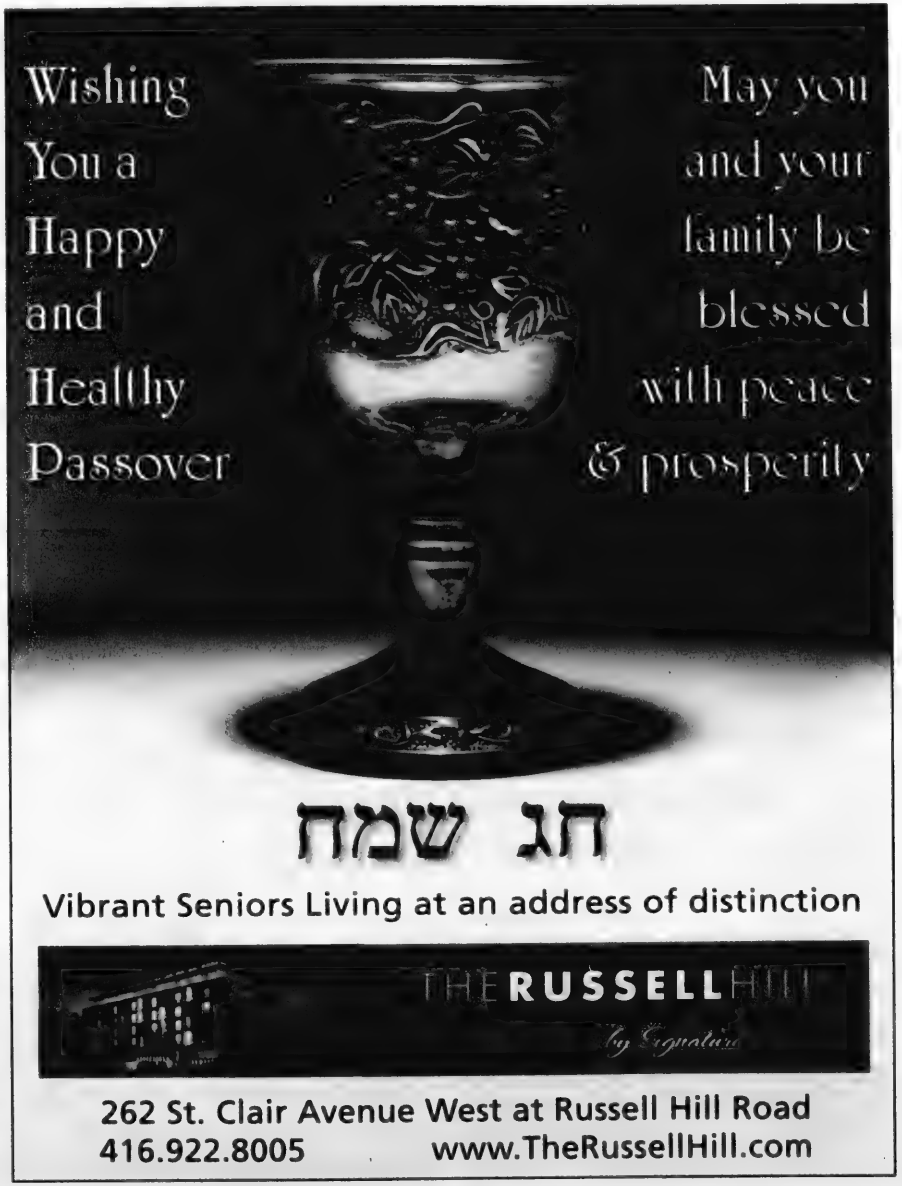
"Mrs. Knecht, I wish I could, truly I do. Let me see, let me see." With his right hand pulling on his red beard, the scribe's eyes scanned the highest shelves of his cavernous kingdom. He looked from one end of the room to the other. The lines above his nose, right between his eyebrows, deepened with frustration.

After a full minute, he gave a sudden chuckle of delight; focusing on a corner ledge that held a new looking pair. "Mrs. Knecht," he cried, "I think you may be in luck." He pointed a large finger towards the dust-covered shelf, "that pair, over there, is a very interesting pair. I would love to tell you who it belongs to, truly I would, but I have no idea! Let me explain. About six months ago, a gentleman walked in here and ordered a pair of the best Chabad tfillin that I could make. I told him the price and he agreed. He wrote his name and phone number on a little piece of paper and instructed me to call when the tfillin would be ready. Then he left. I have not seen him since. I have attempted to call the number many times but it is unlisted. I have asked around and no one has ever heard of him. It has all been very mysterious. So the tfillin have been taking up space on that shelf. I had all but forgotten about them. I am tempted to sell them to you. They are exactly what you ordered for your first bar mitzvah. What should I do?"

Neither of them spoke for a few minutes.

"I tell you what, Mrs. Knecht, if they are not picked up in a week...they are yours. What do you say?"

Her eyes filled. God had been protecting her all along. He had sent an angel - perhaps even Elijah the prophet - to order the tfillin in advance. Her son's dignity and commitment had been preserved.



My First Love

By Rose Romberg

Ku-ker-e-koo, crowed the rooster for the third time, like the final call of reveille. His outstretched wings flapped furiously, the reverberating sound diminishing gradually like a last drum roll.

It was Saturday! Ruth bounded off her straw mattress in the loft and climbed eagerly down the ladder. She tiptoed over the earthen floor, quietly placed a chair under the window, and climbed on it to look out. It was not yet daylight. But it was Shabbat. *She was going to meet Lazar!*

Down below, on the front lawn, she could barely make out the long tables covered with white oilcloth which she had helped set up yesterday, in preparation for the engagement party. The flowers she had gathered in the field and placed in baskets began to take shape in the emerging sunlight.

Through the open window, the morning breeze gently brushed her face, carrying the scent of heather and the pungent odours of the barnyard.

Ruth was content to be at her grandparents' farm. She adored her bubbie. Bubbie was kind and gentle, just like Papa. Ruth missed him terribly. *If only he hadn't gone away*, she thought. *America was so far away!*

But at this moment, standing at the window, nothing else mattered. It was Shabbat and Lazar was coming! She had been waiting all week for this day. Why were Bubbie and Zaide still asleep? Especially today!

Ruth was bursting with excitement and anticipation. How could Tante Gitel lie in bed, still asleep? Ruth knew she was lazy. Had she not overheard Mamma say more than once that Tante Gitel was lazy? But on *this* day! Ruth was tempted to shake her awake. In a few hours they were to start the procession to meet Tante Gitel's groom for the very first time. Ruth knew he just had to be wonderful with a name like that. Papa's name was also Lazar.

Ruth narrowed her eyes, peering at a distant figure approaching the house, wearing a long dark skirt which fluttered in the morning breeze, a black shawl draped over her head and shoulders. *Oh*, she thought, *it's Pani Krakkowni from the farm nearby.* She always came on Shabbat to milk the cow and feed the chickens and, during the winter months, to light the fire. She was nice. She always brought along a jar of sauerkraut. Not even Bubbie could make it as good.

At that moment, Ruth heard Bubbie whisper to Zaide in Polish, "Look how the child is anxious. I wonder how long she's been standing at the window?" Ruth understood every word.

This morning everything seemed to take forever. Ruth was too excited to eat her favourite Shabbat breakfast of stewed apples and plums, cornbread and warm milk fresh from the cow.

Breakfast was finally over. Dressed in Shabbat finery, at last they were on their way.

Rut knew that it was a Jewish custom, passed down through the ages, that a bride and groom must be escorted ceremonially by their respective parents to their first official meeting. Legend had it that if this meeting took place on the Shabbat, it was a double blessing.

Ruth skipped though the fields of purple heather and golden buttercups, where the narrow Vistula flowed and the tall emerald reeds formed a border along the water's edge. Bubbie had taught Ruth how to braid a doll with those hardy leaves— her first doll.

The forest trail they were about to enter was where she and Bubbie walked almost daily during the summer, picking blueberries and mushrooms. Here Ruth had discovered tiny speckled eggs in a bird's nest. She had pirouetted joyfully, in harmony with the symphony of mysterious sounds and smells.

But today all Ruth could think of was meeting Lazar. She skipped along the wooded trail, running from one relative to another, tugging at their clothing. "How much longer?" over and over, she queried. Then she saw people in the distance. She squealed in delight and ran forward. When she was close, she jumped into Lazar's arms, almost knocking him down. He hugged and kissed her, his dark brown eyes shining with merriment. Oh how handsome he was! Ruth felt her heart would burst as her arms clung possessively around Lazar's neck.

In this way they walked along, his parents alongside, talking and laughing in a language not familiar. The only word Ruth understood was *dziecko* (child).

Gently Lazar pulled Ruth's arms away and set her down so that he could greet his bride. Ruth was consumed by a feeling of jealousy foreign to her. At that moment she hated Tante Gitel.

The two families greeted each other with blessings while Ruth clung to Lazar's knees. He picked her up and carried her in his arms as they walked, chatting happily until they reached the farmhouse where the invited guests and family members met in warm embrace, and pre-nuptial festivities began.

At the first opportunity, Ruth climbed onto Lazar's lap. She curled up, her thumb in her mouth, like the four-year-old she was. Safely cradled in his strong arms, she was thinking, *when I grow up I will marry someone as handsome as Lazar.*

Content she fell asleep.

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Nomen....clature

By Rena Zayit

for my bubi
it was called *nishi*
that space between her legs,
perhaps a shortening of *knish*
or did she mean
nisht, no, not?

Yiddish, a language
not spoken in our home,
except for private parental parlance
and then most rudimentary
for parents Canadian born,
a home with 'down there's'
and lettered abbreviations

and thus, I was completely
ignorant of those other words
for my parts, *peergeh* and *schmundie*
and certainly not
a female dog's *klafte*
nor even *der mutteror*,
the mother place
with strange masculine pronoun

and yet, *schmuck*,
that Yiddish word for male parts
heard so often on television
left my father shaking his head
muttering "they think it just means fool"

we did not use that word
in my home, nor even *putz* for a self-made fool
alluding only to a small boy's *shmeckel*
nor the diminutive *petsele*

those other words,
Yiddish words for every penis personality,
I learned much later,
shvantz for male member or tail
and the redoubtable *schlong*
describing perhaps,
an appendage,
a long snake
or a troublesome wife

and yet I wonder
was it just a phallic delight
in linguistic adoption of those words
or prudery
where *dortn*....
the adverbial there...
still describes
a woman's private parts

Where Could the Matzo Be?

By I.B. Iskov

In the middle of our seder
with our whole family,
someone hid the afikoman.
Where could the matzo be?

My little brother David
asked the Four Questions
memorably.
He too was also wondering
where could the matzo be?

I thought it was behind the desk
or on the closet floor.
I looked in every bedroom
and through every dresser
drawer.

I tore the living room apart
and searched quite frantically.
I even looked in the piano.
Where could the matzo be?

I hunted in the kitchen,
but it wasn't there at all.
I searched the dining room as well
and up and down the hall.

It anyone can find it,
I'm sure it will be me.
We need it to end the seder.
Where could the matzo be?

Oh no! Little David has found it.
But where? He won't tell me.
When next year comes, I'll wonder
where could the matzo be?

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The Death and Life of the People and Land of Israel

By Henry Srebrnik

Millions were annihilated in Auschwitz
In Ashdod their descendants are reborn.
Belzec is a graveyard
But the sons of Isaac have rebuilt an altar in Beersheba
Only the massacred inhabit Chelmno
In Haifa Har HaKarmel stands guard over the city.
While Majdanek is a nightmare
Metula breathes the air of a reborn nation.
Sobibor no longer exists
In Safed Jews can dream anew.
From Treblinka to Tiberias is a straight line
The ashes of the dead have fertilized the fields of the living.

Schulz

By Kenneth Sherman

A blue tricycle
with a white seat.

A rose trellis.

A bumblebee the size of my small fist –

early images,

what Bruno Schulz called
"iron capital of the spirit."

Schulz, whose primary wish was
"to mature into childhood"

singled out and shot dead
while carrying home
a loaf of bread
on a street in Drohobycz,
November, 1942.

The thud
of mass footsteps
recedes into the distance

leaving Schulz
attentive to the smallest things:

seams of a tailor's dummy

dust
on a pinned butterfly's wings.

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Yerushalmi

By Jacob Spiero

Today I seem to have the face of a man I briefly stared at,
on a bus on Rehov King David in the fall of 1969.

I wear the same clothes, dark jacket, dark shirt,
rough tan trousers, dust-scuffed brown boots.

The mirror shows me, grizzled, unkempt,
stocky, stoic, almost seventy.

My face is the face my grandfather wore.
My parents, aunts and uncles swore the resemblance
is uncanny. My history is clear.

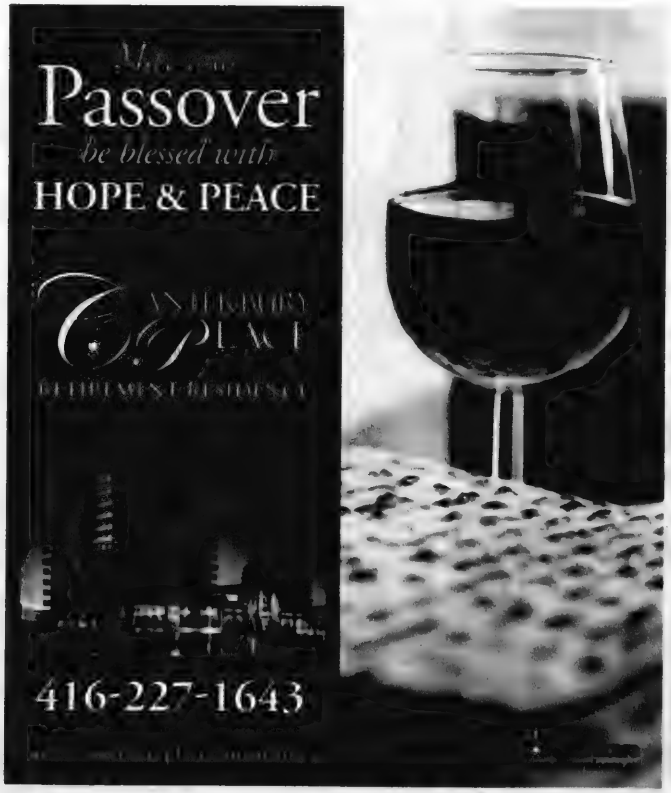
I was one of Titus' captives
marched through Rome in chains.
I collected all my things in a sack
to flee from Ferdinand and Isabella
along the Jew-choked roads.
I missed my fate in Kielce and Bialystock.
I hid in the forests by Kishinev.
Once, I was dazzled by Jabotinsky. I walked
for days to hear him dream. I trusted history.
And then I spent the war in, and outlasted
Bergen Belsen,

I sit on a park bench and look into the faces of strangers
as they pass and every once in a long while
I recognize myself.
I have the face of a man I briefly stared at,
on a bus on Rehov King David in the fall of 1969.

HaMakom

By Jacob Spiero

We meet in a small place, a shtetl shul,
beneath a tallis' embrace. There is a book
in my hands, but I do not need it.
The text is a jail, behind its black bars
the mind wanders, behind the music
of the words, the meaning is obscure.
Some say the words themselves are
prayer. Some say the emptiness behind them
is the God who deigns to meet you there,
dares you, some say, dares
your heart, to be without its meaning,
to come unrooted as a tree would give in
to the wind, a leaf would float to the sea.



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A Blessing in Disguise

By Sharon Yale

Sometimes the story goes like this:

Many years ago, in the village of Bobrovnic, (although some people say it happened in Piltsk, or possibly Garbatke) there lived a very poor widow who had one sickly child, a son. Somehow, the widow eked out a meagre living taking in sewing. It happened, during a very harsh winter, that the widow found herself one bitter afternoon with very little wood for the fire, one small measure of grain in the pantry, and only a few teaspoons of oil left. Oh, yes, and it was almost Shabbos.

What could she do? How would she feed her poor boy (who had a runny nose, and was tucked up in bed), not to mention herself? Just then, there was a resounding knock on the flimsy wooden door of her drafty cottage. Whoever could it be? There was only one way to find out, of course.

The widow fearfully opened the door, and a huge, icy blast blew into the already chilly room. A large figure in a tattered brown cloak stood there, shivering. It was an old, grey-bearded beggar who looked even poorer than the widow herself, as he huddled outside in the snow, a wooden staff in his hand.

"I've travelled all through Bobrovnic," he moaned, "and can find no one who will take me in over Shabbos. Please, missus, will you let me in?"

The widow hesitated only briefly. True, the stranger looked unappealing, but she had been taught to pity those less fortunate than she was (not that there were too many people who fell into that category in Bobrovnic). Still, perhaps a proviso was in order. "I will happily share what I have with you," she said, "but I have barely enough to feed my son and myself. I've got a handful of flour and a spoonful of oil, and only a few twigs of firewood left."

The bedraggled stranger had already elbowed his way inside, and was shutting the door against the wind before she had finished speaking. "You have plenty of firewood," he remarked, nodding at the blazing fire on the hearth. It was true. The fire had suddenly grown to a bright flame, and the cottage was starting to feel warmer already. The widow stared at it in surprise. In the meantime, the stranger had pulled up a stool in front of the fire and was warming his chapped hands.

"Why don't you make a nice challah for Shabbos?" he suggested, nodding at the kitchen.

Exasperated, the widow shook her head at him. "I just told you, we haven't much flour or oil. Barely enough for soup mandlen." The stranger just smiled encouragingly at her, and indicated the kitchen once more. The widow pulled out her pans and bowls, and with a sigh, opened the jar of flour. Strangely, there seemed to be more in there than she was expecting. Perhaps it was enough for some flatbread. She took a spoon to try scraping the last of the oil from the oil jar – but there was at least a cupful in the vessel! As she poured the flour into the bowl, she found there was more than enough for two large loaves.

Within the hour, the widow, her son and the beggar were able to sit down to a meal. What it lacked in variety, it made up for in quantity. And didn't the children of Israel live on manna alone for 40 years? It was good to go to sleep with a full belly, in a warm house, with the smell of fresh bread lingering in the air.

The old man spent Shabbos with the widow and her son. On Sunday morning, when the widow arose, the stranger was gone. On the stool by the fire were an old wooden chest and a note. The chest was filled with gold coins. The note said, "The owner of a kind heart is never poor. But a little money never hurts. Thanks for dinner. Elijah."

Okay, maybe there wasn't a note. But who else could perform such a miracle?

Now, the story I heard recently went like this:

(And I heard it from someone whose cousin wasn't there, but who knew a woman seated at a neighbouring table.) The Sisterhood at the shul was hosting a Shabbat Kiddush luncheon for people who had reserved by Tuesday (or at the very latest, Thursday afternoon. Okay, maybe there was still one spot left Friday morning, but that was really pushing it, and you shouldn't wait that long next time).

The Sisterhood president had done the seating arrangements, and even managed to fit in that annoying person who booked Friday morning. But wouldn't you know it, when everyone had taken their seats, there were still some no-shows, leaving empty chairs at some tables, including one right beside the president herself. She was checking her list to see who hadn't arrived, when an odd-looking man she didn't recognize wandered into the hall.

Continued on page B25

A Blessing in Disguise

Continued from page B24

"Can I help you?" the president said to the stranger, scrutinizing him carefully. She knew most of the shul members, and she had definitely never seen this fellow before. He wasn't even dressed for shul – had he even been in the service that morning? He was wearing patched grey corduroy trousers belted loosely around his rotund middle, a blue and orange paisley button-down shirt and a faded woolen vest.

"I'm here for the lunch," he said, beaming at the president. His small brown eyes shone from behind round, wire-rimmed eyeglasses.

"Did you reserve in advance?" she asked.

"Oh, certainly," he assured her, nodding emphatically. The president knew this couldn't be true. She knew every last name on that list, even that pesky Friday reservation. Well, she would make sure she got this schnorer's name and would follow up after Shabbos. In the meantime, there was that empty chair at her table, and her friends were waiting for her. The lunch had been paid for by someone already, there was plenty of food, and she had been taught to be kind to those less fortunate than she was.

"Come with me," she sighed, and led him to her table. Her friends looked up with interest at the eccentric little man.

"Would you like to hear a funny joke?" he asked brightly, as soon as Kiddush and the motzi were finished.

The people at the table were a polite bunch, and they murmured their assent. He then proceeded to tell a very dull story that had no punchline. He followed that up by completely monopolizing the president's attention for the rest of the luncheon, asking many questions about the shul and the local Jewish community. The president became convinced that the stranger, who said she could call him Eli, was from out of town – possibly a sightseer out on a day pass from some Orthodox yeshiva (she formed this impression from the number of times he completed his sentences with "*Baruch Hashem*", not your typical conversational adjunct at a Conservative congregation).

The president tried to confirm her theory by direct questioning, with little success. "Do you live near the shul?" she asked. No, he did not.

"What do you do for a living?" He explained rather vaguely that he worked for a very large organization as a forecaster. She got the impression he had something to do with the stock market, or possibly a major Jewish charitable foundation that had fallen on hard times.

The president's friends were throwing her glances of sympathy for her captive state, but none of them was successful at diverting Eli's attention from her. To be honest, they were preoccupied with their own conversations, and didn't really try that hard. As soon as dessert was served and benching was completed, Eli thanked the president warmly, murmured something about hoping to see her next Passover, and slipped away.

A week after the luncheon, an envelope arrived at the shul office, addressed to "The Sisterhood President". Inside there was a lottery ticket, and a note. The note said, "The owner of a kind heart is never poor. But a little money never hurts. Thanks for lunch. Eli."

Of course, it wasn't a winning ticket. But then, the president didn't really need the money. Still, she felt quite touched by the gesture.

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A Traditional Treasure

By Sheila Madan

Pesach;
Spring, the rebirth of a season and the perpetuity of life;
the evolving yet forever enduring existence of the Jewish people.

Our seder; humbled and grateful are we for this privilege, not to be taken for granted but to be embraced with awe, joy and love.

As we observe and appreciate the beauty and brilliance of our traditional seder table, we are able to clearly apperceive that it can never compete with the lustrous glow in a grandparents' eyes, brimming with tears, expressing loving pride and adoration as their grandchildren recite the "Four Questions".

We listen, with reverence to our adored "Zaida" at the head of the table dutifully and passionately retelling the story, reciting the familiar passages from the Haggadah; his concentration broken only by the sporadic clatter of an infant grandchild clanging a spoon playfully upon the tray of her highchair and the giggles of the older children impatiently waiting to find the cherished Afikoman. Eagerly we anticipate the repetitiousness and familiarity year after year as our children excitedly search for the Afikoman; we derive pleasure in their delight when the treasure is discovered and the youngest members of the family joyfully receive their reward.

As we nurture and rejuvenate these traditions time and time again, we truly comprehend deep in our heart and soul that riches cannot replace nor can words truly express the joy in our heart; the comfort of the soul and the aura of peace, closeness and continuity that surround and embrace the seder.

The seder shall forever be an eternal privilege to partake of; truly a treasure of our tradition to be cherished.

A Subtle Blend

By Mark Elliott Shapiro

I am a subtle blend
Of east and west
Canada and Israel
Montreal and Toronto
French and English
Hebrew and English

My children are a subtle blend
Of east and west
Sabras who are
Ashkenaz and Yemen
Canada and Israel

My wife Varda of blessed memory
Was a subtle blend
Of east and west
Chabad and Yemen
English and Hebrew

After living in Israel for so many years
I have roots in my Jewish homeland
And in Canada where I was born
Where I grew up

And the language I use every day is a subtle blend
Hebrew and English
Blended but distinct

The ingathering of the exiles here in the State of Israel
Is a subtle blend
Mizug galuyot
Jews from Ethiopia and Jews from Russia
Jews from France and Jews from Iraq
Jews from everywhere

And they all turn to the Western Wall
From the four points of the compass

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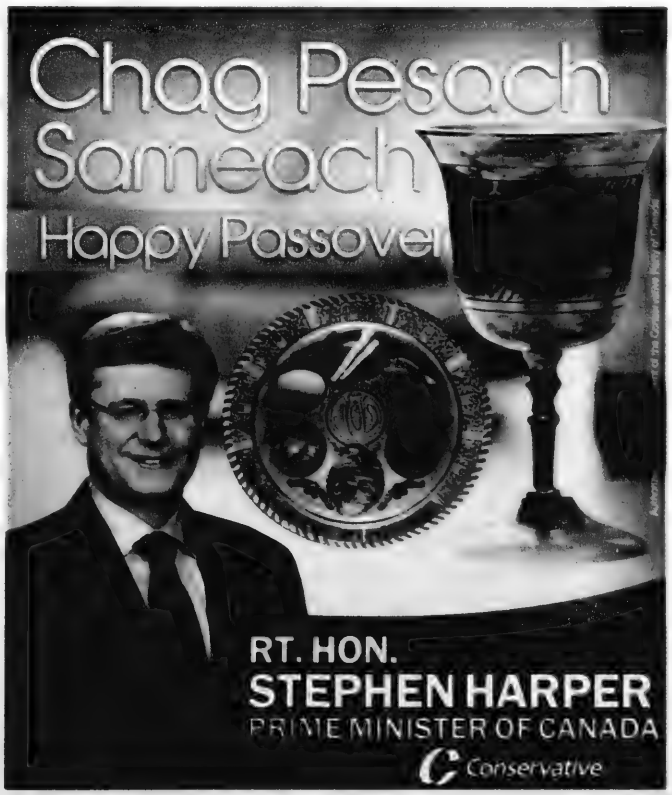

I Can't Cook?

By Alvin Abram

For more than two years, first as a friend and then as my finacé, Marilyn got her hooks into me by her cooking. She would serve tantalizing culinary dishes that smelled delicious, tasted exquisite and were a picture of edible perfection whenever I ate at her home.

My mother and future mother-in-law kept kosher kitchens. My mother was one of the original fast food chefs – if the food wasn't burned – it wasn't cooked. My future-mother-in-law on the other hand was a cook. She lauded her daughter's culinary accomplishments, saying, "Marilyn made this" or "Marilyn cooked that" and Marilyn would shyly look away and place the delicacy in front of me and leave without saying a word, to retrieve something else from the kitchen. I was in ecstasy – I was marrying a cook.

These meals all took place *before* we married. I stress the word, "before". When we married, we spent three glorious weeks in Florida and on the day of departure, prepared to return to a life of love and bliss. Marilyn appeared to have difficulty packing. Her face screwed up into a look of pain and tears dribbled down her cheeks. "Hey honey, don't cry. We had a great time and some day we'll come back." I put my arms around her and give her a hug, but Marilyn pulled away from me, covering her face with her hands. "Come on honey, it's time to go home, and I have to return to work. Everything will be fine."

"Don't be mad at me, Alvin," she said, her voice muffled by her hands.

"Why should I be mad? We had a great time." A feeling of trepidation came over me. "Why are you crying?"

"I don't want you to be mad at me when I tell you," she squeezed out from between her fingers and then after a few false starts, she blurted out: "I can't cook!"

"What!" I exclaimed, not understanding the statement.

Very softly, she repeated, "I can't cook. My mother always did the cooking and I got the credit. I can't cook. My mother never let me do anything."

It took a few minutes for the words to sink in. I loved her meals – that weren't her meals. "It's all right, Marilyn," I found myself saying. "We'll learn together," and from that moment on began the adventures of Marilyn learning how to cook and me trying to keep the food down.

We rented a walk-up apartment in a three-storey building on Wilson Avenue. We were furnishing the apartment and I was about to climb up a ladder to hang the drapes. It should be noted that I possess 10 thumbs and none of them function as a unit. For me to even consider hanging drapes is in itself a major mental undertaking that takes months of preparation and six or seven escape clauses so that I can change my mind. Marilyn was doing her bit and although I lacked co-ordination of my limbs, I consented to *try* – the key word is "try."

I climbed the ladder with exaggerated reluctance and faced my obstacle – the bar that the drapes hang from. As I made my first move towards the bar, Marilyn's voice exploded throughout the room in a tone of total exasperation. "It's not working! . . . It's not working!

"It's not working!"

"What's not working?" I asked glad not to have to challenge the bar.

"The hot dogs."

"What hot dogs?"

"These hot dogs."

"Just a minute, I'm coming down." I was glad to escape the bar and the ladder. I entered the kitchen to see Marilyn with her hands on her hips staring into a pot on the stove.

"The hot dogs are not cooking. There is something wrong with them," Marilyn said.

I moved closer and stared into the pot. "Marilyn. You can't boil hot dogs without water," I stated, pointing to two lonely hot dogs lying next to each other, naked and without water to cover them.

"A lot you know," she answered. "The box this pot came in clearly says that this container is a waterless pot."

I knew Marilyn was serious, so I just asked, "How do you make soup?"

"Tonight's dessert will be special," Marilyn said with unexpected enthusiasm. She beamed from ear to ear at whatever she had prepared.

"What did you make?" I asked, fearful of whatever she said.

"Jello," and went to the refrigerator and brought out a bowl of red Jello. I scooped out a large portion of the red, wiggly substance with my spoon and placed it onto my plate where it quivered.

"Looks like Jello," I said. With the caution of previous experiments, I carved a small piece from the quivering mass and slowly placed it into my mouth. "It's a bit stringy," I said as I chewed. "There's something wrong with it. It's supposed to dissolve in your mouth, not become chewing gum."

Our personal relationship took a dip.

A week later, Marilyn placed another container of yellow Jello in front of me. "Try this and tell me if it's any better," she said.

I scooped out a portion and plopped it into my mouth. "Same thing, Marilyn. There's skin on the top. Something is wrong. Did you follow the instructions on the package carefully?"

Continued on page B28

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Chag Sameach to our friends and family
in the Jewish community

From Bob Rae and Arlene Perly Rae,
and the Liberal Party of Canada

Libéral

I Can't Cook?

Continued from page B27

The room turned chilly as Marilyn gave me a hard stare. She went over to the cupboard and returned with an unopened box and pointed to the instructions. "That's what it says and that's what I did," she answered jabbing her finger into the instructions.

I read the instructions. "If you followed these instructions, then there shouldn't be any skin," I stated.

"I followed the instructions," she emphatically stated. A look of frustration replaced the hostility that was there.

"Show me what you did," I retaliated.

Marilyn brought out a bowl. Opened the package and poured the contents into the bowl.

"So far, so good," I chirped.

Picking up the bowl, Marilyn went over to the sink and opened the hot water tap and let the water run for a few minutes.

"What are you doing?" I asked already knowing the answer.

"I'm doing what the instructions say. Pour hot water and mix thoroughly."

I tried not to laugh as I explained the instructions.

A few months later, Marilyn perfected her Jello-making and showed me the instructions on the packages she had bought that day. The instructions had been changed from hot water to boiling water. She said she wrote the company a letter and told them what had happened.

There is nothing more definitive than someone hell-bent to prove that she is right when she is wrong. Marilyn decided to make a chocolate mousse. We were going to host a large party and the chocolate mousse would be her crowning achievement. To prepare for this auspicious event Marilyn made a chocolate mousse for the family and achieved success. She made another one, which surpassed her first and her tasters raved about her ability to turn powder into baking power.

However, the night before the big party, Marilyn prepared the ingredients and left it in the refrigerator overnight as on her previous preparations. Needless to say, the evening was a huge success. The time had arrived to lay out the dessert and Marilyn busily began decorating the dining room table with cakes, tortes, cookies, pies and her chocolate mousse. Our friends converged into the room and immediately filled their plates with samples of everything that was on the table. When the big spoon was put into the chocolate mousse – out came chocolate goo.

Marilyn was embarrassed.

The next day, Marilyn made another chocolate mousse to see if the results would be the same. It didn't make any difference to Marilyn that our friends had demolished the chocolate goo. That was not important. To Marilyn, perfection was all that counted and chocolate goo is not chocolate mousse. The results were another bowl of chocolate goo.

Frustrated? Definitely.

What went wrong? After checking over the recipe several times, nothing could account for the chocolate goo. She telephoned General Foods and related the story to the consumer division and asked if they could solve the mystery of the chocolate goo. They told her to make another mousse and bring it to the consumer department to show them what was happening. They would test the mousse and hopefully a remedy could be found.

Marilyn prepared another chocolate mousse and placed it in the refrigerator. The next day, she tested the chocolate mousse and declared it chocolate goo. She placed the huge goblet on the passenger seat of her car and with due diligence for her precious cargo drove slowly to the General Foods offices. She parked her car in a lot near the building, removed the chocolate goo and with the stares of everyone she passed, marched down the street carrying her precious cargo as if it were a rare and precious artifact. Needless to say the stares she received suggested that some thought they were witnessing some "looney tune" carrying what they interpret as an item best left in the bathroom where it belonged.

She entered the building feeling ridiculous and was considering changing her mind, but her stubbornness prevailed and she offered the exhibit to the consumers division representative for testing. Armed with several spoons, the chocolate goo was virtually attacked by those in the department. "Our research department will analyze the contents and get back to you shortly," was the decision.

Three days later a gentleman from the research department called re: "runny mousse" problem. Diagnosis: undercooking the chocolate pudding. Remedy: cook a little longer until rapid boiling occurs. Not only did they solve the problem, but they enjoyed the chocolate goo. Much to Marilyn's surprise, two days later, a large box was delivered to the house containing several of the General Foods products and a beautiful letter thanking Marilyn for the delicious mousse. This experience had a good mousse ending.

To tell you the truth I thought the chocolate goo was delicious.

It is impossible to forget the spaghetti with garlic dinner in which the garlic top opened and too much spilled onto the spaghetti. Marilyn chose to thoroughly mix the garlic into the spaghetti and served it to me. The result became a hot issue of discussion after I could regain my voice.

Needless to say the roast beef that had the same elasticity as bubble gum became a jaw breaker because it was impossible to swallow. The flavour seemed to last as long as you chewed, but it was not practical to digest.

Another time, eating kosher Chinese something-or-other, I pushed the cooked vegetables into my mouth that appeared to have died in the steamer while Marilyn watched. My agreement with her was that I would eat anything once, no matter how bad. If there wasn't an appreciable improvement the next time, I could refuse it. This was the first time. I ate – she didn't.

There were many horror stories to follow, but the upside is that now she is a gourmet cook. She can prepare meals equal to any good restaurants and has given her recipes to some. Her baking is as good as any fancy bakery and made to my tastes. The down-side is obvious. I gained weight.

Best Wishes for a Healthy and Happy Passover

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Wishing you and your family a happy & healthy Passover

Mari Rutka

your TDSB school trustee for Willowdale

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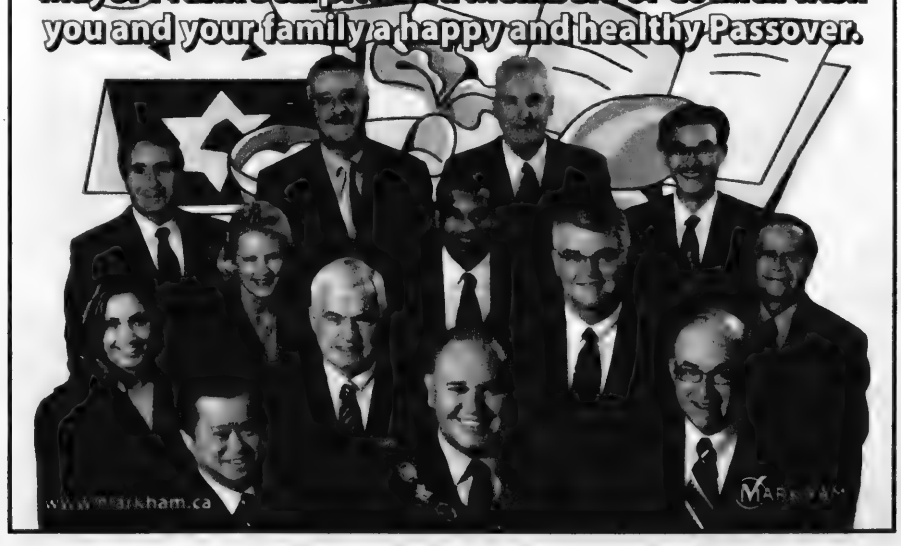
Toronto District School Board

Mayor Frank Scarpitti and Members of Council wish you and your family a happy and healthy Passover.



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The Four-tunate Son

By Harold Pupko

Every Passover, for too many years, Aliyah Oylem-Goylem asked herself the same four questions:

How did I allow myself to get into this mess?

What right does one moment have to change all of time?

Why is love so unreasonable?

How long can I keep the secret?

She resolved that this Passover would be different.

This year, she would free herself from those questions, and unburden herself of a weight that seemed heavier than all of the charoset ever produced in the history of mankind.

She decided to begin with the secret.

The rusted sign that welcomes people to the town of Farblondjetville says: "POPULATION, 1028".

What the sign doesn't say is: "JEWISH POPULATION, 2".

Aliyah was the only person in town aware of the two Jews, whose existence served in her mind as a microcosm of Jewish presence globally. Emmett, her six-year-old son, was blissfully oblivious to his matrilineal inheritance. Aliyah's over-protective maternal instincts had repeatedly blocked her from changing his world forever by exposing his Jewish status to him. However, the burden of responsibility that comes from carrying thousands of years of Jewish history pressured Aliyah into revealing the truth to Emmett. She was just not sure as to how to break it to him.

Sitting in the kitchen pondering her dilemma, she found inspiration in the dish rack.

"*Ma nishtana ha-ladle hazeh*", she chuckled to herself.

Weeks later, she was ready.

On a prematurely warm spring afternoon, Aliyah busied herself over the stove and created a storm of scents designed to pull her son into the kitchen upon his arrival home from school.

That moment arrived.

"What smells so good?" asked Emmett, as he bounced through the doorway.

Aliyah's instinct told her to respond with the word "freedom," but instead she stuck to her script.

"Dinosaur soup," she replied.

The look in Emmett's eyes told her all that she needed to know. Her son had fallen for the bait.

"Dinosaurs are extinct. There's no way we could be having dinosaur soup. Show me what you are talking about."

His mother smiled the smile of a gifted grifter. She walked over to the pot on the stove, plopped in the long ladle, and removed a strange and mysterious object from the pot.

"What is that?" he inquired.

"A matzah ball, my dear son."

As she returned the ball to the pot, Aliyah continued the lesson.

"In this pot of soup are matzah balls, created in honour of the story of Passover, or Pesach, as our ancestors the Jews call it in our native tongue."

Emmett couldn't contain his curiosity.

"What is the story of Passover?"

His mother was quick to reply.

"There are many stories of Passover. Please be more specific in your questioning."

Emmett scratched his head, hoping for some inspiration.

"OK, what do dinosaurs have to do with Passover?"

His mother seemed pleased, maybe too pleased.

"In the beginning, God created the Earth in six phases. Each of those phases lasted millions of years, but for the sake of our story, we will call each phase a day. On the morning of the sixth day, He created the dinosaurs, and let them roam freely over the planet. Magnificent beasts, they were a beauty to behold. God loved watching them, and in doing so lost all sense of time and self.

"The angels marveled at the variety, the simplicity and the power of the dinosaurs. However, later that day, they expressed concern to God about one of those creatures, the one they called the Tyrant King, known to you as Tyrannosaurus Rex.

"The angels' main job was to sing songs of praise affirming the Creator of All as King of the World.

"The Tyrant King was throwing them off key.

"They urged God to destroy T. Rex because it acted as a haughty imposter to the true King of the World.

"The Creator of All, however, was reluctant to destroy his handiwork, and deferred responding to their request.

"The angels, embittered by God's failure to immediately act upon their demand, ramped up their pleas and insisted that not just T. Rex, but all of the land-based dinosaurs be destroyed.

Continued on page B30

The Four-tunate Son

Continued from page B29

"The Almighty was saddened by the hardening of their position.

"God designed T. Rex to have the strongest bite of all of the creatures that He had ever created, but He soon discovered that the bite of angels was the most painful.

"Stuck between His love of the dinosaurs and His love by the angels, God fell into a state of T. Rex vex.

"As the day progressed, the urgency and intensity of the angelic chorus started to get on God's nerves. Overwhelmed by their relentless chatter, He finally agreed to their demand to trigger the mass extinction of the earthbound dinosaurs, but not before, unbeknownst to the angels, he secretly preserved the memory of his beloved T. Rex by embedding its DNA into the DNA of a flying dinosaur.

"And within that imperfect moment, the angels finally desisted from their cacophony of complaint.

"When silence re-emerged and God was able to once again think clearly, He regretted his decision, but realized that He could not renege on his promise to the angels.

"God asked himself four questions:

How did I allow myself to get into this mess?

What right does one moment have to change all of time?

Why is love so unreasonable?

How long can I keep the secret?

"At that moment, Metatron, chief scribe of Heaven, arose from his throne and addressed God:

'Kel Shaddai, shamor vezachor bedeeboor echad."

Emmett giggled at his mother's attempt to imitate Metatron with a deep and booming voice. She sounded like a televangelist speaking in tongues.

Aliyah continued channeling Metatron, but reverted back to English

'To answer Your questions, You must remember that You designed the world to contain healing forces. The All Knowing is protected from all You know by two such forces, forgetting and limited recall. That is why You created me as Your chief scribe, to help You remember to remember. If You check Your blueprint for the universe, You will see that the divine plan requires that you smash an asteroid into the Earth to destroy the land-based dinosaurs. Let me remind You that major collisions carry your creative fingerprints. Do You not remember how You crashed a celestial body into the Earth to create the moon? Can you not see the majestic mountains that You created through Your vision of colliding tectonic plates? Wake up Your imagination to remember Your ultimate plan: the creation of the only animal with the potential to imagine You.'

"God, having been reminded of His ultimate creative task, sighed a sigh, the force of which flung an asteroid towards the Earth. The era of the dinosaur ended with a collision between the celestial and the terrestrial, and with the shedding of a few divine tears. "

At that moment, Aliyah's mind drifted to contemplate the power of collisions to both create and to destroy. She remembered how her life path had collided out of the blue with that of her late husband's to create a blessed marriage. She briefly relived the horror of watching from the passenger seat as her husband's life was ended by a drunk driver. She recalled how, as a result of that impact, Emmett prematurely entered the world, and she reflected on how the arrival of her "little moon" brought a much-needed stability to her life, which was now permanently tilted on its axis. She paused to consider the whereabouts of the organs that her husband had donated as his final act of kindness.

Emmett's voice crashed into his mother's trance.

"What has this got to do with the Jews?" he asked.

His mother choked back a tear and tried to regain her composure.

"God remembered how He had forgotten his own plan, so He took Metatron's advice to guard his memory with a reminder, and envisioned the matzah ball for that purpose. God chose the Jewish people to be bearers in perpetuity of that reminder. We were given the responsibility to remind God every Passover of memory's paradoxical power to both enslave and to free. We do so by making and eating matzah balls. In order to more fully appreciate the lessons embedded in those balls, you have to understand how they are made.

"First, you have to understand that God loves the number four. The world only exists because of four forces dancing together in perfect harmony. Gravitational forces, electromagnetic forces, weak and strong forces all interact to create the only planet in the universe that can sustain life as we know it. Because of his love of four, God commanded that matzah ball be made of at least four ingredients.

"The first ingredient is finely ground matzah, which is the closest edible substance on Earth resembling the material that makes up the asteroid that is central to this story.

"The second ingredient is the egg of the chicken. When God destroyed the dinosaurs, he secretly embedded DNA from T. Rex into the DNA of the ancestors of the chicken. God is the Great Puzzle Maker, and one of His greatest pleasures is to share in the moments when humans solve the puzzles that He has weaved into the fabric of His creation. Imagine God's feelings of relief and joy when scientists like your father uncovered the secret connection between the humble chicken and the majestic T. Rex. It is only through the art of asking questions that the magical and the mystical can be uncovered. That is one of the key lessons of Passover.

"The third ingredient is carbonated water. This represents the carbon dioxide that fuels the breath of storytelling. That breath allows me to tell you the story of Passover the way your father would have told it. Even though he is physically absent, his presence can still be with us through the power of storytelling.

"Passover is all about the telling of stories. Stories of what once was, stories of what someday will be, and even stories of what never was but will always be. Stories of freedom lost and stories of freedom gained. An eternal haggadic process, where the same story is repeated annually, but with effort, heard differently, every year.

"The last ingredient is flavouring, the most important being the love that the cook puts into his or her work. This represents the love and respect that God expects each of us to demonstrate to all of His creations. That is why He commands us to love four times in our Bible. And within the quartet of verses containing the word ve'ahavta, you will find the essence of our people.

"So there you have it, the story of Passover, or more correctly, your first of many Passover stories to come."

Aliyah then sat her son at the table and presented him with a huge bowl of soup containing four enormous matzah balls.

Emmett eagerly pressed his spoon into a matzah ball, but surprisingly the matzah ball pressed back with an indescribable firmness.

Emmett swallowed his lesson with enthusiasm and quickly emptied the bowl's contents into his stomach.

Within moments, it felt as if he had swallowed an asteroid.

"I feel kind of funny," Emmett mildly moaned, soup dripping down his chin, as he turned to his mother for comfort.

"My dear son, what you are feeling is the full weight of Jewish history pressing from within. Welcome to the tribe."

"The tribe? Huh?" responded a somewhat bewildered young man.

"Judaism," answered Aliyah with a loving smile.

"Any questions?" she asked.

"Yes, I have four," chuckled Emmett, hoping that his intuitive response would relieve some of the tension that he had noted in his mother's face throughout the evening.

Aliyah felt her soul elevated by the response.

It appeared that she was raising the Wise Son.

She promised him that next year the matzah balls would be fluffy.

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Her Caregiver's *Ani Maamin*

By Chana Perman

A melody floats through the air,
It is the song of *Ani Maamin*
I believe with complete faith in the coming of Moshiach (Messiah) and although he may tarry, nevertheless, I wait every day for him to come

The song whirls its way into the ears of one precious soul, Leah

Leah, confined to a wheelchair
Leah, unable to respond with words
Leah, whose loving husband stands by with tears in his eyes
Leah's caregiver is African-American
She knows the Hebrew words of the song perfectly, and sings with emotion

It is a moment that wraps itself around me
This is Leah's favorite song
Its tune haunting
I recall the heartbreaking tale
Of the Modzitzer *Ani Maamin*
Composed by Rabbi Azriel David Fastag on the train to Treblinka,
Ultimately, making its way to the Modzitzer Rebbe in America
And here:
Leah, whose story I do not know
But whose song I hear
It was theirs
It is hers
And mine
This caregiver's *Ani Maamin*
About our caregiver, G-d in heaven,
I believe with complete faith in the coming of Moshiach
May it be speedily in our days

Untitled

By Molly Lerman

I stood before the Western Wall and cried
For all six million people who could not
I did not leave a message in the wall
But prayed for all the souls that God forgot

I placed my hand upon the wall
And I could feel the pain
How many times has this occurred...
Over and over again.

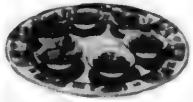
We are the chosen people
I often wonder why
Chosen by God almighty himself
Chosen to suffer and die.

Is there a lesson to be learned
For all the world to see?
Is it not time for peace on Earth
For all eternity?

I'll not return to the Western Wall
Until God shows the way
For intolerance and hatred to cease
Then I'll come back to pray.

Happy Passover

Wishing you a Chag Kasher v'sameach



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It Will Never Be The Same

By Sheila Madan

Passover approaches,
Our hearts ache with loss,
Reflecting on our wonderful seders;
Our beautiful seders of the past;
Together we would read the Haggadah;
Now, this is but a cherished memory;
It will never be the same.

Our seders were special; she made it so,
And we will miss her;
Her loyalty and commitment;
Her strength and her love;
We will miss her warm smile; her gentle heart;
Our hearts broken and aching;
A chasm; a void never to be filled;
It will never be the same.

Although it is a different time now;
For she is no longer;
What we once had is with us no longer;
We must persevere; we shall gather around the seder table;
Together we will read the Haggadah;
We will; and we must;
She would want it so;
It will never be the same.

We shall persevere;
And our lives will go on;
Eternally intertwined with beautiful memories;
As we gather around the seder table;
And together read the Haggadah;
It will be beautiful and it will be good;
It will be good;
It will never be the same.

Garden Story

By Mark Gordon

How can this be?
In tears, like a cork floating
on a welter of waves.
after reading that old garden story,
kicked in the gut
by his disapproval,
knowing that the curse
means war without end.

Yet I am grateful for this upheaval
in my bland flesh,
convincing me that I am
something more than dust,
more than a centipede
hunting its ribbon
of sun.

I have been drawn
through the twin hoses
of Adam's eye,
and Eve's lamentations.

I know too that the sun
has been tipped up-side-down
for my drinking
if I just edge my lips close
to that fountain of light,
drink deeply past the boots
the night wears,
that have carried me,
murder-wearied, from the start.

Best Wishes for a Happy Passover from Richmond Hill Council!

Mayor & Members of Council 2010-2014

Richmond Hill
Richmondhill.ca

Chag Sameach

Wishing you peace, good health, and happiness on Passover

Dr. Eric Hoskins
Member of Provincial Parliament for St. Paul's

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Peter Shurman, MPP - Thornhill

Wishing you and your family a Chag Sameach.
Happy Passover
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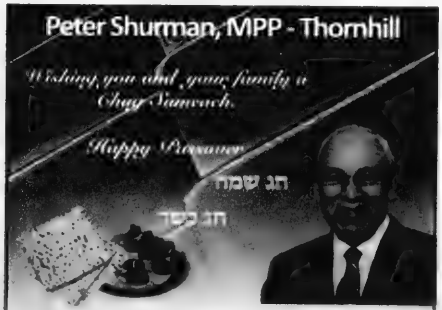

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Exodus in Tan

By Bruce Jacobs Davidovitch

Nothing fashions you younger than
Lying in the sub-tropical sun
On a February afternoon at Hallandale Beach
Chill long gone from the soles of your feet
Sun block crinkling in the folds of radiating skin

Nothing forges you older than
Lying in the sub-tropical sun
Watching wrinkled and leathery bodies warp
Ripen and lose elasticity submitting to
Sagging pigment and rising melanoma

But alas, it feels so good
Each pore drenched in UV
More sedentary, complacent and less able to rise
And seek protective shade and sunblock
Warnings scream within a frying brain

A hundred dermatologists' voices ride in forbiddance
But denial comes easy as soft ocean breezes
Sussurate like Temptation's whisper
It's alright and one more golden
Baked, basted and broiled hour is all you ask
For that tan line is a bragging right
Evidence acknowledging neither burn nor blister
Like the Anglo/Irish/Scandinavian
But darkening as a meandering desert wandering
Semite of biblical times

The essence of our people's second homeland
That southern portion of the Floridian peninsula
What Torontonian, Montrealer, New Yorker or Chicagoan
Did not trek I-75 ahead of a wintry cold front
Like the greatest Moishe ahead of the forging waters

En route to a Promised Land

His Time

By Suzanne Reisler Litwin

The child takes a deep breath and then begins
To follow the silver pointer along the old page
And sing ancient scripture of life lessons and God's words
Now is his time.

Years have past of all his Grandmen
Who arrived at this day to read and become
Greater men of our own, righteous and proud
Reading and learning of the better and true

But in the pew sits the Mother in tears
Overwhelmed with joy and pride of the son she carried
From this moment on he will become
Among the learned men before him in steed

For her he is still the softest skinned child
Whom she held and rocked through days and nights
All the love and care she gave and gathered
All that she hopes for his dreams to be

Watching him through her blurred watered vision
She sees the son so playfully young
This release of child to adult strikes a deep cord
A maternal soul understands this childhood loss

And so the great men chant the new member of this pack
Mazel Tov is spoken with taps on his back
A pulling smile is stretched upon her cold wet face
Happiness is glowing within this holy place

Deep down Mother reflects on the baby that was
The youthful hopes and dreams of warmth and sweets
Now is the time that her bird must fly
Now is his time to leave childhood ties.

Now is his time...

On behalf of the Ontario Liberal Caucus

chag Pesach sameach to the entire community

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Mike Colle
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Hon. Michael Coteau
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Authorized by the Ontario Liberal Caucus

Mount Sinai Morning Meditation

By Jennifer (Jinks) Hoffmann

Construction clamour nearby.
A siren on Bathurst Street.
A dog barks without cessation.
A neighbour mows the lawn;
his kid jumps on the trampoline.

Why then is there a silence
so lush, so enveloping
I almost cannot breathe?

Perhaps in the silence
You are praying we remember
we all stand at Sinai. Always.
Each of us only one letter,
of the Torah,
written in this place, not that.

Perhaps in the silence
You are praying we do not try
to change another's letter
to be the same as ours,
that *we* do not try to be
in a different place
in the Holy Book.

If we succeeded
there would be
no Torah.

Perhaps You are praying we know
the silence is filled
with Your love songs;
perhaps You are praying
we are drawn to reading
and re-reading the original score.

Perhaps You are singing my name
and asking me to remember
that to say a person's name
is to know them.

Water Music

By Dr. George Bernstein

Walking along the beach
In the dying of the light
I hear water music orchestrated

By a symphony of waves in
Harmony with a chorale
Of music of the spheres

God's baton arcs
Across the universe
As He conducts

From his galactic podium

The War

By Kenneth Sherman

She told me the village from which she came
was so small, if a horse stood on Main
its nose and its tail would stick out either end of town.
Still they came and burned the place down.

Wishing You a Happy and Healthy Passover

Jordan B. Zale
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We would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our patients, family and friends a healthy and happy Passover. And may we see peace in Israel and around the world.

חג שמח

Dr. Sharon Perlmutter
Dr. Tracy Berman

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Sterling Silver development corporation

Wishing all of our clients and friends a Happy Passover

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Alina Speaks

By Anita Lerek

Alina Szapocznikow Kallicz, Poland 1926 – 1973, Paris, France
Alina spent her teen years in the ghettos of Pabianice and Lodz, and in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. She helped her mother, a doctor, in hospitals at the various internment sites. She became a noted sculptor after the war. She contracted tuberculosis (infertility); then breast cancer to bone cancer, resulting in her death at 47. She was silent about her experiences in the Holocaust.

Alina Szapocznikow

Dear little stone, you are all I can touch right now. So sore.
When I hold you, I feel the stones in Pabianice, the gravel chips
blowing in the wind with the coming cold. In the park I'd make heaps of stone,
and bow down to you as if it was a holy place. Then I'd laugh and laugh, and run home
to tell my *tatoosh* (father) about my newest silliness. He died so young.
Good for him. Spared the tragedy.

I laugh now – yes, still laugh – but only inside. Hurts too much to move.
Around me everyone is so serious about my dying. I'm used to it.
I've been dying, and with the dying always. Seeing the dying saved my life.
It's OK. Everything is so vulnerable and fragile, really dying a bit every minute.
I see that. I mold that, to live forever. What more do I need to say?
Talk, talk, everyone says, even my dear Piotr. They beg me with their eyes.
If I started to talk I would never stop crying. Useless. Only for the weaker ones.
I need to work even now. Push, push, push my pencil to draw the phases of the invisible.
To forget some things helps me remember others.
What do they want
So much to hear? Listen to my work.

Little stone, I have carried you since Pabianice. You feel so heavy now.
I . . . I . . . I . . . am pain. Is this just another pain, another small death
that is my normal life, or is this something bigger? Small Bellies, Big Bellies.
How I used to climb onto my huge marble babies, and drill and hammer them
to life. So much fun, the quarries, Italy, mountains and mountains
of rock for me to control.

That was in 1968. Such a mania for life. New folds, new shapes,
new materials, polyester resin, plastic foam, engine parts. The drive to grow
life from my hands, imprint my body parts in fast hardening mass.
New times, old times. The old madness in Warsaw.
Feeling it encase me – Jid ("Jew").
Couldn't breath. Lost my studio on Brzozowa Street. Back home
to Paris, more student riots. I feel myself dying. My breasts feel tender.
First no - the doctors say there's nothing there. Then on to Italy,
to life, to the body's fullness. Keep playing, keep grieving.

Continued on page B36

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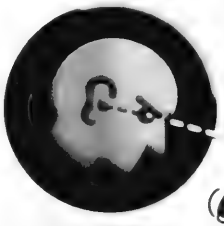

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Alina Speaks

Continued from page B35

...

Dear stone. I dream that my body is cut up, butchered. *Mamooshka* (mother) and I
working at the Pabianice ghetto hospital. Feb 1942. Germans ordering
medical examinations of all the Jews. Stamp faster and faster. "A" for the healthy
and "B" for the old and sick.

A
B B B B
B B A

I wake up dead.

Multiples all around me. I create a self-portrait with four growths of myself
flying out of my head. Lumps, obsessing breasts, smooth delicate breasts
with headless torso, locked in blackness; marble breasts tacked
onto a chest topped with a yellow blob; and my delicate long-stemmed flower breast that lights up as a lamp. I feel ... I feel .... I check myself in to the hospital In Paris. Second no - they find nothing. Six shows
in 1968. My smiles and works are everywhere. I have nothing to say to anyone.
Feel cold inside. I miss *mamooshka*. She'd know what to do.

...

On May 16, 1942, my 16th birthday, the sun cursed down on us Jews ejected from
our Pabianice ghetto. Closed for good. Of the population of 9000 residents, we
3500 "A's" were transported by trucks to the nearby Lodz ghetto. The "B's" we never saw again. Those were monster times.
Imagine. I didn't talk to Miroslaw, my brother, for the whole day because
he wouldn't let me go out that last night with my friends. Lodz, barbed wire
prison with drooling sewage. Watching everything, just watching, at the Children's Hospital,
watching the starving children, the dysentery, the typhus and the tuberculosis,
seeing tatoosh coughing everywhere. No medication. Watching Germans
raiding our hospital, rounding up all the young patients into trucks
like sacks of potato, while in the fireless cold - uncookable
potatoes rotted away. Strangers, diseased body parts, amputated lives. Horror and youth. I want to live so much, I write in my little yellow book. I seek out dark bushes,
nature's skin on my skin, on boy's skin. I trace lines in his wounds, imagining
the embrace of security for a moment. Around me life is slipping, undoing. To touch
your perfection, dear stone, to be your hardness, to remember our fiery ancestry.

...

They say my figures are becoming less steady, unsupported, mutilated,
wobbly bandaged mummies, dismembered legs, gashed hands, headlessness.
My Goldfinger sculpture, horrible, some say, showing thigh stumps with a car part clamping down the crotch.

January 19, 1969, on the third try, I receive my cancer diagnosis.

Continued on page B37

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Alina Speaks

Continued from page B36

...

My future is always worse than the hell I leave behind.
Out of Lodz. Time and trains, a blur. I am a body rolling
on noisy tracks. The train's skin is my skin, lashed
by storms and strip heat. The dark quarters are
blinding. I see only by touching. From boards
to metal bars I stab through to patches of window
pane. Too crowded to stand or lie down, I'm
suspended in between.

Auschwitz ... Breslau ... Hannover were scream stops,
nothing more. In the circle of
mamooshka, I patted her lips and chest trying to make
her coughing stop
as we travelled farther and farther away from all we
knew,
swallowed up inside the German belly, together.

Bergen-Belsen. A warehouse for the sick from other concentration camps.

We saw the heaping of bodies barely alive in the hospital and in the overflow tents.

We watched the inmates' organs exploding, losing limbs, losing blood, losing their lives.

Sometimes we had to give lethal injections to the very ill. Maybe better that way.

The evil eye of the Germans turned patient and caregiver to rock.

Dear stone, you had more feeling in you than me.

...

After the diagnosis, I am moved to commemoration. I wish to record my un-doing,
step by step. By freezing each stage of my body's pain and dying, I preserve
its memory and dignity.

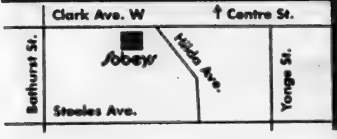
Dear stone. I wrench you out of me, and place
you with many others on the ground, as base for the objects that I have cast
from my own face. My faces, my tumors, stuffed with my mementos -
I arrange them forever. To endure the trauma, and to put it out there,
I realize now, is to free the spirit.

Dear one. Enter my magical space. Seek out my pain, my light; and yours.
Feel the connection. Don't be afraid. My lips are still. Come listen to my work.

Notes
Grateful Acknowledgement to –

- *Catalogue, Alina Szapocznikow, Sculpture Undone 1955 – 1972*, Elena Filipovic and Joanna Mytkowska, Mercatorfonds, MoMA, 2011
- *Body as Crisis, Representation of Pain in Visual Arts*, Marta Joanna Zarzycka, Ph.D thesis, June 25, 2007
- *Death Masks at MoMA*, Frances Brent, *Tablet Magazine*, November 29, 2012.

To all our friends, family and the entire Jewish community, we extend our warmest wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful Passover!



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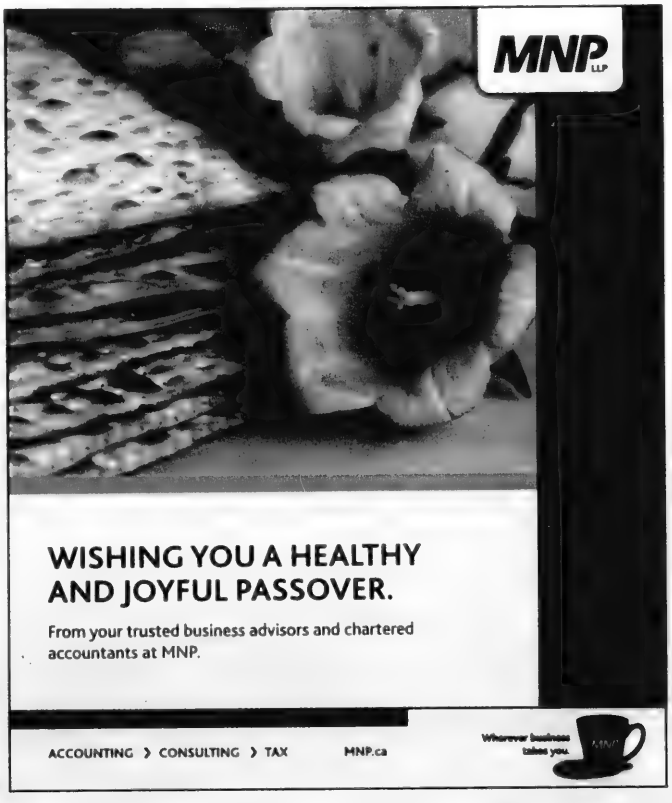
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Sometimes We Must Disobey

By Maurice Krystal

We were unpacking suitcases in our hotel room when my wife announced she planned to get arrested two days from now. I looked at her face hoping to see a little smile or grin but instead I noticed the hard-set jaw and determined glare. She took out her tallit bag and laid it on the bed.

"So should I rush to support you or should I pretend I don't know you?" I asked.

"You're free to do what your conscience suggests."

"I think I'll play it safe," I said, "just so I can bail you out of jail. One of us has to act responsibly."

We both laughed as we continued to unpack.

After an eight-and-a-half-hour flight from Montreal to Ben-Gurion Airport, I was suffering from jet lag. I'm not a good traveller and didn't sleep a wink on the plane. Judith did, even snored lightly the way I am used to hearing her. This was our second honeymoon trip to Israel, 30 years after our first. We were in a fancy hotel near the Zion Gate in the Old City. There was a Jacuzzi and air conditioning in our suite. Thirty years ago we stayed in a bug infested youth hostel. What remained the same was that unexplainable feeling, that as soon as the wheels hit the tarmac, we were once again home.

Judith is a long time vegetarian and the next afternoon we went to an upscale buffet style restaurant on Jaffa Street. It is not my style of food but I often bend to accommodate her. I do so because I respect her idealism, whether it involves food or fighting for worthy causes. We belong to an egalitarian congregation and when we joined my wife didn't just dip her toe into the water, but dived in and learned how to chant the Torah up on the bimah. Her only regret was that her parents did not live long enough to see it. So when she joined Women of the Wall more than a year ago in their struggle for gender equality at Judaism's holiest site, it didn't seem far-fetched.

After selecting our "rabbit" food we found a table on the outdoor terrace next to two gentlemen involved in an animated discussion. It was mainly in English and from the accents it seemed that one was American and the other Israeli. The younger, a man in his 30s, referred to the other, probably in his 60s, as uncle. They were talking about the planned demonstration at the Wailing Wall tomorrow. We listened attentively.

"This is not a religious or an equality issue Uncle," the young man said waving his arms and adjusting his kippah. "This is really about politics. They want to bring down the government by embarrassing us on the world stage."

"How can a small group of women gathered around the Wailing Wall wearing religious paraphernalia bring down a government?"

"Most of these women are foreigners. They are left-wing radicals. They insult Jewish traditions. Unlike the Diaspora, most Israelis are Orthodox and prefer the status quo."

"Moishe, your father would not be happy to hear this talk, God rest his soul. He wanted Judaism to unify the country, not separate it into so many divisions."

I stared at Judith as we listened to their disagreement over a two-state solution, how to deal with Iran, if Obama really supports Israel, how to deal with the new Egyptian government, and who is even a Jew. As we walked out Judith turned to me and held my arm.

"So much going on in such a small country."

"Yes," I replied, "That's democracy."

The next morning was Shabbat and at 9 a.m.the sun was a glowing orange ball above Jerusalem. The narrow streets in the old quarter were filled with people, many taking photos with their phones as the two-dozen women with prayer shawls marched in a tight bunch around one woman holding a Torah. Tourists paused in their frantic search for trinkets and bargains to watch the strange procession pass by. Some were even clapping as they realized what was happening.

I was behind the entourage of the Women of the Wall as they approached the entrance to the Western Wall plaza. I kept a careful eye on Judith, but keeping pace with her had become increasingly difficult as the crowd thickened.

The huge sandstone blocks on the lower levels of the famous wall reflected a warm orange glow. The plaza was packed with people waiting for the conflict to begin. There had to be over a hundred police of both genders standing in line. They were assembled in the plaza some 50 feet away from the wall. Behind them was an even larger group of journalists with cameras and elongated lenses aimed at the women approaching like rifles ready to shoot.

For all its importance the length of the ancient wall is no more than half the size of an American football field, and maybe one third that in height. There are tunnels under the ground level that show that the wall has stones many hundreds of tons in weight. What is not seen, as is often the case, is more impressive than what is obvious.

Metal grills separated the plaza near the wall into a women's and men's section. Black -garbed haredi men on their side of the Kotel barrier screamed and shook their raised fists as the women entered the plaza. I did not understand all their words, but I heard the word *kurve*, which I knew was the Yiddish term for prostitute repeated

Continued on page B39

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Sometimes We Must Disobey

Continued from page B38

a number of times. When some of them began hurling folding chairs over the barriers a number of the police rushed to keep them back.

One of the Women of the Wall began chanting the *Shema* and the female police contingent moved to stop the group's progress towards the wall. A female officer addressed the Torah-carrying contingent in English while another officer repeated the commands in Hebrew.

"You are under arrest for provocative action in a holy site."

"We will not stop," yelled the woman carrying the Torah. "I am a Jew, acting like a Jew, in a Jewish place."

Suddenly an order was barked out in Hebrew and the policewomen rushed the tallit-wearing women. I was caught in a crowd a dozen feet away. Two officers were trying to grab the blue and gold covered Torah but the woman holding it was refusing to give it up. Other officers grabbed her from behind, a melee ensued and I saw my wife's head grabbed in a headlock. Without thinking I rushed to her aid and pulled the arm of the officer who held her head. Suddenly I felt something hit the back of my head as the ground rushed up.

I was in a bed in a semi-dark room realizing someone was shaking and talking to me. I tried to get up but slumped back dizzy.

"Slowly sir," said a heavily accented male voice.

He held my arm and torso and slowly lifted me off the metal cot.

"Where am I?"

"You're in the Jerusalem central police station. You have been sleeping here for about two hours. Your wife is waiting for you on the other side."

He pointed to the end of the long room with some dozen beds against the wall, as we slowly walked towards a door.

Judith's frown quickly turned to a smile as I slowly approached with the officer holding me up. I sat next to her in a plastic chair in what looked like a waiting room. There was a buzz of many voices in many languages.

"Did I get clubbed?"

"Judo chopped. These Israeli female officers are well trained."

I felt the back of my head.

"Is anything broken?"

She shook her head.

"They were going to charge you with obstructing a police officer from carrying out their duty, but, when they found out you were only a protective husband, the charges were dropped."

The next day we were packing for a three-day visit to Eilat, to go snorkeling in the Red Sea. Judith had gone to settle the hotel bill and came back with a newspaper.

"Look at this, we made the front page."

"I'm not surprised, considering how many got arrested."

"That's not all. Netanyahu has asked Natan Sharansky to review the Wall's policy of not allowing women to pray with religious garb and he wants Sharansky to recommend changes."

She grinned and sat on the bed.

"So it was all worthwhile?" I asked.

"Religious principles don't change over night. There are two sides to every issue and in Israel, probably three sides. Nothing is simple, especially in this part of the world."

She looked at me.

"Was it worthwhile for you?" she asked.

I felt the back of my head.

"I'm quickly forgetting that it ever happened."

"Well, that's not good either."

A Contemporary

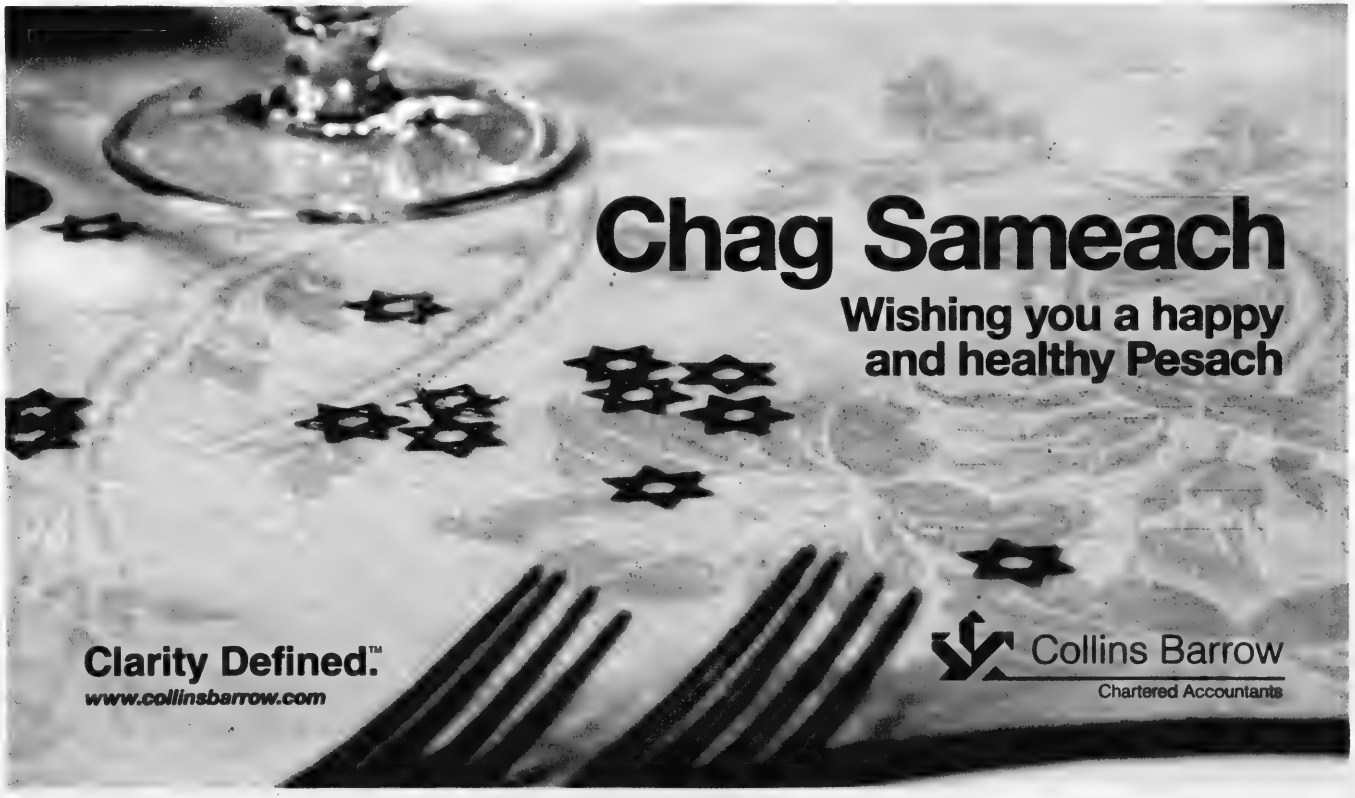
By Kenneth Sherman

After his wife left – she wasn't Jewish –
Took the kids and took up with – to his mind –
A no-goodnik – he became Lubavitch

And bought himself a Harley-Davidson.
You can see him early summer mornings
After prayers, accentuating the contradictions:

His engine screaming down sleepy streets,
Martial helmet and sacred fringes,
Denim vest and sweep of patriarchal beard
blown back

As if caught in a prophetic wind.



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A Day in the Life at Baycrest

By Joseph Peretz

I awake with a jolt. I look at my alarm clock. It is 6 am.

I was dreaming of my army days, so long ago. A bugle call used to rouse us out of our sleep at six and we had to get up. At Baycrest we have the luxury of lingering in bed a few minutes longer. Wide-awake, the first thing I do is to open the window only to realize that I forgot to close it last night.

I get up, brush my teeth and shave unless, as it sometimes happens, the bathroom light goes off for a while. It is a good thing that I stopped using a straight razor. With an electric shaver you cannot cut your throat in the dark. Now, let's think for a minute. Is it Tuesday or is it Saturday, my shower days? If so I don't have to wash. I sit down, put the news on TV and think of the lucky lady who, today, will be able to admire my nonagenarian physique. I bet that the ladies are fighting amongst themselves so I can make their day!

The news seems to be the same each day. War here, fighting there, which leader of which country is still the leader. At least we don't have to worry about our prime minister who always seems to board or exit a plane travelling to the four corners of the world having nothing but our well being in mind!

Now comes the highlight of my day. I go to see my Baby. As I enter her room, she greets me with a smile big enough to make my heart melt. She sits in her comfortable chair, all dressed, as they would say in French, *"Tire a quatre epingles,"* wearing a matching outfit, golden loops in her earlobes, lipstick, eyebrow liner and a new colour nail polish.

It reminds me of the "good old days" getting ready to go out to a party, maybe a birthday of a friend, now long gone like most of them.

She grabs my hand and pulls me down to kiss her and then she extends a finger for me to nibble on. It must have a certain meaning to her as if she tries to tell me something and then rubs her fingers across the night table back and forth. God only knows what goes through her mind or what is left of it.

Her eyes light up when I tell her that I love her and her smile gets bigger.

Dee, her caregiver looks on. I have to thank her for preparing my Baby for my matinal visit.

By now, it is time to go for breakfast. We walk together, each pushing our own walker. We enter the spacious dining room, park our vehicles and sit down so Dee can put on our bibs. What a breakfast!

She alternates between taking a bite of her banana and a slice of cheese. She was always a good eater and still is. A hardboiled egg is gone in no time, followed by a bowl of oatmeal, which she sometimes eats by herself or Dee feeds her spoon after spoon. My Baby, always a lady, whether she holds her juice glass, coffee cup or the little wine glass for Shabbat, still has her pinky extended.

Bit by bit other hungry people trickle in with walkers or wheelchairs. Zina, the kitchen lady to most of the caregivers, stops at our table to give Josie a hug and wish her good morning and make a show of admiring the colour of her nail polish which Dee changes every few days. My darling just sits there and smiles. I wonder what she is thinking but she seems to enjoy the attention very much. At least she still recognizes the people around her.

We finish breakfast and she eats her applesauce that she gets after every meal. Little does she know that it is mixed with her pulverized medication. She used to spit out some of her pills, get up and run out of the dining room (without her walker). At least now she ingests the medication and enjoys the applesauce.

At this time we return to her room where she sometimes has a nap on her bed or just dozes off in her armchair while I read the newspaper. I skim over the news, often boring and repetitious. I scan the obituaries and notice that unfortunately our once large circle of friends is dwindling down rapidly and the trips to Benjamin's Funeral Parlour are becoming more frequent.

I figure that at that rate there won't be anybody left to come to my funeral. So, I just decided not to die! It's worked until now!

When my darling wakes up and gets her snack it is time for our daily walk. Downstairs, we walk from bench to bench. I call it "*benching.*" *Benching* is the Yiddish word for blessing over the lighting of the Shabbat candles or over the challah. So we walk every day "religiously."

Pretty soon it is lunchtime and we meander to the elevator and up to the dining room where I can see the menu of the day.

I never knew that there were so many kinds of chicken. To me a chicken is a chicken, but oh-no! I learned that there is boiled chicken, broiled chicken, breaded chicken, roasted chicken, barbecued chicken, lemon chicken, balsamic chicken. There is even Israeli chicken (probably

Continued on page B41

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A Day in the Life at Baycrest

Continued from page B40

born wearing a skull cap instead of the usual red crest). Some days we get chicken schnitzel, chicken salad and to top it off there are chicken wings or chicken liver. So you see that as long as there will be chickens, we certainly will not starve.

There are, of course, other delicious items on the daily menus such as lox or imitation crab served with croissants and Caesar salad. It is a concoction of white fish and it is "yummy" but I am puzzled. How does somebody in a kosher kitchen know what crab tastes like? Just talking about all that food is enough to gain weight.

After lunch we nap in our respective rooms. When my Baby wakes up and sees me, she takes my face between both hands and kisses me. Now out the door for another walk.

Here I have to say something about the cleaning staff. They do such a splendid job that you could literally eat off the floor. Yet I must admit that I never see anybody do it! They are pushing a cart with all their cleaning implements. In front of the cart, in big letters is the name "Royce Rolls".

Our walkers are only named Lexus. Could you not just *plutz* with envy? Weather permitting, we stroll in one of the little parks surrounding the building. In one of them there is a large bench with a plaque on it with both our names on it dedicated with love from our entire family. This does not mean that Josie will sit on it any longer than any other bench.

A few times a week we are treated to a concert in the beautiful Winter Garden. My love does not even stop to listen, she who used to love music, any kind of music, be it jazz, classical or opera. The only way to make her listen is to buy her a chocolate ice cream in the coffee shop. She would sit until the ice cream is finished, get up and continue walking. When I point out to her that some of the old people are dancing with their caregivers, it leaves her totally cold. We, who often won a prize just for being the first couple on the dance floor.

So we go benching some more which brings us to the quiet Garden Court with its glass roof, similar to the Winter Garden.

Tucked away in one corner is the quaint little museum that I remember from 10- 15 years ago after my memoir was published.

A copy of the book and some enlarged pictures of our wedding, the first chupah after the city was liberated, were on display as part of a Holocaust memorabilia exhibit.

Little did we think at that time that one day we both would be living at Baycrest.

Sometimes an "old timer" would sit at the shiny baby grand piano and tinkle sentimental songs from our time like *If You Were The Only Girl In The World And I Was The Only Boy*. Songs I used to play for my Baby on the big electronic organ she bought me for my birthday. *Those Were The Days, My Friend*. But they ended too soon.

We continue our walk back to the elevators. It is close to dinnertime, after which we return to my Baby's room where the caregiver and I watch the news on television.

My love does not show the slightest interest but she sits in her armchair and holds my arm tight as if she knows that I will soon be leaving. After the news, I tell my Baby that I am going home to sleep and promise her to come back in the morning and give her a big kiss. She looks at me with her big brown eyes and I can tell that she does not know what I am saying. She does not even wave good-bye and focuses her attention on the caregiver.

I go to my room next door and after more than six decades of sleeping in each other's arms, we are now separated by a flimsy partition between our two rooms. It may as well be the Berlin Wall.

I ponder what has become of our lives and I sit down and cry.

Wish all our families, friends & clients a very happy, healthy, peaceful and sweet Passover

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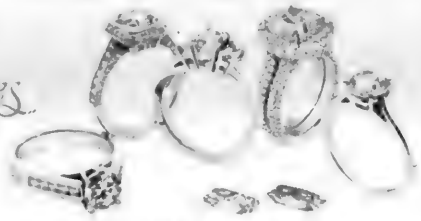

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Where is She?

By I.B. Iskov

A young woman, half-smiling, stands in sepia tones,
her light brown hair coiffed like Garbo's.

My mother, in her better memory, confessed:
This is my sister, Basha. She was my father's favourite.
Isn't she beautiful?

My sixteen-year- old brain racing,
I wondered why
my mother never told me
about this other auntie, about her husband,
my other uncle and their two daughters,
my other cousins.

I wondered why
I never got to visit them
and why my mother's parents never mentioned
this important person,
their eldest and most attractive, intelligent daughter,
all the years they lived in Canada
after the war.

I looked at my mother full of questions
and asked only one:
Where is she?

My mother, wiping tears, blurted:
She was murdered by the Nazis with her husband and children.

Yellow and Pale

By Jan Csillag

I see a starchy cloth of white
stretched with care
on a long table.

Red ruby red glasses
perch tightly squeezed
on a shiny tray.

Light feathering down from candles
making patterns in disarray
on faces assembling this night.

A collection of pages
is piled high
like a fluffy nest
ready to tell the story.

I see the gathering flock –
our younger selves or some
not here at all.

Little bird, yellow and pale,
you peck at my pane.

I don't blame you for lingering here.
Which missing soul stares
and wants to share
more time, more time?

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My Zaidie, My Hero

By Janice Gutstadt

My zaidie was always my hero. I thought he was Superman, Batman and Mighty Mouse all rolled into one. He had a calming gentle power to turn my sadness into happiness. If I was in a fight with my brothers he would take my side unconditionally. I was the *kleiner kind*, the *shaine madeleh*. He would pick me up and hug me and I could smell the lingering cigar smoke on his suit and a faint smell of Crown Royal on his breath.

We all lived together in my grandparents' house, my mother, my father, two brothers and my bubbie and zaidie. My mother stayed there because she felt it was her duty to take care of her sick mother just as her own grandmother had taken care of all of us. My bubbie would get dizzy spells and fall down, so we all lived together until I was about ten.

My zaidie didn't look at all like Superman. In fact he was the antithesis. He was a small, wizened, balding man with sad grey eyes, a fringe of grey hair encircling his head like a backward crown and a hearty laugh. He was a man of few words. We sat at the arborite table in the big kitchen of that old house playing dominoes, card games and High–Q and he patiently taught me to count in Yiddish up to 100. He was a tailor by trade, a man who worked with his hands. He sat for hours on the weekend at his old treadle Singer sewing machine fixing clothes for people to make a little extra money for us. But it was his hands that interested me, long, thin, white fingers and large blue veins that erupted from the back of his hands. Once I pushed his vein down. "Zaida does that hurt?" I asked. He shook his head. I pointed to the blue tattoo on his arm. "Zaida does that hurt?" He touched his heart and answered, " It only hurts here sometimes when I think about the world." That was my zaidie.

He never had an easy life. He suffered a great loss during the Shoah, a young wife and small daughter, but we never talked about that.

When he moved to Canada after the war his friend at Tip Top Tailors made a shidduch, a match with him and my bubbie. The friend was married to my grandmother's sister, Aunty Tilly. We called her Yenta Tilleybenta, always interested in other people's business. They hoodwinked him, tricked him into marrying a sick woman who had spells all her life, because he was alone and longed for a family. When things got too bad in the house he went downstairs into the basement with his stash of cigars and Crown Royal flinging the words, "*Dvora, a khalerye*" into empty space.

Sometimes I followed him down to the basement. It was a dark musty place filled with old barrels, books, comics and his special box. The first time he showed me what was inside his box, I was awestruck. It was a fragile looking shofar, the colour of ivory, almost translucent, cracked in places and looked as if it would fall apart at any moment. The sunlight shone through the dusty basement window reflecting sparks of light on its surface. My grandfather had smuggled his shofar into Auschwitz and brought it out when he was liberated. It held some sort of magic for me. On Rosh Hashanah he brought it to our little shul and he produced clear strong sounds. No one could believe this tiny damaged man could fill the shul with the blast of "tekiah.". I sat in shul, proudly listening to him hoping one day he would teach me all the secrets of his shofar.

From the moment I began school I loved everything about it. The pretty perfumed teachers, the rainbow crayons, the thrill of learning to read and the acquisition of many new friends fascinated me. In class I was a quiet and shy little girl who rarely spoke or raised her hand even though in my mind I knew the answers to all the questions my teachers would pose. When I was called upon in class my face flushed a bright cherry red and I painfully stammered out the answer feeling everyone's eyes on my hot face. It was in my written work that I expressed myself, fluently and clearly, surprising my teachers who invariably made me their pet, a job that entailed wiping the blackboard or distributing test papers.

The first day of school in Grade Five was a shock. I was assigned to a class taught by a male teacher whose reputation preceded him. Mr. Skinner was a tall, muscular man with slicked back black hair and a strident voice. When our class became too noisy he slammed a

Continued on page B44

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My Zaidie, My Hero

Continued from page B43

textbook shut shouting, "Your heads should be in here." If someone's penmanship was not perfect, they would have to rewrite the passage many times on the blackboard in front of the whole class until he released them.

One boy who was disabled and limped suddenly became ill in class and threw up on the floor beside his desk. Mr. Skinner stopped the class, focused a steely gaze on him and shouted, "Get some paper towels from the back and clean up that mess now." I can still see that small boy limping back and forth to the paper towel dispenser, tears streaming down his face, crouching down to wipe up the smelly, slick mess. We all sat there silently, small and powerless mesmerized and terrified by the scene. Our hands were folded obediently, innocently on our wooden desks, bodies tensed with dread listening only to the sound of a small foot dragging along the wooden floor.

Mr. Skinner had a knack for uncovering and exposing a student's weakness like a wolf trailing a sick or damaged deer. With one flash of his eyes in your direction he took you down in an instant. One student on the first day of school stuttered out his name, "JJJJJJohn FFFFFasciannno." Every day he made John stand up and recite a poem we had learned the night before. He stood there sweating, painfully spitting out stammering words between long pauses until he was exhausted and allowed to take his seat in a cloud of shame and anxiety .We didn't look at John and pretended that the incident never happened, thanking our lucky stars that it was not one of us under his scrutiny.

Mr. Skinner had his own unique view of the world and peppered his lessons with strange stories and anecdotes. He was very animated and excited especially when he was teaching us about the Second World War. One day he blurted out that the Holocaust was a hoax, a big lie, and a Jewish conspiracy. It never happened. Everyone was silent, although more than half of my class was Jewish and some were the children and grandchildren of survivors. My head ached and my faced burned a bright red. Slowly I stood up and said, " That's not true. My grandfather was in Auschwitz. He has a number tattooed on his arm." I sank back into my desk and put my head on my arms.

All the air in the class seemed to be sucked out of the room and I had trouble breathing. I felt a shadow looming over me. I heard Mr. Skinner say, "Remain after class."

In public school we all went home for lunch. We looked forward to the break and the comfort of home cooked meals, hot soup, grilled cheese sandwiches and our mothers' welcoming smiles. The smell of soup simmering on the stove or chicken roasting in the oven for dinner was irresistible. At lunchtime I looked for Mr. Skinner but he had disappeared. After waiting for what seemed to be an hour I decided to go home because I knew my mother would be waiting and worried. It was wintertime and the day was very cold and snowy. I went to my cubby in the cloakroom to put on my jacket and mittens and boots. My mother had printed my name in big black bold letters on the inside of my boots to make it easier for me to find them. They were missing. In an instant I knew that Mr. Skinner had hidden or taken my boots, a coward's revenge on a little girl who had the nerve to stand up to him in front of the students. I had no choice but to walk home in my stocking feet. I tramped through the big snowdrifts in the schoolyard, my white socks becoming brown and frozen as I trudged along the slushy sidewalk to my house. When I got home my socks were soaking wet and I was shaking, my teeth chattering uncontrollably. Tears had frozen on my cheeks.

My mother carefully undressed me like a fragile doll and wrapped me in a big blanket. I had no words. I was unable to speak until my grandfather came to sit with me. He looked at me with his knowing grey eyes and I could feel myself melting, thawing out. The story bubbled out of me. I said, " Mr. Skinner hid my boots on purpose. He is cruel and meant to us. He is a bully and a coward. He told us there was no Holocaust."

My zaidie didn't say a word. I saw him go down to the basement and return with the box containing the shofar. After eating a bowl of hot soup, we both got dressed in our winter clothes armed with the old shofar in its box and the two of us started off for school hand in hand. We were almost the same height but I could feel him squeezing my mittened hand hard and sense the growing determination in each step that he took.

When we reached the classroom my zaidie entered the room quietly. Every eye was focused on this frail looking diminutive man. He removed the shofar from the box. The light reflected golden sparks from its surface. It look so brittle and delicate and for a moment I was afraid that my grandfather might not be able to produce any sound from it, that it would crumble in his hands. He put the shofar to his lips and let out one shattering, achingly beautiful and loud blast. The sound was deafening, like the cries of thousands of children, like the lone cry of his small, lost daughter. Mr. Skinher covered his ears and sank to the ground. The class erupted in wild clapping and stamping of feet. Somewhere I heard the sound of windows shattering and of walls crumbling. In between the piercing shofar blasts I heard laughter, my laughter, a soft tinkling sound like a tiny bell. It was the sound of hope.

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Do not Pass-over the Passover Mints

By Esther Chanowitz

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It is also a time of encourageMINT, contentMINT, enjoyMINT, merriMINT, refineMINT, adjustMINT, exciteMINT, and commitMINT!

Family members need to come to agreeMINT, to compliMINT , and compleMINT, each other, and , we need to MINTS our words...as we work on our self improveMINT and refineMINT. This will minimize disappointMINT, resentMINT, and embaressMINT.

This is our spiritual counterpart of our physical "cleaning for Passover": finding, and removing negative character traits, such as haughtiness, symbolised by the puffing up of bread dough, and trying to be more humble, like the flat and low, "poor man's bread," Matzah.

That is a true achieveMINT, and accomplishMINT indeed! A journey, much like the journey from Egypt, as we are all a work in progress.

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May we celebrate, yet THIS year, in Jerusalem, aMIN-To that! (AMEN!)

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Jerusalem Fragments

By Yonatan Curry

In the instant that the explosion happened there was an immediate quietness coupled with a bright light which had a coolness to it. "That's strange" he thought. After that everything went black.

Michael Burger had been sitting in the afternoon sun on a dry grassy patch with his back resting on the warm stones of the walls which surround the Old City of Jerusalem. Intermittantly nodding off he had thought this was an idyllic way to pass a sunny afternoon in Jerusalem. He would not have been surprised to see King David walking by as he was only a few yards from the entrance to his tomb and any one who could write those Psalms would surely venture forth into the warm Jerusalem sun to appreciate such a day.

As his sleepy frame gradually sagged lower against the wall his fingers scratched the dirt and began to casually play with a small piece of metal just below the surface. He had to bend his arm around a large bolder and it was this action which probably saved his life.

When he awoke in a cool bright hospital room the following day he immediately sensed something was missing. He did not feel complete. He could not quite put his finger on it, but something was missing. In making a mental inventory of his body he realized that his right hand was no longer there. But where was it ? Also why was he not in pain or bothered by this startling fact.

He remembered it had been there when he worked on the computer yesterday morning, but after that there were no actions to serve as markers for his missing hand. "Oh well, someone will be by to tell me what's happening," he thought. Then he drifted off to sleep again.

Little could he know that the place he had chosen to sit down on was the favourite hiding spot of Chana Levy when she played the game of hide and seek with her best friend, Yoav Yishai. Most days after school would find them out together roaming the streets and alleyways of the Old City looking for adventure.

Bound by matching superior intellects and their childish love of excitement they always found something new and of interest.

This was in spite of, or maybe because of, their mothers' admonitions to "be careful and keep out of danger." At 12 such cautions had an all encompassing aspect to them which meant they could be acknowledged and then safely discarded.

On sunny afternoons they would venture out beyond the Old City walls and engage in a glorious game of hide and seek. Chana was inordinately proud of,the fact that Yoav had never located her hiding spot which afforded her a warm dry location that had the added advantage of commanding a panoramic sweep of the lay of the land. It was while she was crouched here that Chana's fingers dug in the dirt and first encountered the small metal object that Michael's fingers also discovered on that fateful day a few days later.

Getting bored with not being found and noting that the sun was setting she scurried back to "home base" just a few minutes before Yoav.

Sitting in their school classroom several days later, they along with the rest of their classmates heard the explosion triggered by Michael's exploring fingers. But, being too young to think of any terrorist *raison d'etre* they assumed it was the result of work on one of the highways or building sites which seemed to be an ever increasing fact of the Jerusalem landscape.

Even after discovering the source of the explosion later that afternnon after school got out and the havoc it had wrought on her perfect hiding spot; it still did not dawn on Chana that her life had been spared.

Neither Michael nor Chana could know that this particular remnant of the First World War had remained

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Jerusalem Fragments

Continued from page B46

in its quiet hiding spot since being buried by Ottoman soldiers in 1916. Some 20 years later it had almost been "found" by Sgt. Warren of The Royal Engineers who upon passing his metal detector over it encountered a strong beeping signal. But upon digging in the dirt a fraction of an inch near the mine he uncovered a metal bottle cap and decided to lower the sensitivity range on his metal detector just as his fellow officer, Cpt. Mattingly, bellowed out " let's get a move on or the beer in the mess will be all gone." Muttering to himself as he changed the setting on his meter he hurried away from the wall to rejoin his unit.

As Michael slowly took in the doctor's words his first thoughts were that it was a pity that it had been his right hand as he would now have to learn how to do everything with his left! He also wondered if he would look 'peculiar' to people when he swam in the pool at his JCC back home in Canada. He decided that these were quite childish worries and that instead he should be thankful that his vision had not been affected. Better still was the realization that but for his actions the mine might just as easily have been triggered by one of the many children he often saw playing around that spot.

The fact that they never found much of his hand was in many ways fine by him as he found it comforting to know that a part of him would forever lie scattered amongst the stones and soil of this holy city. His mother had cut her hand in a fall as a child and a stone had become imbedded under her skin. A fact which made her quite proud later in life as she was able to say that she always carried a bit of England with her wherever she went. He on the other hand (a terrible pun) could say that a part of him was forever anchored in Jerusalem.

What neither Michael nor Chana, nor Yoav for that matter, could possibly realize in those days was that in accidently saving her life Michael had permitted Chana to grow to womanhood. Attending Hebrew University and then The Technion, she would became a doctor and after marrying Yoav, her childhood friend and fellow doctor at the Institute of Medical Research Israel Canada (IMRIC) Chana would give birth to a son, Dovid, who like his parents, would become a medical reasearcher.

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But even as all this lay in the not too distant future, Michael feeling strangely at peace with the world and his place in it, dozed in his hospital bed.

Far away at the Palo Alto Observatory in California astronomers had just that day detected a sudden string of unusual nebula explosions curving along the edge of the universe. In a rather un-scientific moment, this phenomena they decided looked for all the world, like a contented smile.

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Yahrzeit

For Fay Straining

By Ally Fleming

I light a candle whose flame is a soul's brightness, her inner light reaching up to God.
I light a candle because it is generous, as she was, with warmth and radiance.
I light a candle because love feeds us as wax feeds the wick, and we grew out of her love.
I light a candle because we have all walked in darkness and yearned for illumination.
I light a candle to feel her presence, to remember her voice, her hands on my shoulders.
I light a candle because her daughters are my mothers, because I am from her, and she is in me.
The candle is beeswax and bright and sweet. We are two flames burning together.

The Chanukah Flame

By Anne Duchowny

The dancing flames of the chanukiyah candles flickering bright
Their reflection in the window illuminating the night

I sit and ponder as I watch each candle glow
About the miracle wrought a millennium ago

Oh Chanukah, Oh Chanukah, what a delight
To watch your candles brighten up the night

Exodus

By Brandon Marlon

Exodus I: Gone from Goshen

Ours was a world of rills and lakelets,
marshes and bulrushes, tributaries yielding
to the Nile as we surrendered to overseers
who cracked the lash and struck the rod.
We were in thralldom then, wet with sweat,
moiling for a pharaoh only seen from afar;
though we attuned ears to the riverine environs,
we were gyved to a land deaf to our slavery;
desperate suffering cried out on our behalf,
our every sigh an orison, our every breath an oblation,
until in time all we heard were the gasps of Godful hearts.

Moses' osses stirred the lifeless,
prying us from the ambit of godlings and worldlings;
women skittered, men loped, children capered.
We moved as sheeple, pursued by harriers,
the hopeful among us floating,
the fearful trembling on the border of the grave.
But with the guidance of our herder (may his sleep be sweet),
and by the pillared arms of the Almighty,
we unfastened fetters and cried our relief,
singing salvation along liberation's road,
the immortal hymnody of a nation in formation.

Exodus II: Betrothal

Do you remember our devotion
when once we were young?

How, as a bride, we adored you;
how we followed you through the desert,
through a land not sown?

Rebellious and stiff-necked,
we overcame even ourselves for your sake,
weaving through perils, living on dole,
engraving your thin silence
upon the granite of our hearts.

Recollect us at our best, when our bodies were sore
scratched by bramble, scorched by wasteland blaze,
urged onward by faith in your will.

We swooned and stumbled and rose again
on behalf of your name alone.

We were unforgettable then.

Keep us in mind…and your memories of us fresh.

Exodus III: Engaging Destiny

Expelled from the homeland, sacred and promised,
thrust amid foreigners more hostile than hospitable,
we wandered and cowered before majorities,
mingling without merging,
reading daily the obituary of our people
in the glaring eyes of wishful antagonists.

For millennia in exile, aloof meant intact;
clad in gabardines, gartels, and shtreimels,
burning the midnight oil in cellars and garrets,
we immersed ourselves in spiritual realms,
lamenting fate's infelicities,
pleading for the imminence of the Messiah.

Now restored to sovereignty, let us abrade the Diaspora
with its fusty sackcloth and ashes,
renewing our vocation, cherishing the challenge,
rekindling the firelight of Israel
to warm the nations of the world
and melt the idols of the age.

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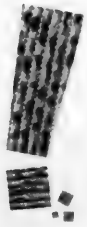

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Lost Jews

By April Laufer

Hegaditi l'chem hayom ki avod t'oveydoon…
I tell you today that you will surely be lost…Devarim 30:18

She closed the book. She did not have the energy to read about the unfairness of the world toward Israel and the Jews. Not that she didn't agree with some of the comments. Not that she didn't wonder the very same questions.

Her friend Bluma had recommended the book, *Je m'accuse* by Shifra Stein, the title a parody on Emile Zola's *J'accuse* that pointed to the injustices of the Dreyfus Affair. "She's dead on," Bluma exclaimed, her voice pitched high and adamant. "The answer to the Jewish problem is a stronger army in Israel. It is a waste of time trying to negotiate with Israel's enemies because they will never accept a Jewish state." Stein accused Israel of not doing enough. Of not being tough enough. "*We Jews are too liberal, too soft hearted and we have only ourselves to blame for our continued victimization,*" Stein had written. In a somewhat elliptical comment Stein said that it was time for Israel to move on.

Yes, she understood the feelings. Especially when she thought of her family in Israel and how much they had to endure. The uncertainty of daily life, the rocket attacks, the constant vigilance. Yet, they never had any doubt about their decision to move to Israel. Israel wasn't just an address. Israel was home.

Once a year she and Max made the trip. How ironic she thought to herself. In Canada she always worried about the day-to-day events in Israel and how her children and her friends' children were managing. It was curious that whenever she arrived in Israel, the worry of terrorists, and suicide bombers and rockets, actually receded from her mind.

In Israel they were always busy with the grandchildren and visiting friends, and visits to places new and old. There was just so much to do in Israel. In Israel she knew what was happening. Watching people's faces, noticing how people behaved, she knew.

And then after a visit, that was always too short, they were back in Canada. No, she wouldn't leave Canada; her other three children were here. Still, she understood the irony that living in Israel with enemies on all fronts was the only place where a Jew could feel secure.

Things seemed unsettled for her whenever she returned from a visit to Israel. Reading about anti-Jewish sentiments throughout the world she remarked to her husband Max, how ominous and tiresome she found the constant barrage against Israel. With an unerring calmness he replied, "Just words." "But don't you worry?" she would press. "People who hate always get in the news," he replied. 'There are people who stand by Israel too." "Who?" she challenged. "France's new president said that France will always stand by Israel." "Where did you read that?" she retorted. "Right here," and he pointed to the article in the Jewish paper that he was reading. "Well," she harrumphed, "I didn't see that as a headline in the national paper."

Max who was always reading newspapers, told her to stop reading the paper if it made her depressed. And she tried, but then she felt this overwhelming need to know, to be aware of what was happening even if the news did so often crush her.

Perhaps, Max understood things that she never could. He was a child of survivors after all. Perhaps, that gave him some special knowledge. Some meme of consciousness that made him know that this was the fate of being a Jew, always the victim/survivor.

She wondered about all the anger directed at Israel and Jews. Perhaps, Stein was right. Jews were disliked simply because they were Jews. And what would happen if there were no more Jews? Would there be this longing for them? *Oh – if only the Jews were here, then we would have someone to blame?*

She heard the mail being dropped in the mailbox at her front door. Maybe there would be something interesting in the mail to take her mind off of the news. Maybe a card from her niece who was somewhere in Africa in her job with Doctors without Borders.

She brought the mail into the kitchen. Bills. Bills. Real Estate. Aah, the shule bulletin. She opened the envelope and looked at the last page. *Nachas and Potpourri.* An interesting language pairing, Yiddish and French. She glanced down the list of names with a smile. Ah yes, weddings, engagements. Thank G-d there were occasions for celebrations.

Continued on page B51

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Lost Jews

Continued from page B50

She flipped back through the rest of the shule bulletin, and noticed the bolded headline announcing the upcoming lecture: "Lost Jews." She didn't read beyond the heading but stood there thinking. Something about the title resonated in her.

She was about to read the details of the program when she was interrupted by a phone call. To her quiet hello her youngest daughter enthused, "Hi mom you're not busy are you?" Her daughter did not wait for a response but steamrolled on with, "I'm desperate to get to the gym today and the babysitter just cancelled. Can you PLEASE watch Ethan and Maya? It'll just be a couple of hours. I can be there in about 15 minutes. Please mom."

To which there was only one answer. "Of course."

She hastily threw the bulletin on top of the morning's papers placing them carefully away. She would finish reading the bulletin later.

When the grandchildren arrived a few minutes later, she felt happy. She planned to make chocolate chip cookies with them, read some stories and she actually looked forward to the million toys that would be strewn throughout the house. It was the perfect distraction from everything that was bothering her.

Later when she watched them leaving and being bundled into the car she wondered what did the world hold for them? Before she realized it she found herself thinking about "Lost Jews."

Wasn't "lost" a kind of wandering? Like being lost in the desert. Or not knowing where you are going.

She sighed. Lost. As in not found. Or like the Jews in the Diaspora still traveling in a miasma of not quite having arrived, never quite belonging.

Didn't that description fit Jews everywhere? Even Israel, 60 years old, had not quite arrived, not quite been accepted on the world stage? Last week it was stories about European and even North American universities boycotting Israeli academic institutions and academia.

Should the Jews not share their research then?

This week some Canadian aboriginal leader said Jews were like a disease. Where did such comments come from? Why?

Picking up a few things in her local plaza, she walked by a man with a long beard and yarmulke asking another man with a similarly long beard and yarmulke, "Where do you daven?" She walked on and did not hear the man's response and so let herself muse that everyone was looking for lost Jews.

Something about that exchange caused her to wonder how Jews were not all united in beliefs or politics; about how even within the Jewish faith religious views sometimes separate community rather than bringing them together. Are we lost from one another as well? She pondered.

She had known exactly what the man had meant when he asked his question; still it did seem a curious coincidence in her week of angst over Lost Jews that she would have overhead that very question.

Later as she put away her groceries she glanced at the day's newspaper headlines. Canada would not attend the next UN World Conference against Racism. Closing her pantry cupboard she remembered the stories of the Conference in Durban in 2001. The conference had focused almost exclusively on Israel. Even countries that had committed genocide against "other" ethnic groups had not faced censure.

She wondered if all that negative press, the pillorying of Jewish lobby groups having too much influence; the Holocaust deniers; the anger towards Israel; wouldn't that make someone wish to be lost so that he could not be so easily found and vilified?

Wasn't that one of the themes of the Jews in the Diaspora? Let's not be different so we can be the same; so we can be lost in the crowd.

And then there was the comment that one of her grandsons had let slip. If only Israel wasn't around, maybe people would stop blaming the Jews for everything.

She had been shocked by his comment and then sad. When she was growing up she had believed that the creation of Israel meant that Jews would no longer be lost or wandering. She still believed that Israel was "our" being found but she understood the difficulties that her university grandson faced. He was constantly confronted with anti-Israel posters and protests. He had to duck as he walked through the main university hall, which inevitably had someone handing out pamphlets proclaiming apartheid in Israel or worse.

A bewildering time.

"I'm going to a lecture," she announced to her husband. "Oh? What?" he asked raising his head from his favourite Jewish newspaper. "Lost Jews," she answered as she picked up her purse and checked that she had her car keys. "Oh," he said, as he continued reading the article in the paper, "B'nai Menashe." "What?" she asked with surprise. "What did you say?" "B'nai Menashe," he repeated, "the lost Jews of India."

She was standing in the hall on her way to the front door. "Oh right," she said. "Right. The Lost Jews of India."

Somewhere in the back of her mind she had known this. Now she realized that she had seized the words 'Lost Jews' as a metaphor for her sense of alarm over the state of the world.

She remained stalled in the front hall.

She put the keys back in their place, shrugged off her coat and went and sat down opposite her husband. "Not going?" her husband asked looking at her over his reading glasses. "I'll make us a tea," he offered.

She looked at the newspaper and opened the first page. She saw that some state had announced that it was making a contest for the best editorial cartoon satirizing the Holocaust.

She closed her eyes with a weary sigh. In the background she heard Max getting the teacups from the cupboard. The kettle was starting to boil. Lost, she thought, we are most definitely lost. Then as Max placed the teacup in front of her gently touching her shoulder as he did so, she suddenly had a different thought. If something was lost, didn't that mean that it still might be found?

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Israeli President Shimon Peres is interviewed by Turkish media at his residence on March 24 about relations between Israel and Turkey. The interview was given two days after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's apology by phone to Turkey's prime minister. Since the call, a measure of frost has returned to relations between the two countries. ***Please see related story on page 28.*** ***(Flash 90 photo)***

Turkey's ambassador to Canada hails reconciliation with Israel

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Turkey's ambassador to Canada, Tuncay Babali, has hailed the announcement that Turkey and Israel intend to normalize diplomatic relations after an increasingly acrimonious three-year dispute.

"It will definitely be beneficial for both countries, as well as for the peace and stability of [our] ever-more volatile region," Babali said in an interview last week. "It will also give [us] an opportunity to further diversify and deepen our relations."

Babali made his comment to *The CJN* just days after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu formally apologized for an Israeli commando raid on a Turkish ship in May 2010. The raid claimed the lives of nine pro-Palestinian Turkish political activists trying to break Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip, controlled by a Hamas government since 2007.

Exclusive

In the aftermath of the incident, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan demanded an apology, compensation and the lifting of Israel's siege of Gaza. Israeli and Turkish diplomats tried, but failed, to resolve the issue in direct talks.

As a result of the impasse, Turkey expelled Israel's ambassador in Ankara after withdrawing its own ambassador in Tel Aviv and downgraded bilateral relations to the level of second secretary.

The crisis was defused on March 22 as U.S. President Barack Obama was leaving Israel after a state visit. Obama, who had publicly urged Israel and Turkey to end their increasingly acrimonious dispute, brokered the rapprochement by placing a phone call to Erdogan and putting Netanyahu on the line.

Netanyahu, in a 20-minute conversation with Erdogan, expressed regret for the "unintentional" loss of lives and injuries."

Continued on page 28

Shmini
Candlelighting: 7:30
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Greater Toronto Area

This issue of The CJN went to press on Thursday, March 28

Shoah education still key for CMHR

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Despite complaints from some quarters, Holocaust education remains an important focal point of the still-in-development Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR).

According to an internal working document released recently to the media by the museum's board, a display on the Holocaust will fill a 4,500-square-foot space, making it the facility's largest stand-alone gallery after its Canada's Journey gallery.

As outlined in the working document, the Examining the Holocaust gallery is intended to be a case study in the "systematic destruction of human rights."

"The lessons of the Holocaust demand that we be vigilant," the working paper states.

The gallery will feature photos and graphic panels, videos, text and small, open drawers containing "fragile or secret documents." Among the exhibits will be an overview of Lemkin's Techniques of Genocide, a touch-screen panel that explains eight "techniques" that the Nazis used to try to destroy the Jewish People.

The outer structure of the $350-million-plus museum was completed late last year. The museum is expected to open to the public in 2014.

Canada's Journey, the largest gallery at 9,500 square feet, will consider past historical wrongs such as the internment of Japanese people during World War II, the Chinese head tax, residential schools for native peoples and modern issues such as same-sex marriage and disability rights.

Other galleries include an aboriginal section, human rights today and taking action in defence of human rights.

The Holodomor, the Soviet Union's forced starvation of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian farmers – estimates of the number of dead run from 1.8 to 12 million – in the 1930s, will be examined in a film that will be part of a gallery called Breaking the Silence.

The gallery would "recognize the role of Diaspora communities and Parliament in breaking the silence" on five genocides – the Armenian genocide, the Holodomor, the Holocaust and, more recently, Rwanda and Srebenica.

The status of the Holodomor relative to the Holocaust among the museum's educational programs has been the main bone of contention from critics of the museum, and from one group in particular, the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association, which has been pushing for the Holodomor to be given equal space with the Holocaust in the museum.

"We have the support of most Ukrainain Canadian organizations, which are working with us," said Maureen Fitzhenry, the museum's media relations manager.

"They seem to understand what we are trying to do and appreciate our efforts to incorporate information about the Holodomor."

Fitzhenry noted that the working document is not an exhaustive list of every component and story of every gallery.

"The document is not a good way to assess what might be missing from the museum, although some are using it in that way," she said. "We have actually redacted some of the specific lists of stories being considered because they are not yet solid enough to release publicly."

She added: "The goal of the document is to ensure that museum programs are completely aligned with the galleries and built exhibits. Both components [exhibits and interpretive programs] are a very important part of the visitor experience in an 'ideas museum.'"

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Israeli teen goes missing in Toronto

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

A 16-year-old boy from Eilat, Israel, in Toronto as part of a reciprocal visit to the Jewish community, left the group without permission and, on the eve of Passover, remained unaccounted for.

York Regional Police have been asked to investigate, and friends on his social network back home, as well as members of the Toronto Jewish community, are being asked to tell him to contact his family as soon as possible.

"At this point, we don't know where he is," said Tali Aronsky, a spokesperson for the Jewish Agency for Israel. "Our priority is to locate him and make sure he's okay."

The Ethiopian-born youth, Raphael, was in Toronto as part of the Diller Teen Fellows Program, a Jewish leadership initiative that includes a visit to an overseas Jewish community where the visitors meet and interact with other Diller Teen Fellows. It is run under the auspices of Jewish Agency, in partnership with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and other communities in North America and Israel.

Brian Keshen, UJA's vice-president of community capacity building, said, "We are still looking to find him and have contact with him."

The Israeli Consulate has been informed of the missing teen and they are spreading the word among expatriate Israelis that he is in Toronto on his own, said Keshen, who supervises the Diller program in Toronto.

According to Aronsky, prior to the group's arrival in Toronto on March 14, the teen had asked for permission to leave the group and spend time with friends. He was told that this was "not an option," Aronsky said.

Last Wednesday, while visiting the Vaughan Mills shopping centre in York Region with a couple of members of the group, the boy went to the washroom. "He gave them the slip" and disappeared with nothing more than his laptop and some cash, Aronsky said.

Mall security was informed, but a search did not turn up anything. York police were then contacted.

Aronsky said the teen later contacted organizers and his family in Israel to let them know he'd left the group but that he planned to make the flight back to Israel on Sunday. He did not.

Prior to his going missing, there was no indication he'd leave on his own. "He was bright and engaging, very involved in the workshops and discussions," Aronsky said.

The teen "had been part of travel groups on behalf of the Eilat community before," Keshen said. "He'd been recommended by his teachers and school."

Jewish Agency staff is in contact with the youth's parents, but as of Monday at noon, there was no indication his parents would file a missing person complaint.

The last word his parents received from their son was that he was with a friend in Toronto, Keshen said.

The youth left without his passport or luggage. "We want to make sure he's safe and aware of the support that's available," Keshen added.

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An impressive visit

By any measurement, the three-day visit, from March 20 to 22, by U.S. President Barack Obama to Israel was a stunning political success.

It is true, as many experienced observers have noted, that the measure of the president's trip will ultimately be proved only by deeds and not by words. But there is no denying the psychological and emotional basis of the personal relationship between Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appears to have been altered for the better. If indeed it has, this can only be to the advantage of all parties concerned.

A cursory look at only a handful of highlights of the three-day presidential tour conveys a sense of the positive energy that the visit created.

• After *The CJN* of March 28 went to press, news of the rapprochement between Israel and Turkey broke across the airwaves and wire services.

Netanyahu spoke on the phone with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and apologized for what Netanyahu said were "operational errors" during the raid in 2010 on the Turkish ship, Mavi Marmara, that was part of a Gaza-bound flotilla.

Netanyahu's office said, "The prime minister made it clear that the tragic results regarding the Mavi Marmara were unintentional and that Israel expresses regret over injuries and loss of life. In light of the Israeli investigation into the incident, which pointed out several operational errors, Prime Minister Netanyahu apologized to the Turkish people for any errors that could have led to loss of life and agreed to complete the agreement on compensation."

The two leaders immediately agreed they would normalize relations between the countries. And Turkey said it would cease its efforts to sue the Israeli soldiers involved in the 2010 incident.

Many of the news reports concerning the apology, however, missed an important fact that Israel Radio reported (according to *JTA*): Obama initiated the phone call in Netanyahu's presence, spoke with Erdogan, and then handed the receiver to Netanyahu!

• On March 21, Obama travelled to Ramallah to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Abbas hoped to elicit a reiteration of the call for a settlement freeze that Obama made in 2009. But the American president refused to do so.

In fact, he retreated from the 2009 statement by implying that a settlement freeze should not be a precondition for negotiations.

"If the only way to begin the conversation is that we get everything right at the outset, then we're never going to get to the broader issue, which is how do we structure a state of Palestine and how do you provide Israel confidence about its security," Obama said.

The president's change of position was not lost on the Palestinians or the Israelis.

• During his joint press conference with Netanyahu, Obama made the following statement about Iran.

"We agree that a nuclear-armed Iran would be a threat to the region, a threat to the world, and potentially an existential threat to Israel. And we agree on our goal. We do not have a policy of containment when it comes to a nuclear Iran. Our policy is to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. We prefer to resolve this diplomatically, and there's still time to do so," he said.

"Iran's leaders must understand, however, that they have to meet their international obligations. And, meanwhile, the international community will continue to increase the pressure on the Iranian government. The United States will continue to consult closely with Israel on next steps. And I will repeat – all options are on the table. We will do what is necessary to prevent Iran from getting the world's worst weapons."

Obama's words were quite categorical. "Our policy is to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon... All options are on the table."

It was clearly Obama's intention to win over the people of Israel, to dissipate suspicion by which a considerable number of Israelis had viewed him. He had set out to reset the relationship. His visits to the Shrine of the Book, prime minister's Yitzhak's Rabin's grave and Yad Vashem were intended to demonstrate symbolically and substantively that he understood and empathized with Israel's – the Jewish – claim to secure, sovereign existence in the Land of Israel.

Obama worked hard to impress the Israelis. As we know, Israelis are quite experienced with and even cynical about the ways of politicians. But most of the reports from Israeli media suggest that Israelis were impressed by Obama.

Time will tell if it was for the good. – *MBD*

From the editor's desk...

SeeJN

THE LAGOVER SOCIETY

Throughout the late 1800s and into the post-World War II era, many different mutual benefit societies (landsmanshaft in Yiddish) were formed in Toronto by groups of Jewish immigrants who were often from the same town or region. They joined together to help one another establish new lives in Toronto. One such group was the Lagover Society, which was organized in 1931 and helped many early Toronto Jews by offering free loans, job assistance, and a sense of community. Pictured here are Lagover members at a committee banquet in 1947. Photos from many of the societies are on view on the recently installed Bridge of Hope at the Lipa Green Centre. ***(Ontario Jewish Archives photo)***

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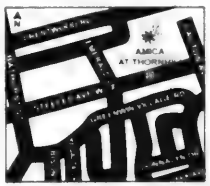

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Activists aim to preserve Kensington's character

Vicky Tobianah
Special to the CJN

Before Kensington Market in Toronto became the hip, vintage-shop, urban scene it is today, it was just a small area with a strong identity, which many immigrants, including Jews, called home.

Virtually every immigrant group that came to Toronto before the 1980s first planted their roots in this area, said Rosemary Donegan.

Donegan, a curator who focuses on art in relation to industrialization, was speaking about how Kensington Market and Spadina Avenue have changed over the years, at the inaugural event for the Kensington Market Historical Society, on March 20.

"It's a living street, it's changing all the time," said Donegan, about Spadina Avenue. These new immigrants were actively involved in the city's politics, she said, a reason why the street became known as "red Spadina."

Jewish life flourished on these streets, with Hebrew and Yiddish newspaper stands lining the sidewalk, although in those times they would arrive a day late from other major cities, said Donegan. The streets were filled with greengrocers, synagogues, a Yiddish theatre and kosher butchers. Although those are long gone, you can still see faded Hebrew letters on some of the buildings.

Kiever Synagogue in Kensington Market

It's estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 Jews lived in this area at one point, but most of the Jewish community had left by the 1950s. Today, only two synagogues remain: the Anshei Minsk Synagogue on St. Andrew Street, an Orthodox shul that still holds daily services, and the Kiever Synagogue on Bellevue Avenue.

"It was a village, an enclosed area," said Jean Cochrane, the author of the book *Kensington*. "It was a bubble. It was very much a cohesive neighbourhood. They're a strong community, and when they feel threatened, they mobilize."

That's still true today for Kensington Market locals like longtime resident Marion Kane, 66.

"When I moved there in 1978, there were live chickens on the sidewalk. It was mainly food shops, lots of Jewish merchants were still there at that time," said Kane. "Gradually, the Jewish merchants have nearly all gone. The European Quality Meats and Sausages [a butcher shop that had been there for more than five decades] closed last April. The whole feeling of the market has changed."

Kane is a member of the Friends of Kensington Market group, which aims to preserve the market's unique character. They stopped Starbucks from opening last year, and they're currently attempting to thwart Loblaws from opening a supermarket in the neighbourhood.

"A lot of the change is inevitable," said Kane, "but part of it is worrisome. There's a danger of it becoming gentrified, like another Yorkville. We need to preserve Kensington as a haven for small merchants."

Kensington looks vastly different than it did 50 years ago, when it was a place for low-income immigrants. Now, the market is much more upscale, with lots of bars and cafés and many vintage shops, and younger, hip residents, as Kane put it, who want to move in.

There are still some elements of the past that remain, such as the outdoor food market and its reputation for bringing food from every corner of the world on one street. It's these elements and many more that the Kensington Market Historical Society wants to preserve. "There's lot of interest in its history, and that's why we started it," said the society's president, Dennis Reid.

The residents who have been watching the area change hope that the society will still have a market to preserve in 10 years time.

"They're moving with the times, but in the process we don't want to lose everything that makes Kensington special in the name of the almighty dollar," said Kane, "like the outdoor street life, its cosmopolitan nature, the fun and flavour of the place. It would be painful to lose it."

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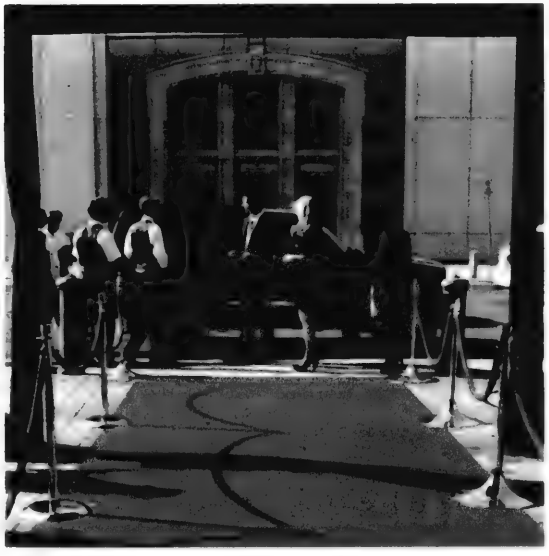

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Seeds of hope

We have just concluded our celebration of Pesach. At this very time 70 years ago, from the bunkers, apartments, balconies, alleyways and sewers of the ghetto in Warsaw, Jews were in the midst of their desperately courageous armed resistance against the Nazis.

The ghetto uprising actually began that year – 1943 – on the first night of Pesach, April 19. The Nazis rolled their tanks to the ghetto entrance intending to trample through and destroy the largest Jewish ghetto of Europe as a macabre birthday offering to their fuhrer, whose birthday was the following day.

But the starved, emaciated Jews resolved to fight.

As Prof. Dina Porat, Yad Vashem's chief historian, has written: "Along with members of the undergrounds, all of the surviving Jews in the ghetto resisted the enemy in order to defy their murderers, although they knew they had little chance of survival. These 50,000 Jews, left in the ghetto following mass death by disease and starvation and the deportation of 265,000 men, women and children to Treblinka, took to defence in the bunkers, and fought with utmost courage and resolve. They put up the bravest of resistance for almost a month, until they were brutally suppressed."

Indeed, the Jewish fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto resisted the Nazis longer than any of the armies of the countries of Europe conquered by the Nazis. Their resistance inspired others.

Remembering the defiance of the Jews of Warsaw will occupy a special place in our commemoration this year of Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah (Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day).

But defiance and rebellion during the Holocaust took many forms. Porat succinctly, eloquently explains. "In the ghettos and camps, indeed in every place with a Jewish populace and Jewish life, there was some form of protest or resistance to the plot to obliterate the Jewish nation. From flight to hiding, mutual help efforts to educational and creative activities as well as the observance of Jewish rites – even with the scarcest of means and in the most unthinkable conditions – all these acts embodied the relentless struggle of Jewish individuals and communities to counteract the restrictions and dangers raining down upon them – and against all odds, sometimes, to live to see the day of victory."

The fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto harboured no hope that they could defeat the daily, unceasing onslaught of the relentlessly hateful Nazis. They knew their enemy too well.

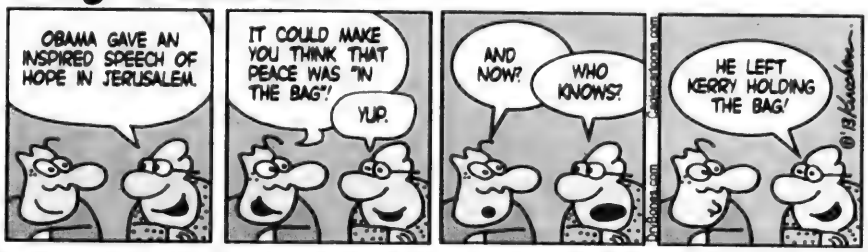
They could not imagine, however, that their determination to fight back would ultimately become a universal symbol of bravery and heroism, or one of the inspiring evocations for the Jewish fighters five years hence fighting back against the onslaught of five Arab armies intent on destroying their tiny, nascent Jewish state.

Fittingly, the anthem of that tiny Jewish state is called *The Hope*.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres was re-elected unanimously as head of Israel's Labor party, thus becoming its candidate for prime minister. He was unopposed. In his acceptance speech, he spoke of the need to pursue peace.

Dry Bones WHAT NEXT?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Act of defiance preceded redemption

I am perplexed by the words of the late Rabbi David Hartman, as published in *The CJN* ("Passover: a fine-tuning of the human soul," March 21). He states that "Passover suggests a supernatural model of redemption... that positions us as passive and patient, waiting for an interventionist God to rescue us from our Galut realities." However, Rabbi Hartman overlooks that brave act of defiance that the Jewish People needed to undertake before they were redeemed! Before the last plague, the Jewish People were required to take a symbol of Egyptian belief, a lamb, which was viewed as a god, and roast it whole – outside, for everyone to see! If that was not enough, then they took the blood of this god and smeared it on the outside of their doors! They ate this lamb in a festive meal and ate it with matzah. We are taught that the requirement of freedom is to first reject the norms of the oppressors, and then we will have the moral strength for freedom. It's this meal that we re-enact at the seder – the night before we went out to physical freedom. In the Torah, the experience in Egypt is the rationale for many of our social justice commandments. It's not much of a challenge "to find underlying spiritual and ethical meanings beneath the surface of Passover." Rabbi Hartman states that Jews "can't stand order," but the festive meal at the beginning of Pesach, and the very name of our prayer book, means "order"! Yes, we needed revealed miracles at the birth of our people, at Pesach, but by the time we reach the end of the year, with Purim, we are taught to see God acting behind the scenes.

Yehudit Shier Weisberg,
Toronto

• • •

The Purim problem

Yossi Klein Halevi's Perspectives piece, "Pesach Jews vs. Purim Jews: the agony of our dilemma" (March 14), is about those who worry about Amalek, who attacked the weakest of the Israelites as they fled from Egypt, and those who worry about taking care of Palestinian strangers. But the Purim problem – the problem of Islamism, isn't only an Israeli problem. It's a problem that affects all western nations. Its effects on Israel should not be separated from its effects on other countries, and to do so, takes it out of context. Only when Islamist attacks on Israel are seen in a universal light can the ideas of peace or annexation be genuinely investigated.

Jonathan Usher
Toronto

• • •

IAW incorrectly minimized

David Koschitzky's guest voice, "IAW is really a non-event for students" (March 7), and its headline convey the wrong impression about Israeli Apartheid Week's significance and minimize its strategic importance to Israel's foes. Whether or not the IAW has been successful in attracting mainstream media coverage – Kotchitzky reports that it has not – it still remains the most universal and most recognized "calling card" of the multiple tactics used by those who would slander and vilify Israel on campus.

IAW's proliferation, combined with a lack of an aggressive response, can and probably does spawn and encourage the other campus activity that Kotchitzky deems important enough to warrant a response – the harassment and intimidation of Jewish students, the misuse of student governments to promote anti-Israel sentiments and professorial "abuse of the podium." Now the proverbial chickens have come home to roost in the form of a resolution passed by the York Federation of Students (YFS) on March 21 supporting the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign.

Jewish Federations of Canada says that serious efforts will be taken to reverse the trend that this resolution represents, not because the resolution has practical significance, but because the student body and Jewish organizations, all obliged to pay dues, were given little forewarning of the proposed resolution by their executive on a subject that he believes holds no real interest for the vast majority. How then did these guys get elected, one wonders?

I see this resolution as a followup to the recent IAW held at York University. Surely both are connected, with the lack of firm response to the one encouraging the other.

Ron Hoffman
Toronto

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LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

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One less witness

Special to The CJN

The doctor came by to visit the day before our mother left us. As her condition had declined dramatically in recent weeks, he was checking up on her with increased frequency. Sitting at her bedside opposite my sister Rochelle and me, the doctor asked our mother in his characteristically empathetic manner how she was feeling. She smiled, clasped his hand, and in a weak yet resolute voice responded: "My bags are packed."

Appearing to change the subject, she motioned toward the blue number tattooed on her forearm and explained, as she had done countless times in the past, that this was how the Nazis tagged Jewish prisoners kept alive for slave labour at the Auschwitz concentration camp. It was not just an efficient German administrative procedure, akin to ranchers branding their cattle to keep track of them – it was actually a deliberate attempt to dehumanize the Jews. By replacing the prisoners' names with numbers, the Germans were trying to steal their souls before killing their bodies. Of all her family members deported to that hellish place, she was the only one who survived to bear witness.

Robert Eli Rubinstein

Lest the good doctor misunderstand her intentions, our mother emphasized that she was not looking for pity. After the war, she had been blessed with a wonderful husband, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And Canada proved to be an excellent country in which to build a secure and fulfilling new life. No, the reason she drew attention to the tattoo on her forearm was something else.

Her horrific experiences at Auschwitz led her to ponder how it had been possible for humankind to sink to such depths of degradation, and how it might be possible to prevent a future recurrence. She concluded that the key was for people to acknowledge their common humanity.

We might have different colours of skin, hold divergent beliefs and do things in dissimilar ways, but deep down, in our heads and in our hearts, we are all essentially alike, children of the same Creator. Tragically, we have seen how distaste for others can transmute into raging genocidal hatred, even among citizens of the most advanced, civilized countries.

We must be ever vigilant in warning people about the grave dangers of intolerance and discrimination. This was the crucial lesson she had learned at Auschwitz, and she felt compelled to convey it to all who would listen.

And so it was that an elderly woman speaking heavily accented immigrant English who had never before addressed an audience, joined the Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre Speakers' Bureau.

Again and again, our mother was to employ her personal story of survival as the framework for delivering a universal plea for tolerance to diverse groups from all over southern Ontario, non-Jews as well as Jews. She derived particular satisfaction from engaging in dialogue with schoolchildren, to whom the future belonged, thousands of them over the years.

The gates of Auschwitz

In general, she found Canadian youngsters to be profoundly ignorant about the crimes perpetrated against the Jewish People during World War II. They were invariably shocked to realize that this lovely, refined lady and her family had been marked for death simply because they were Jews. This shock provided the opening to drive home her point about the pernicious consequences of intolerance.

'We are painfully aware that the ranks of the survivors are rapidly being depleted and it is just a matter of time before they are all gone. We who remain behind must prepare ourselves for a world in which there are no living witnesses to the calamitous destruction of European Jewry.'

The doctor sat silently for a moment, tears welling up in his eyes. The elderly patient's heartfelt words had resonated deeply within him. Dispensing with professional protocol, he told us that his own late father had served in the Pacific with the Canadian Armed Forces, ending up in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp. The camp guards treated him with extreme cruelty and he bore the scars of this dreadful experience for the rest of his life, his family suffering along with him.

Right to the end, Judith Rubinstein was driven by an unwavering sense of mission. Her growing physical distress was not what preoccupied her. She had an important message to transmit to *all* mankind, including, of course, her doctor. But the universality of the message did not negate the unique particularity of the Jewish tragedy. No other people in history had ever been marked for total, utter annihilation. For my mother, the necessary response to the tragedy was a defiant affirmation of Jewish identity, which the enemy had been so determined to obliterate. Such an affirmation is manifested in living, loving devotion to the heritage of our ancestors, providing a legacy to be passed on to our progeny. This is more a matter of faithfulness than of faith, for regardless of the level of religious observance to which survivors eventually reverted, they could never escape a certain abiding skepticism regarding *Hashgacha Pratit*, Divine Providence.

At our mother's funeral two days after the doctor's final visit, I focused on what was then fresh in my consciousness, namely her fearless serenity in the face of death. A traumatized 24-year-old orphan emerging from Auschwitz could not have imagined that she would prevail to the venerable age of 92, living what would prove on balance to be an extraordinarily good life. For our mother, every single day after liberation had been a great blessing, but it was more than sufficient and she was not greedy.

Now it is time to turn our gaze to the future, which, we recognize with sorrow, will be devoid of Judith Rubinstein's potent presence.

We are painfully aware that the ranks of the survivors are rapidly being depleted and it is just a matter of time before they are all gone. We who remain behind must prepare ourselves for a world in which there are no living witnesses to the calamitous destruction of European Jewry. We have been spoiled all these years by having in our midst remarkable people like Judith Rubinstein. To be sure, they bore testimony with their tattooed forearms, resolutely refuting the scoundrels who deny the veracity of our people's tragedy; but in their successful struggle to rebuild normal, decent lives, they also gave us hope for the future of humanity.

Who will now guide us? Inspire us? Give us comfort?

We shall have no choice but to devise as best we can new ways, of necessity less direct and less compelling, to perpetuate the sacred charge of the survivors.

Let us pray that we are up to the challenge.

Robert Eli Rubinstein lives in Toronto. These remarks were delivered in February on the shloshim of Judith Rubinstein's death.

Israel and the lessons of the Holocaust

The first Crusade was proclaimed by Pope Urban II in 1095, sending thousands of men (and some women) east through German lands toward the "Holy Land," then under the rule of Muslims. Along the way, through the Rhineland and eastward, crusaders and townspeople massacred the Jews of these areas, leaving smouldering ghettos and mutilated bodies behind as they pressed forward to do God's will.

We know about some of these because we have *memorbuchen*, martyrologies written some years after the events of the Crusades, in which tales were recounted of the deaths by crusader sword. Sadly, many also died at the hands of fellow Jews who killed their families and died by their own hands rather than accept conversion.

The reverberations of those massacres were felt long after the soldiers had gone, leaving grieving survivors behind to rebuild and propelling thousands more into Poland and Russia, where they were more welcome, if still vulnerable.

In Spain, where Jews had lived for centuries in relative amity with both Christian and Muslim neighbours, the ascent of Isabella and Ferdinand spelled the end of Sepharad. The Jews of Spain were hustled out of the country or forced to convert, creating a migrant population of Sephardi Jews who, ironically, often found havens in both Catholic Italy and the Muslim Ottoman Empire.

The fate of Spanish Jewry led, as Gershom Sholem argued in his *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, to the development of a closely constructed mystical universe propagated in Safed.

Jean M. Gerber

in Vancouver

We today live in the shadow of the greatest massacre in our people's history.

Every year, new facets of this catastrophe are revealed. Individual stories of survivors are legion. Shelves of research abound. Memorial services in our communities are annual events. Centres for the study of the Holocaust are dedicated to teaching the lessons of its inception, implementation and outcome: millions dead, whole populations destroyed and remnants scattered.

The themes of "Never again" and anti-racism are prominent.

Now a question: should we, dare we, claim that the State of Israel is one outcome of that enormity? Earlier catastrophes had no such outcome, nor would the idea of a Jewish state ever been contemplated by their survivors, short of the coming of the Messiah.

Yet there it is, deep inside us, the memory of the deepest horror of our age and the brightest accomplishment within the space of a few decades.

What are we to make of the 20th century, with these bookends to Jewish life, one blood-stained and the other seemingly redemptive?

Brushing aside those who deny the Holocaust or minimize its realities, we certainly should memorialize and teach it, or else what good can come of so much suffering? The memories of the survivors are precious, and we have done well to preserve them, as soon only their printed and recorded words will remain. Even in this, we are fortunate, as past tragedies have not had similar authorities.

But the "lessons of the Holocaust" must not be trivial. We have to teach that while some individual actions mattered for good, most people and governments, including our own, turned away or actively participated. And some individuals were both heroes and villains, a bit of each depending on the circumstance. There must be nuance in what we teach.

As for Israel, is it a miracle or a human-created opportunity? Surely, six million deaths don't lead inevitably to a Jewish state. The issue is fraught. However, we can take heart from the recent speech by new MK Ruth Calderon (a student of the late Rabbi David Hartman), whose love of state and Torah are manifest. Her vision sounds like a gift that can move Israel in a new and inclusive direction.

She aspires to "bring about a situation in which Torah study is the heritage of all Israel, in which the Torah is accessible to all who wish to study it, in which all citizens of Israel take part in Torah study as well as in military and civil service. Together we will build this home and avoid disappointment."

She longs for "a day when the state's resources are distributed fairly and equally to every Torah scholar, man or woman, based on the quality of their study, not on their communal affiliation."

Her "aspiration," as she calls it, brings hope of a brighter day, one that can make us worthy descendants of the lost communities of Europe.

Freedom for agunot

We have just observed Passover, our eight-day holiday of liberation. We celebrate our freedom from slavery at this time every year and use the holiday as our freedom apparatus.

Focusing on issues of liberty and independence helps the holiday establish its relevance. In the past, we have set the table with place settings for Soviet Jewry as well as for other special causes.

In a religious framework, we say that, as God saved us, we are obligated now to turn around and redeem others. For the most part, Jews have been attentive and even resourceful in following that imperative. In both the religious and the secular communities, we have seen incredible dedication to the redemption of Jews. In fact, there has been a growing establishment working toward the recovery and improvement of all humanity.

My grandson was on a mission this past summer with a group of Jewish teenagers who went to Africa to help orphans there. They went as Jews to help non-Jews.

But there are a group of Jews who are off the radar for most of us. These are women waiting for their *get* – their Jewish divorce. They are in an enigmatic state of being married but in a dead marriage. Unable to get on with their lives, they are held hostage by men who no longer love them and no longer provide for them. And Jewish law as applied by its representatives enables them to do so!

What are we to do?

I have challenged our community for many years. During those years, we successfully asked the Canadian legislature to walk with us and work out an amendment that would ease the imbalance. We can be proud Canadians, for we have a law that helps our agunot, our women deprived of a Jewish divorce. But for full justice to be applied, for the redemption that Passover demands, we need and expect an application from within Jewish law. Pressure can come only from within the Jewish community.

So, to begin with, while Passover is fresh in our minds, we should listen to the story of an Agunah.

Then let's ask our rabbis, local national and international: What are you doing to help this woman? Where are you in this matter?"

Recently, in one of our online discussion groups, our rabbis were insulted by the strident tone of the activists. In truth, the posting was angry and fed up with all rabbis at the wasted years during which so many women languished and so many useless marches were held.

High profile cases go on and on – here in Canada, in Washington D.C. and in Israel. What good does it do to put a man in jail? The women are still alone, living in poverty and bound by a dead marriage contract. Nothing has been done in the Orthodox world to end the systemic abuse of these women carried out in the name of Jewish law.

Many rabbis have worked on individual cases, have marched

Norma Baumel Joseph

in Montreal

and spent long hours trying to convince men to release these women. These are dedicated rabbis, the "good guys." And it is these men who reacted to our strident comments. But, while so many have worked tirelessly to help individual women, none has attacked the problem at its core.

The problem resides in the law. Listen carefully to what I am saying. There are solutions. (Not prenups. That is not a solution. No *get* has been given on the basis of a prenup.) I will write it again. There are solutions in Jewish law, systemic solutions. We have waited too long for rabbis of goodwill and strength to operationally apply those available to them.

Jewish law is based on classic principles and responsa precedents. It is complex, often confusing, and marvellously flexible within its own system and parameters. No body of legislators ever intended divorce law to imprison women within this horrible state that it has become. We call on our community to call upon their rabbis to do something systemic.

Yes, keep helping the individual, but also work toward building that solid block of rabbinic responsa and action that will legitimate final redemption of the system of divorce. While Passover's message of freedom is still fresh in our minds is a good time to begin to free the system of this plague.

Movies to savour at the Jewish Film Festival

The most outstanding Jewish cultural event in Toronto is undoubtedly the annual Jewish Film Festival. This year's edition, which runs from April 11 to 21, lives up to high expectations, judging by its cinematic offerings.

"I don't go to sleep easily, ever," confesses Shimon Peres, the president of Israel, in the documentary *The Price of Kings: Shimon Peres*, which will be screened on April 15 and 16.

At the ripe old age of 87, Peres, one of Israel's founding fathers, is still in the thick of things. Many of his contemporaries are either dead or confined to senior citizen's homes. But Peres, who has filled every top position in government, is still serving his country. "The most interesting thing in life is to work," he says.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Last month, he was one of the first dignitaries to greet U.S. President Barack Obama upon his arrival in Israel for a visit. And a few days before, he formally accepted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new coalition government.

The portrait that Richard Symons and Joanna Natasegara draw of Peres in their 77-minute film is rich in nuance. Although he was never a soldier in the field, he was instrumental in acquiring the heavy weapons that the newly founded state required to win the 1948 war. Peres, as defence minister, permitted the construction of settlements in the West Bank. But as foreign minister and prime minister, he was something of a dove, pushing forward to make peace, even as Palestinian suicide bombings claimed countless victims.

"If you don't have a vision or a dream, you'll do nothing of importance," he tells an interviewer. True to this maxim, Peres has worked assiduously to secure Israel, as *The Price of Kings* suggests. Yet until quite recently, Peres, who hungers for popularity, was an under-appreciated figure in Israel. His bitter rivalry with Yitzhak Rabin was no secret, but they learned to work together to solve the pressing problems of the day.

Harry Hunkele's *Back Door Channels: The Price of Peace* (April 14 and 16) recounts in meticulous detail the frantic diplomacy that gave rise to the Camp David Accords in 1978 and Israel's peace treaty with Egypt in 1979.

When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat let it be known, in the wake of the Yom Kippur War, that he wanted to break the bloody stalemate with Israel, the United States got even more deeply involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. American, Israeli and Egyptian diplomats used unofficial channels in Morocco, Romania and Austria to facilitate negotiations, which were kick started by Sadat's historic visit to Israel in 1977.

Hunkele claims that Ezer Weizman and Moshe Dayan, the Israeli defence and foreign ministers, and Jimmy Carter, the American president, drove the incipient peace process. Menachem Begin, Israel's prime minister was not as conciliatory. Indeed, his relations with Sadat were so bad at one juncture that Sadat threatened to pull out of the talks.

Key players who participated in these complex and interminable discussions add substance to this otherwise substantive and intriguing film.

Honorable Ambassador (April 12 and 15), directed by Jonathan Paz, focuses on the tireless efforts of an Israeli ambassador to bring the benefits of drip irrigation to Africa. Miki Arbel, the Israeli envoy in Cameroon, discovers to his chagrin that local farmers are not using the made-in-Israel technology to water their fields. An agronomist by training who loves Africa, he travels around the country to ascertain why they are resistant to modernity.

An affable, well-meaning fellow who likes chatting with his African driver, he meets "kings" in flowing robes, local officials and hard working women who till the soil while their lazy spouses lounge around indolently in cafes. And while he is treated with kindness and respect, he discovers that old ways die hard in a tradition bound country. In utter frustration, he calls his wife, informing her he is at his wit's end. But then something wonderful happens to vindicate his faith in the mission. *Honorable Ambassador* is by turns amusing and endearing.

Shimon Peres

Gideon Raff's *Prisoners of War* (April 14), the Israeli pilot movie that inspired the American television drama *Homeland*, is taut and riveting. Three Israeli prisoners-of-war are returning to Israel after 17 years of captivity in Lebanon. Their families are consumed by a mixture of joy and apprehension. Sadly, another Israeli POW, having died in Lebanon, will return in a coffin. The reunions are moving, but the POWs have been profoundly affected by their ordeal, and in one particularly poignant case, a wife cannot bring herself to admit that she gave up on him and remarried.

This is tender and powerful stuff.

Norman Mailer

The Other Son (April 15 and 17), directed by Lorraine Levy, pulls at the heartstrings. In 1991, as Iraqi Scud missiles crash into Haifa, nurses in a hospital hustle new-born babies into the safety of a bomb shelter. Two of the infants, a Palestinian Arab and an Israeli Jew, are accidentally misidentified after they're returned to their cribs. The parents are unaware that a mistake has been made.

Eighteen years later, DNA tests conclusively confirm the egregious error. What are the parents to do? How will the sons react? Can this potentially tragic separated-at-birth situation be rectified?

Levy handles these explosive emotions with immense tact and sensitivity, turning in a film that leaves a viewer at the edge of the seat.

Norman Mailer: The American (April 17), a biopic by Joseph Mantegna, delves boldly and flamboyantly into the life and times of the late, great American novelist. Mailer tapped into writing while studying engineering and catapulted to fame with his first novel, *The Naked and the Dead*, which was based on his experiences as a soldier in the Pacific theatre during World War II.

Twice a Pulitzer Prize winner, Mailer was a journalist and a political activist as well. Mantegna regards his subject as a "literary rock star" who had a finger on America's pulse. In one jaunty archival clip, he jousts playfully with Gore Vidal, who was no wallflower either.

A macho man in the mould of Ernest Hemingway who revelled in boxing, Mailer had six wives and nine children, all of whom appear in this absorbing film. Mailer, essentially, was a paradox. He was a companionable husband, but a philanderer whose infidelities condemned marriages. He was a devoted and supportive father, but self-absorbed in the extreme.

George Gedeon, in the probing documentary *In the Presence of my Neighbours* (April 21), skillfully examines the historic relationship between Greeks and Jews. He pays special attention to the Holocaust period, when Germany occupied Greece, and to contemporary Greek attitudes toward Jews, which are coloured to some extent by antisemitism.

A Greek Canadian journalist from an Orthodox Christian background, he delivers a remarkably balanced account, letting the chips fall where they may. By doing so, he performs a valuable service for both Greeks and Jews alike.

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Survivor reminds students of courage and hope

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Marie Lardino, founder and principal of Voice Intermediate School expected that bringing Sally Eisner, a survivor of the Holocaust, as a guest to her school would have an impact on her students.

She wasn't prepared, however, for the impact her initiative would have on her personally.

Lardino thought it would be a "fantastic" idea to bring Eisner to the school – a small private school in Toronto's Distillery District as a follow-up to last year's Grade 7 and 8 trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

In November, Lardino met Eisner through a friend, and immediately felt a strong connection. The two women now speak virtually every day, and Lardino brought Eisner back to the school last month.

In a tribute to Eisner on her blog (http://marielardino.blogspot.ca) Lardino, nee Benitez, wrote of the resemblance in looks and loving manner between Eisner and her own aunt in Uruguay.

Eisner even ended conversations the same way as Lardino's aunt – "I love you, I love you, I love you," stressing the word "love."

Lardino, who attended Catholic school as a child in Uruguay and moved here when she was 12, only learned as an adult that she has Jewish ancestry.

Grade 8 students Philippe Blasi, centre, and Liam Mroueh reconnect with Holocaust survivor Sally Eisner on her second visit to the Voice Intermediate School.
[Frances Kraft photo]

She believes her Uruguayan-born grandmother, whose maiden name was Reiter, was Polish, although Lardino's great-grandparents were from Spain. Her grandmother used to use Yiddish words and light candles on Friday night, she recalls.

"For me, it always felt like something was missing," Lardino said.

For the 45 Grade 7 and 8 students at her school, meeting Eisner also had an impact.

The 90-year-old survivor, who grew up in the Polish town of Zaleszchyki, lost her parents in a labour camp when they were shot by Nazis and thrown into a mass grave, along with her future husband's parents. She was just a teenager at the time.

"I am not a bitter person," Eisner told *The CJN*. "I love people, and I'm not prejudiced."

Pam MacIsaac, the school's vice-principal, said the students were inspired by Eisner, and asked if they could do a followup project.

In early March, Lardino brought Eisner back to the school to see the artwork that the students had created as a gift for her.

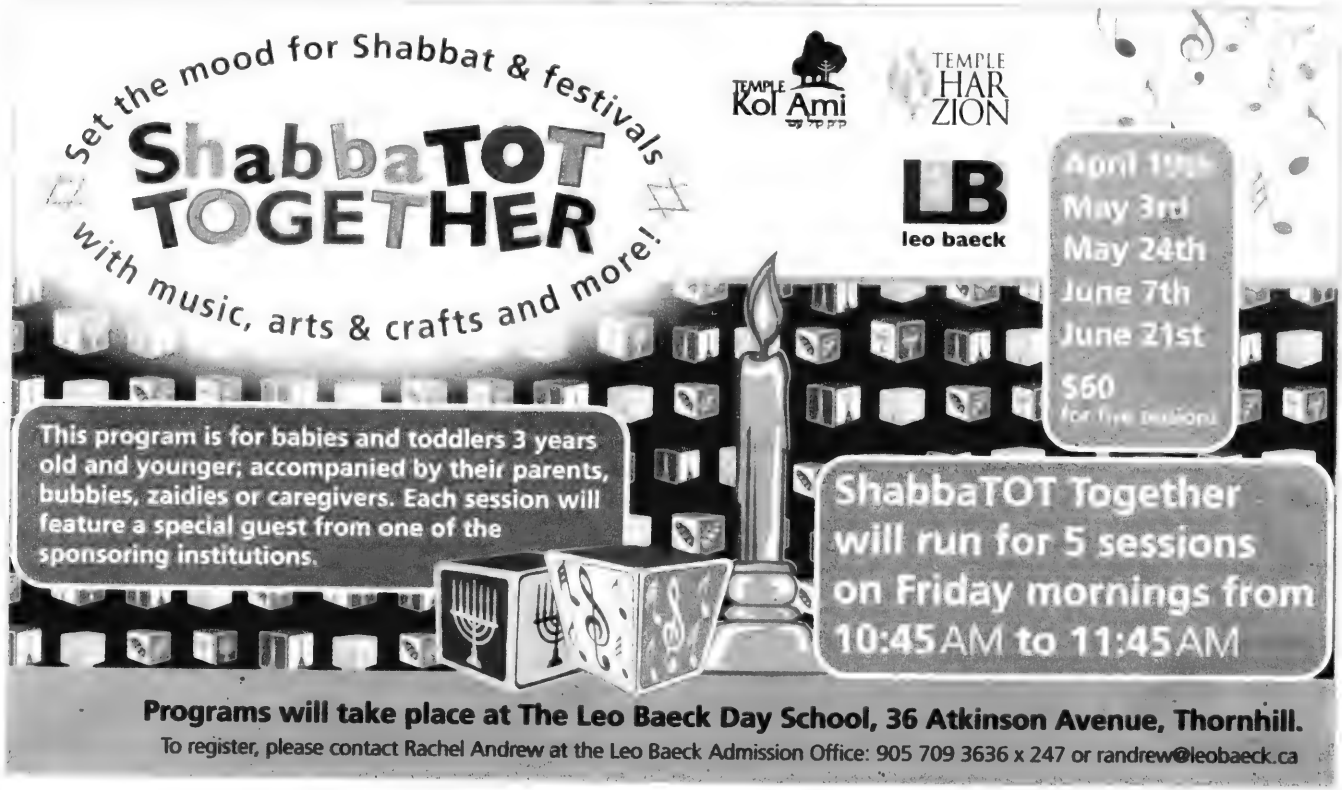
Their work featured birds to represent Eisner's freedom after the Holocaust, hearts for love, words like "courage" and "hope," and quotes that the kids remembered.

One girl told Eisner, "You inspire me because you always look on the brighter side."

Eisner told her, "I hope you'll look on the brighter side of things, and [that] you'll be surrounded with flowers."

A male classmate told Eisner that the blue swirls in the picture he helped create represent "the good in your life, and how we love you, and we always like to see you here. The red represents the not-so-good part of your life, and how it got better."

Eisner was moved by the presentations. "Everything is so close to my heart."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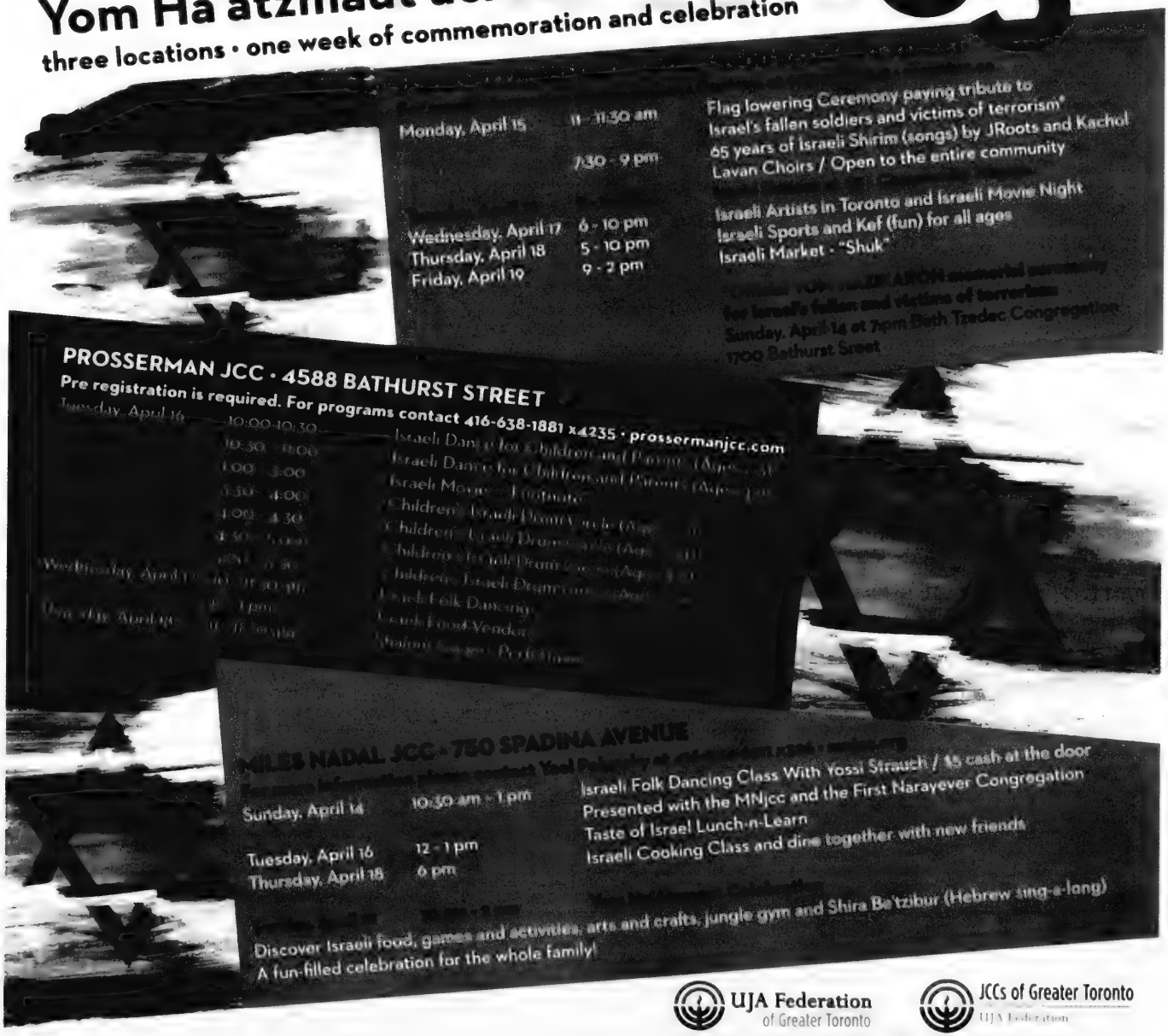
Monday, April 15 11 - 11:30 am
Flag lowering Ceremony paying tribute to Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism*
7:30 - 9 pm
65 years of Israeli Shirim (songs) by JRoots and Kachol Lavan Choirs / Open to the entire community
Wednesday, April 17 6 - 10 pm
Thursday, April 18 5 - 10 pm
Friday, April 19 9 - 2 pm
Israeli Artists in Toronto and Israeli Movie Night
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Israeli Market - "Shuk"
Sunday, April 14 at 7pm Beth Tzedec Congregation
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Israeli Folk Dancing Class With Yossi Strauch / $5 cash at the door
Presented with the MNjcc and the First Narayever Congregation
Tuesday, April 16 12 - 1 pm
Taste of Israel Lunch-n-Learn
Thursday, April 18 6 pm
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A Day with
Etgar Keret
Thursday, April 18, 2013

Join us for all of the events listed below:

Film Screening and Discussion
12:30pm–2:00pm
Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Drive

Three short films will be shown: *Skin Deep* (Directed by Etgar Keret and Ran Tal), *A Buck's Worth* (Written by Etgar Keret and Animated by Talia Rosenthal), *What About Me?* (Directed by Etgar Keret and Shira Geffen). Etgar Keret will comment on each film.

Talking Pictures Comic Jam
2:00pm–6:00pm
L'Espresso, 321 Bloor Street West

A "comic jam" is a collaborative process where a narrative comic page is created by many minds and pens (or found images) working together in sequence. Anyone can do this; if you've read a story, a comic, or had an idea, you'll be able to take part. Hosted by Talking Pictures and comic artists Ruth Tait, Dalton Sharp. Etgar Keret will be available to sign books at the beginning and will return to see the completed art work.

Warsaw House: A Public Lecture
8:00pm–9:30pm
O.I.S.E. Auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West

On the eve of the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Etgar Keret will read from his own work and talk about his experience in the Warsaw House, an art installation less than 5 ft. wide between two buildings in which he briefly lived. A book signing will follow the talk.

Free Admission | Open to the Public | No Registration Required

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TALKING PICTURES
Toronto Jewish Film Festival

Documentary captures Greek Holocaust history

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

As he chatted with friends in a coffee shop on the Danforth one day in 1999, George Gedeon, a Toronto news video editor of Christian Greek descent, suddenly realized that his knowledge of a troubling facet of modern Greek history was abysmally lacking.

When a friend mentioned that 62,000 Jews in Nazi-occupied Greece were murdered during the Holocaust, he was not only dumbfounded but embarrassed by his ignorance.

"I didn't know that," he said, adding that his schoolteachers never bothered to mention the Holocaust in their Greek history lessons.

Eager to educate himself, Gedeon, now 63, contacted the Jewish community in Thessaloniki, where 46,000 Jews were rounded up and deported to the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp between March and August 1943.

George Gedeon

"That was the beginning of my introduction to Greek Jews," said Gedeon, who freely admits he was exposed to anti-Jewish stereotypes and tropes at home during his youth.

In 2000, video camera in hand, he went to Thessaloniki and met the president of its Jewish community. He told him he wanted to make a documentary film about Greek Jewry.

"He expressed support for my project," said Gedeon, who was born in Ismailia, Egypt, lived on the Greek island of Rhodes and immigrated to Canada after the Six Day War in 1967.

Armed with grants from donors, he returned to Greece four more times in the next few years and filmed yet more footage.

Having finished his 47-minute film, *In the Presence of My Neighbours*, he presented it at the Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv in 2011. Shortly afterward, Channel 2, an Israeli TV station, broadcast it.

On April 4, the film is scheduled to be shown at Temple Sinai, and on Sunday, April 21 at 2 p.m., it is due to be screened by the Toronto Jewish Film Festival at the Sheppard Cinema 5.

In the Presence of My Neighbours is a broad and sympathetic survey of an ancient community decimated by the Nazis in a few short years. By his reckoning, Greece was home to 70,000 Jews before World War II, with the vast majority living in Thessaloniki.

Although Jews arrived in Greece during the Greco-Roman period and were integrated into Greek society, they were sometimes subjected to restrictions. And because Jews were associated with the crucifixion, and generally maintained good relations with Greece's Ottoman overlords, they aroused the enmity of some Christians, he notes.

When Greece was invaded by Italy in 1940, Jews serving in the Greek army conducted themselves with exemplary bravery. During the subsequent German occupation, Jewish citizens were marginalized, mistreated and forced to sell their properties at artificially depressed prices as most Greeks looked away in indifference.

By his estimate, 8,000 Jews survived, going into hiding with the assistance of Christians or escaping from the country altogether. Miraculously, 2,000 Greek Jews managed to return from the Nazi death camps.

In the wake of the war, Greece was one of the first European countries to repatriate property to rightful Jewish owners. In some cases, however, Jews had to launch lawsuits to retrieve stolen property.

Gedeon, in his film, claims that anti-semitism is alive and well in contemporary Greece. "Jews create problems for us," says a Greek. Still other bigoted Greeks claim that Jews were responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attack in Manhattan, deny the Holocaust and blame Jews for Greece's current financial crisis.

Gedeon is repelled by the neo-fascist Golden Dawn party, which fared relatively well in the last Greek national elections. It feeds on the dire economic situation and the presence of illegal immigrants in the country, he said.

Although embarrassed by the dark side of Greek history, the Greek government is positively disposed toward the Jewish community, he pointed out.

With only about 5,000 Jews living in Greece today, the future of the community remains murky. In an interview, Gedeon expressed optimism that it will prosper. "I do want to see Greece keep its Jews. They are happy and comfortable in Greece."

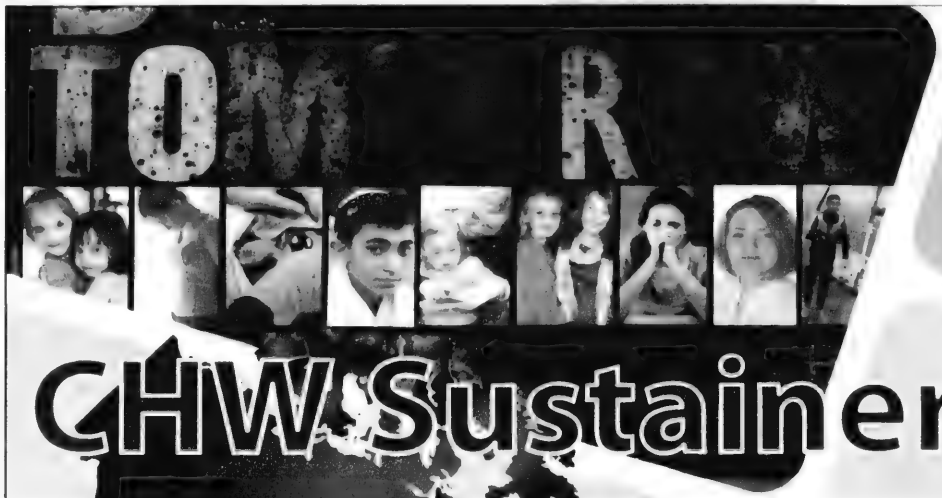
Gedeon, who recalls having seen and heard Israeli aircraft bomb Ismailia during the opening round of the Six Day War, is not certain whether his film will ever be screened in Greece.

"Holocaust survivors have told me it will never be shown in Greece," he said. "I hope they're wrong. Maybe an independent television channel will run it."

He added, "I don't dare show it to the Greek community in Canada. I've been accused of being a bad Greek. Often, they think I'm a traitor. Their first reaction is: 'You must be a Jew if your name is Gedeon.'"

Describing himself as a proud Greek patriot, he said he recoils from the unsavoury dimensions of Greece's past. Nevertheless, he fervently hopes that Greece will acknowledge its complicity in the Holocaust and come clean.

"My work will be completed if the Greek government says, 'We're sorry for what happened.'"



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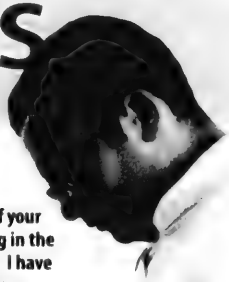

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A Holocaust story with a happy ending

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Stories about the Holocaust tend to be dark and depressing, but Jenny Lynn Witterick's debut novel, *My Mother's Secret*, breaks that well-worn template.

"I thought it would be great to write a story with a happy ending," she said last week in an interview.

My Mother's Secret, which was scheduled to be published on March 25, by iUniverse Inc., is based on real events and is a profile of compassion and courage. It unfolds in Nazi-occupied Poland as Franciszka Halamajowa, a Polish woman, and her daughter, Helena, risk their lives to save Jews and a pacifist German soldier in the town of Sokol.

Before World War II, 6,000 Jews lived in Sokol. Only 30 survived, of whom 15 were rescued by Fransciszka and her daughter.

At Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, a plaque honours them as well as the more than 6,000 Polish Christians who have been recognized as Righteous Gentiles.

Witterick, 52, stumbled on the pair in the course of watching a film, *Number 4 Street of Our Lady*, during Holocaust Education Week in Toronto in 2011.

"It mesmerized and inspired me," she said. "It was so powerful and uplifting. There is good, even amid unspeakable evil. I couldn't stop thinking about it. This was a story worth telling, and I decided to write it. Inspiration is to the mind what food is to the body."

The message that her book conveys is compelling. "We all have a choice of how we live and who we want to become. We can choose compassion and kindness just by deciding so. You don't have to be exceptional to make a difference. You can become exceptional by making a difference."

Solely on the face of it, Witterick did not seem to be a person who would compose a novel set during the Holocaust. First, she is a financial analyst and investor, president of Sky Investment Counsel, Inc., rather than a professional writer or historian.

And second, she is of Chinese origin, an immigrant from the island of Taiwan who settled in Canada with her family in 1968 and who could not be more physically removed from the wartime killing fields of Poland. But as the old aphorism goes, appearances can be deceiving.

When Witterick started Grade 2 in Toronto, she could not speak English. By Grade 4, she was a star student, having surpassed most of her classmates.

"My English teacher advised me to pursue a literary career," she recalled. But her parents' financial situation was such that she could not afford to take "a long shot" on a career in writing.

So she gravitated toward finance. "I couldn't believe people would actually pay you to analyze and figure out companies," she said.

Witterick thinks she is drawn to the Holocaust, in part, because mainland Chinese civilians were subjected to mass atrocities by the Japanese army in the 1930s.

Jenny Lynn Witterick

And there are two additional things to consider, said Witterick, whose husband, Ian, directs the ear, nose and throat department at Mount Sinai Hospital.

She has many Jewish friends, including Brian Goldstein, a business partner she has worked with, on and off, since 1986.

Witterick's mother, Shu-Haw Kwok, worked in a women's clothing factory after her arrival in Toronto, and the people who were the kindest to her were Jewish. "Maybe my mother's experience had an influence on me," she said. (Her father, Ten Char Kwok, was an aircraft mechanic at Air Canada).

Canada, too, had an impact on Witterick. "We live in a multicultural society, and where else but in Canada would a Chinese girl learn about the Holocaust?"

When all these factors are taken into consideration, Witterick could not exactly be viewed as a neophyte when she began doing the research for *My Mother's Secret*. As she said, "I don't remember when I wasn't interested in the Holocaust. I'm drawn to stories of true courage where people somehow survive and beat the odds."

Witterick had amassed a fount of knowledge on the Holocaust when she sat down to write her novel. "Over the last 20 years, I'd read many survivors' memoirs and collected a lot of detailed information you can't get from regular research," she explained. Basically, she created characters around the facts, writing *My Mother's Secret* in simple yet affecting language in the hope of appealing to a wide age group.

She wrote whenever she had a spare moment. She could not travel to Poland because her demanding schedule ruled out such a trip.

Several publishers rejected her manuscript, saying the Holocaust has been retold ad infinitum. But Witterick was not crushed by the rejection slips, being confident that her relatively upbeat tale of goodness and survival was comparatively unique in the annals of Holocaust literature.

My Mother's Secret has changed her life. "I always wanted to write, and never did until now," explained Witterick, who's currently composing another novel.

Although Witterick is appalled by Holocaust deniers, she usually ignores them. "There will always be people who don't want to believe the truth," she said. "You can't change their minds. They wear blinkers. You dismiss them."

All proceeds from *My Mother's Secret* sold at Chapters/Indigo will be donated to the Love of Reading Foundation, which buys books for poor communities.

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Son's memoir recounts dad's wartime heroism

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

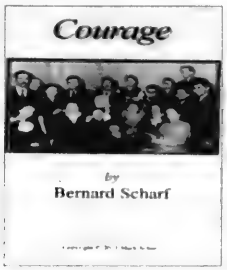
Many Holocaust survivors are reluctant to talk about what they went through during the war, but not Mark Scharf's father.

Bernard Scharf was a survivor who saved 55 people during the war. Mark Scharf recently published an account of his father's wartime experiences in a book titled *Courage*.

"Rightly or wrongly, I was exposed to my father's telling of his experiences to me from my earliest memory as a child," said Scharf, who is a lawyer in Barrie, Ont.,

"I realized much later that this was because he was proud of what he did to save himself and a total of 55 people, including some of the members of his family," he said.

"I was too young and too naive to really understand the significance of what my father was telling me. I didn't appreciate, at the time, the heroic nature of what he did and what he went through."



In the late 1970s, Scharf began recording his father's experiences. "He said that he wanted his children and grandchildren to have his written history of his experiences in the war," Scharf said.

Bernard Scharf was born in 1914 in the village of Maidan Pynanski, in part of what was then Poland, formerly known as Galicia.

Courage begins with Bernard's childhood and his experiences as a soldier during the war. He was in an anti-tank unit in the Polish army. He was on manoeuvres around Zlochev, Poland, in August 1939 when his regiment was ordered back to barracks in Zlochev on Aug. 28.

He returned to his family's farm, and eventually he and his family went into hiding from the Nazis in the forest with other Jews. The 55 people consisted of family he convinced to flee with him into the forest and stragglers who stumbled into the encampments from time to time.

In the book, Mark Scharf notes that aside from the possibility of being killed at any time and living in fear of that happening, "the physical effort to protect and feed many people on a daily basis was enormous."

As an example, while his father and the others were in hiding, his father would walk some 10 miles or more nightly in the snow, he said, without snowshoes, carrying heavy loads of food, together with a rifle and ammunition, through hostile conditions to bring supplies to the people he was caring for in the forest.

Bernard Scharf died in 1986 after suffering from dementia. Only recently, after Mark Scharf's mother died, did his sister, Esther Mandelbaum, find her father's notes. That is when Scharf decided to turn the notes into a book.

"For whatever reason, the true significance of my father's survival and heroic rescue of his extended family and others from the Nazi killing machine did not sink in until sometime after his death," he said.

Scharf told *The CJN* that his father believed it was important for his family, particularly his grandchildren, to understand his father's history, so that they could appreciate what he went through to come to a place like Canada, where they were safe and could prosper.

"I now more than ever appreciate his struggles and the self-sacrificing dimension of his personality. I believe others in the Jewish community might appreciate and be heartened by his story as well," Scharf said.

Copies of *Courage*, which includes pictures, are available by emailing mscharf@bellnet.ca or calling 1-705-487-1990.

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Winnipeg Shoah Week features new highlights

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The community's annual Shoah Week will include two special highlights this year, the unveiling of a new section of the city's Holocaust Monument, with 250 new names inscribed, and the launch of Carol Matas' latest book.

The week kicks off April 7 with the traditional memorial service in the morning at Congregation Etz Chayim in north Winnipeg, and the sixth annual reading of Megillat Hashoah in the evening at the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue in south Winnipeg. As well, during the week, there will be the other usual programs such as B'nai Brith's "Unto Every Person, There is a Name" and the public Holocaust commemoration at the Holocaust Monument on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislature, where the new section will be unveiled.

The Holocaust Monument was the first such memorial to the victims of the Holocaust to be erected on the grounds of a Canadian legislature. The original was dedicated in September 1990 by the Winnipeg Jewish community, with the support of then-premier Gary Filmon and his government, in commemoration of the Holocaust survivors and their families in Manitoba. There were 3,000 names originally carved into the monument.

"We have had an influx of newcomers in recent years," Shelley Faintuch, the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's community relations director, noted. "Also, there were people who missed the earlier opportunity to participate in this project. So, last year, we sought out others who might want the names of their family members added to the monument."

Carol Matas

The new names were inscribed last summer and fall.

"We are grateful to the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba and the provincial government's Department of Multiculturalism for their generous support of this project," Faintuch said.

She added that because of the heavy snow cover still on the ground, the memorial ceremony this year may have to be moved indoors. After the ceremony, Christine Melnick, the minister of immigration and multiculturalism, will be hosting a special reception for Holocaust survivors in the legislature's Golden Boy dining room.

The other highlight will be the release of Matas' newest book, *Pieces of the Past: The Holocaust Diary of Rose Rabinowitz*. The book launch will take place April 9, at the Berney Theatre in the Asper Jewish Community Campus, in conjunction with McNally Robinson Booksellers.

The launch is being co-sponsored by the Holocaust Awareness Committee and the Rady Jewish Community Centre.

This is Matas' 43rd book, the 11th with a Holocaust theme. The primary audience for her books are elementary (Grade 5 and up) and secondary students, but she notes that she has some adult readers as well.

Her most recent novel is based on the arrival of Jewish war orphans in Canada in 1948. The book captures young Rose's life in flashbacks in the Warsaw Ghetto and in hiding.

"Scholastic [her publisher] had [Winnipeg Jewish historian] Allan Levine go over my manuscript," Matas said. "Allan was a tremendous help."

She also credits Dan Stone, a retired University of Winnipeg history professor, for his help. Stone, who is past president of the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada, specialized in Polish history.

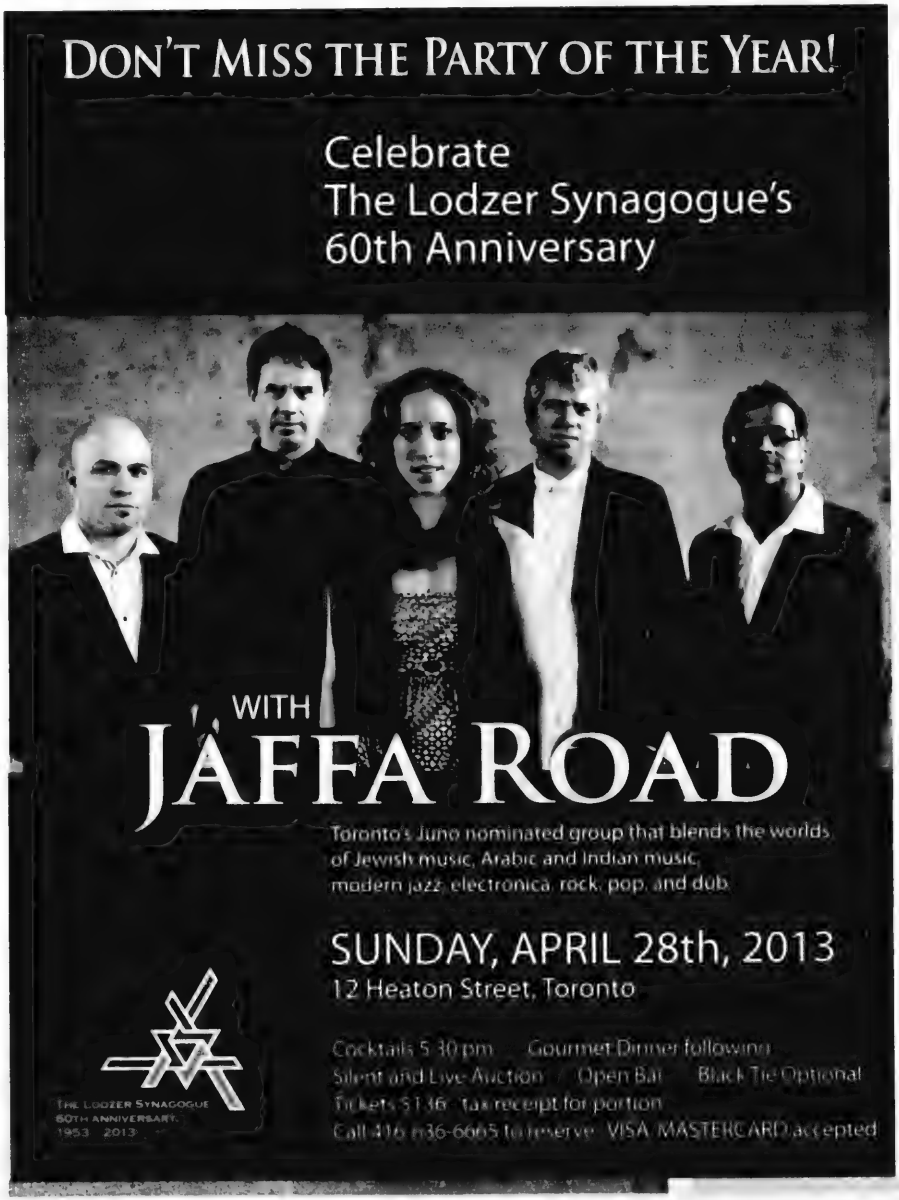
"Carol's new book is a wonderful recounting of the experiences of those orphans who came to Canada after the Holocaust, with the interplay of making new friends, adapting to a new country and reconciling with the past," Faintuch said. "It is also a look at Jewish Winnipeg at that time and the relationship with the general society. I think all of us would do well to read this book."

Matas said the book will probably be launched in Toronto in the fall.

One of her current projects is her first book just for adults. She describes *When I Die* as a coffee table book with thoughts and images related to death and dying.

"The concept came to me while I was meditating one day," she said. "My mother-in-law died last year and my father-in-law was quite ill for a time. I was thinking about them."

Her daughter-in-law, Bonnie Brask, provided the photos, she said.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Obama makes key statements about Israel

Much has been said about the significance of U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Israel and the West Bank last month. Substantial coverage focused on what was – and was not –accomplished in the context of low expectations set out in advance of the trip (as discussed in last week's According to Reports).

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

One outcome was the surprise announcement on March 22, the last day of Obama's visit, that Israel and Turkey would re-establish full diplomatic relations. This followed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's apology to Prime Minister Recep Erdogan for the deaths of Turkish citizens during the 2010 Mavi Mamara incident. Obama was widely commended for carefully guiding this important reconciliation process. (That it may not be as smooth a process as originally thought is another matter.)

Until that announcement, most western media outlets concentrated on two subjects: the impact of Obama's trip on efforts to counter Iran's nuclear threat, and the effect Obama may have on the moribund Israeli-Palestinian peace process. (Space permits only a consideration of the latter.)

The headlines in major newspapers on March 22, the day after Obama delivered an important speech to a large gathering of students in Jerusalem – but also after he spoke earlier that day in Ramallah – indicated the state of media attention: "Obama urges Israel to strike peace deal" (*Financial Times*); "Demand peace, Obama tells Israelis" (*Globe and Mail*); "Obama Lays Out Case for Israel to Revive Peace Talks" (*New York Times*).

In short, with rare exceptions, the onus fell squarely on Israel to strike a deal with the Palestinians, even though the Palestinians have long been refusing to return to the negotiating table without preconditions. The story in the *Globe and Mail* (a report from the *Wall Street Journal*) took account of Obama's visit that morning to Ramallah but began this way: "U.S. President Barack Obama exhorted Israelis to come to terms with the Palestinians following a visit to the West Bank on [March 21], appealing for sacrifice in the name of peace."

As we have seen so often, there was no mention of what, if anything, is expected of the Palestinians "to come to terms" with Israelis. This gap makes the coverage not wrong (concerning what Obama said in Jerusalem) but fundamentally incomplete. And that incompleteness – the failure to provide a full account – results in a distorted picture.

What almost no media outlet paid any attention to was a critical line from what Obama said in his 1,300-word address in Ramallah in support of a two-state solution as the only way forward for Palestinians and Israelis: "We seek an independent, a viable and contiguous Palestinian state as the homeland of the Palestinian people alongside the Jewish State of Israel – two nations enjoying self-determination, security and peace."

Obama's use of the term "Jewish state" in front of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian community was far from accidental. It was crucial and goes to the heart of the conflict: the historic refusal of the Palestinians and the broader Arab world to accept the reality of Jewish national self-determination in a small part of the Middle East.

Indeed, Obama repeated this theme (something entirely omitted from his 2009 Cairo speech), during his three-day visit beginning with his remarks upon landing in Israel on March 20: "[L]et me just reiterate that a central element of a lasting peace must be a strong and secure Jewish state, where Israel's security concerns are met alongside a sovereign and independent Palestinian state." He was most emphatic about this during his Jerusalem address, when he said the Palestinians "must" recognize Israel's Jewish character.

U.S. President Barack Obama

No wonder the Palestinians were very unhappy with Obama's message. Even though he criticized Israel over its settlement policy, saying that it's "counterproductive to the cause of peace," he did not make a halt to settlement activity a condition for resuming negotiations. But even more, he challenged the Palestinians to come to terms with the historic attachment of the Jewish People to its ancestral land.

The significance of Obama's repeated declaration on this subject should not be overlooked.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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אָבער ס'טוט זיך אויפֿן נעבּיס פֿון יידיש. אותדעזר ספֿראָך "דזשדספּיק," וווּ דער יידיש/ענגליש לעקסיקאָן רופֿט יידיש, ניט אין נייע חענן. מער מענטשן, אין אַלגעמיין, הערן יידיש און הערן באָקומט מיט אותדערע אויסדרוקן, שפּריכוואָרטער און סלענג. יידיש איז נעוואָרן אַ ניצלעכער טייל פֿון ענגליש.

די פֿון אייך וואָס קענען נישן אַ קאַמפּיוטער וויסן וואָס "ענגל" איז. דורך "ענגל" קען מען נעפֿינען אין ענטפֿער כמט צו אַלע פֿראַגען וואָס איינער קען דענקן צו פֿרעגן. חען ס'קומט צו יידיש וועט "גוגל" אייך באָקומט מאכן מיט אַלע נייע מיינונגען וואָס יידישע חערטער נעמען אין חען יי אַסימילירן זיך דורך "דזשדספּיק" און חערן פֿראָקטיש ענגליש.

דעצמט זיך ביים קאַמפּיוטער און –עפּענט "גוגל" און בעט אַז ס'זאָל אייך אַריינלאָון אין:

The Jewish English Lexicon

רער לעקסיקאָן קען מען בלויז נעפֿינען אויפֿן אינטערנעט. ס'איז צוואַמען נעשטעלט נעוואָרן פֿון "שרה. בונין כענאַ" אַ פּראָפֿעסאָר פֿון היינטצייטיק יידיש לימודים ביים "היברו יוניאָן קאָלעדש" אין לאָס־אַנדזשעלעס. די איז רער רעדאַקטאָר און שומר פֿון לעקסיקאָן. די דעצידירט חעלכע חערטער חעלן זיך שטעלן פֿאָר די ארגן פֿון די וואָס וווכן "דזשדספּיק," מע נעפֿינט שוין איבער זיבן הונדערט חערטער אין לעקסיקאָן. אויב איר האָס חערטער וואָס איר דענקט חאָלטן נעחען אַ גוט ביישטייער צו וואָקסן דעם וואָקאַבולאָר פֿון "דזשדספּיק" שיקט זיי צום לעקסיקאָן.

רער לעקסיקאָן אַנערקענט אַז רער אַמעריקאַנער יידיש איז נישט אַ גאַנצהיינשיקער ספֿארך. מיינונגען און אויסלייג ענדערן זיך פֿון גרופּע צו גרופּע. חעלטלעכע יידן קאָנען נוצן אַ חאָרט און עס נעבן אָן אַנדער מיינונג וי פֿאַרשטאַנען בי נאָר פֿרומע יידן. רער רעדאַקטאָר פֿון לעקסיקאָן שטעלט אויס ספּעציפֿישע קאַטעגאָריעס, דעמאָנסטראַטיוו אין סאַציאָלראַפּיס, אין חעלכע די נייע "דזשדספּיק" חערטער קאָנען זיך נעפֿינען. אויב איר האָס אַנדערע מיינונגען, שיקט זיי צום רעדאַקטאָר. רער לעקסיקאָן ארבעט אָפֿן חעלכן פֿרינציפּ וי ויקיפּעדיה.. ס'איז אַ לעבעדיקע זאַך. די טינס איז קיינמאָל נישט טרוקן. מע קען שטענדיק קאָרישינען. אויב איינער מיינונג האָט אַ חערדע חעט רער שומר, רער רעדאַקטאָר, עס אריינלאָון אין לעקסיקאָן. מע קען נעפֿינען דעם לעקסיקאָן דורך גוגל.

אויב איר האָס נעדאַנקען חענן אותדער חינקל שרייבם דזשם אַדער בליק- פּאָסט: info@cjnews.com

Deep-seated faith has helped us survive

Rabbi Charles Grysman

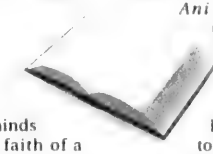
The timing of Yom Hashoah and Pesach blends recent history with the seminal event that gave rise to the Jewish People. As a child of a Holocaust survivor, both Pesach and Yom Hashoah evoke strong emotions in me. Our seders included in-depth conversations about the Exodus, the Holocaust and life in Poland before the war. My late father often expressed a profound sense of loss and emptiness, a result of losing most of his family in the Holocaust. He also exuded feelings of faith and perseverance. It was this latter quality that emphasized how faith can carry a person through any crisis.

Unquestioning faith was characteristic of the Jewish People's initial response to Moses and Aaron in Egypt. Rabbi Simcha Zissel of Kelm noted that the Torah says, "The people believed" even before Moses and Aaron had proven themselves. This happened later when Moses and Aaron went to see Pharaoh and weren't harmed by the lions that guarded the palace. Having belief precede proof showed the nation's trust and deep connection with God.

The deep-seated faith cultivated in Egypt was evident whenever the nation faced a crisis. Whether it was developing new avenues for worship after the destruction of the Temples or coping with the difficulties of persecution, the nation found a way to maintain its connection with God.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook suggests that this is why the Exodus is so dominant in Jewish liturgy. It's recited in the *Kiddush* for every holiday and explored in depth during the Passover seder. High-

Rabbinic Reflections



lighting the Exodus reminds God of the exuberant faith of a youthful nation in its God. As we find in Jeremiah (2:2), "I remember you were faithful in your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness." Exuberant faith is evident in the way we rebound from crisis. After the Holocaust, this was evident in our national resurgence through the State of Israel and in our spiritual resurgence as seen in the expanding yeshiva movement and the growth of religious Judaism in general.

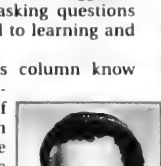
On Yom Hashoah, I will sit quietly in a memorial service and will remember those we lost. I will be overwhelmed by the trauma of losing six million Jews. I will think about the numerous family members I never met as I feel a cold emptiness in the depths of my soul. I will see my father's face and be reminded of the horrors he saw in Bergen-Belsen. I will see the strength that comes from having overcome tragedy and having the ability to begin anew. I will sing *Ani Ma'amin* and try to understand how that song of faith embodies the ongoing connection to God that was implanted in us in Egypt. I will look ahead to that burst of energy that characterized the Exodus from Egypt and will appreciate the vibrant Jewish life that is flourishing in the State of Israel and North America. I will look at my children and grandchildren and be inspired as they play a role in restoring and enhancing the dignity and vitality of our people.

Rabbi Charles Grysman is spiritual leader of Zichron Yisroel Congregation of Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto and teaches at Yeshivat Or Chaim.

Four questions about Jewish education

I write these words just days before Pesach, the holiday that, more than any other, focuses on children. We are mandated to ensure that every child – the wise and the wicked, the simple and the ignorant – be given an education, each according to their needs and abilities. The authors of the Haggadah understood that asking questions is the springboard to learning and commitment.

Readers of this column know that I often address the issue of funding for Jewish education. These pieces generate the greatest response, and the message must be repeated over and over again. We as a community can and must do more to fund Jewish education. Our response to this challenge will determine the future viability of Jewish life in the Diaspora.



The world economy is still feeling the impact of the financial crisis of 2008, and all signs point to it being years, and perhaps decades, until we're back to "normal." As I write this, banks in Cyprus are closed for fear of a run on them in reaction to the taxing of bank deposits. This, in turn, is an effort to deal with the enormous debt load in much of the Eurozone. What's so sad is that the signs of the financial crisis were there for all to see, if one cared to look. Most chose to ignore the warning signs until it was too late.

Our educational crisis is no different. On the surface, all seems fine. While enrolment has dropped almost everywhere in North America, we still have near-record numbers of students in our day school systems, and there is much to

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

praise in them. Yet we await our own tipping point and the massive drop-off in day school enrolment that will follow due to the enormous financial burden being placed on parents. It's true we survived the financial crisis, and the Jewish community will survive even if we have a 50 per cent drop-off in enrolment. That would just put us back to where we were 30 and 40 years ago. But is that what we want?

In the spirit of Pesach, I present four questions for us to ponder.

Why is it that the wealthiest generation in all of Jewish history is unable to provide free (or very affordable) Jewish education for its children?

Why have we not copied the phenomenal success of Birthright Israel, which provides free trips for thousands of Jewish youths, and expanded it to "Birthright Education"?

Why do we bemoan the high assimilation rates in our community, yet at the same time insist that we're unable – or should I say unwilling – to properly fund the one institution that has demonstrated success in producing committed Jews?

Why can Warren Buffet and Bill Gates succeed in getting the superrich to donate a minimum of 50 per cent of their wealth to charity, while our community can't get the super-wealthy among us to commit 20 per cent?

While we might debate the answers to the above questions, not enough people are even asking them. If we want to ensure the Jews of tomorrow don't become the fifth child, who doesn't even attend a seder, we must address these questions today.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Young academics study Yiddish history and culture

The majority of Jewish victims of the Shoah were Yiddish speakers. One-third of the Jews of the world were killed in the Shoah, but they comprised a much higher percentage of the world's Yiddish speakers. While the Jewish people have, thank God, managed to recover and thrive since then, many fear that the Shoah was essentially a deathblow for the Yiddish language.

Optimistic Yiddishists find signs of life for the Yiddish language. One of the most surprising ones is the resurgence of interest in Yiddish in the academic world. The number of students actually studying the Yiddish language at most universities is low, but the number of professors researching and writing about Yiddish language, literature and culture is growing quickly.

Views & Reviews

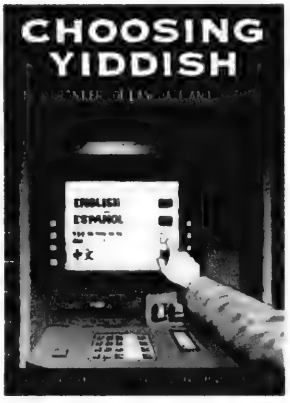
Martin Lockshin

For example, a new collection of academic essays has recently been published: *Choosing Yiddish: New Frontiers of Language and Culture*, edited by Lara Rabinovitch, Shiri Goren and Hannah S. Pressman. It contains 19 scholarly articles about Yiddish, all written in English, mostly by young academics.

Categories include "Yiddish and the City," "Yiddish Comes to America," and "Yiddish Encounters Hebrew." Although the editors explain in the introduction why the Shoah was not one of the groupings they used, nevertheless, their decision is puzzling, since the relationship between Yiddish and the Shoah shines through in a number of the essays.

My York University colleague, Kalman Weiser, has a fascinating article here about tensions within YIVO (the *Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut* [the Yiddish Scientific Institute, later renamed in English the Institute for Jewish Research]) between 1939 and 1940. The *Amopteyl* (short for *Amerikaner opteyl* or American Division) of YIVO took hesitant steps to move control of the organization and its publications to New York, at the time the city with the largest number of Yiddish speakers in the world, from the group's head office in Vilna. The YIVO office in Vilna was not pleased. It continued to see Europe, not the United States, as the centre of Yiddish culture and it was not willing to cede YIVO leadership to the Americans. Weiser's essay sheds light on the question of how much Jews in either the U.S. or Lithuania understood in 1939-1940 that the cultural dominance of Eastern European Jewry was over and that their physical end was near. Weiser highlights some of the curious ways that Lithuanian and American Yiddishists regarded each other then. In March 1940, the New York Yiddish newspaper *Forverts* wrote: "The problem with our America is what is called here making 'a living,' and in the present time it diverts much time and causes much concern. It is, however, different in Vilna. There, they don't make a living. The means don't exist... Therefore, they have more time and more patience for scholarly work."

Another Shoah-related essay is by Shiri Goren, of Yale University. She tells the moving story of the Hebrew poet and author, David Vogel (1891-1944), who was born in the Ukraine and moved first to Austria, then to the land of Israel, and eventually to France. There he was rounded up by the Gestapo and sent to Auschwitz, where he was killed in March 1944. Throughout his literary career, Vogel, a native Yiddish speaker, wrote and published only in Hebrew. But just before he was captured by the Nazis, he buried a manuscript that he had written entirely in Yiddish in the backyard of a home in Hauteville, in southeastern France. This very long manuscript of almost 150,000 words was found after the war and published both in the Yiddish original and in a Hebrew translation. Goren discusses what might have led a committed Hebraist like Vogel to return to his Yiddish roots as he felt his world coming to an end.



Aside from Shoah-related essays the book has other interesting pieces, a number of them with Canadian content. Shayn E. Smulyan of Brown University analyzes the use of Yiddish in the works of the Canadian hip-hop artist, SoCalled (born Josh Dolgin in small-town Quebec). Rebecca Margolis of the University of Ottawa describes the growth and initial success of Montreal's Yiddish-speaking National Secular Schools between 1910 and 1950. In 1955, New York City's Yiddish paper *Tog-morgn zhurnal* claimed that "if there has ever been the possibility of Jewish/Yiddish autonomy in English North America, it was in Montreal." Even today, Margolis writes, "Montreal stands out as home to one of the very few secular Jewish day school systems that continues to teach Yiddish" both at the elementary and high school levels. But the challenges were formidable even in the '20s and '30s of the last century. One Montreal Jewish educator wrote: "I recall going around in the hallways or in the yard at recess and telling the students, '*redt yidish*' [speak Yiddish]. This went on for several years until we concluded that it was pointless."

The range of topics covered is surprisingly wide, from the treatment in the Yiddish press of the 1876 murder trial of Pesach Rubenstein, the "Hasidic slasher," to the political poems written in Yiddish by Jewish leftists who were outraged by the conviction in 1920 of two Italian immigrant workers Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti for murder in South Braintree, Massachusetts, on very flimsy evidence.

I enjoyed this book and recommend it if you're interested in Yiddish. But aside from the unsystematic treatment of the Shoah, I was surprised by another glaring absence. Only one of the nineteen essays said anything about the tens of thousands or perhaps hundreds of thousands of contemporary haredi Jews who speak Yiddish on a daily basis. With no disrespect for the scholars in this book, I would suggest that the real story of the survival of Yiddish now and possibly in the future is being played out not in academia or in the world of hip-hop, but in these religious enclaves in Israel and North America. While the academic study of haredim can be challenging, scholars who care about the future of Yiddish would be wise to pay close attention to the only sizable community that is really "choosing Yiddish" in our post-Shoah world.

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Orthodox synagogue planning to rebuild

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — After a couple of false starts, south Winnipeg's Herzlia-Adas Yeshurun synagogue, the city's largest Orthodox congregation, is back on track to the future.

The congregation, which numbers just under 100 member families, has for several years needed to replace its physical systems – including the close to 60-year-old building's original boilers. The matter came to a crunch last fall when the boilers were officially ruled out of service.

It is also necessary to improve the acoustics and to make the building – which has three levels – more energy efficient and more accessible to the very young, older people and those with physical disabilities.

The congregation originally announced a fundraising campaign last winter. The stated goal was to raise somewhere between $1.5 and $2 million to tear down the current structure and replace it with a smaller building on one level.

Other than a fundraising dinner last May, little more was heard.

The second chapter began last summer when the Herzlia board approached the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg with an offer to turn over ownership of its building and land to the federation. In return, the federation would help with the cost of replacing the worn out boilers and generally upgrading the building.

Federation president Israel Ludwig noted at the time that the federation was looking for a space for 60 new daycare spaces. "We have received a government grant to open 60 additional daycare spaces but lack the room at the Asper Campus to expand the existing daycare," he said. "It's a case of if we don't use it [the grant], we lose it."

The federation provided funding to hire a contractor and architect to draft a new initial building plan and drawings for the synagogue. That plan largely fell through when the federation saw the costs that would be involved.

It looks as if the third chapter will be the one with the happy ending for south Winnipeg's only Orthodox congregation. Herzlia president Earl Hershfield has announced that synagogue members have pledged close to $900,000 to upgrade their shul.

How large a building Herzlia will build depends on the federation-Rady Centre response, Hershfield said. "If we have to go on our own, we will build a smaller shul on one level. There are also other potential sources of funding we can look into."

Hershfield believes it would be a win-win for Herzlia and the community if the federation would put the additional daycare spaces into the new building.

Bob Freedman, the federation's longtime executive director, indicated that the federation will soon be on board. "Negotiations between the Rady JCC (the federation beneficiary that would operate the daycare) and Herzlia are going well, and an agreement looks to be close to completion," Freedman said. "Assuming an agreement is reached, the federation would be putting more than $500,000 into the Herzlia project. We should be able to finalize this at our next board meeting on April 3."

Herzlia Synagogue
(Myron Love photo)

The congregation traces its origins back 106 years to the founding of the Adas Yeshurun congregation in the old north end. In 1955, the congregation chose to merge its synagogue with the Herzlia Academy, a Jewish school that had been opened in south Winnipeg the year before.

"My family and I believe that Winnipeg needs a strong Orthodox shul and we want the Herzlia to be that shul," Hershfield said.

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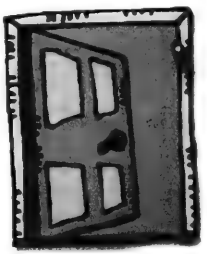

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SAD SCENE: Miriam (Lexie Zeitz) and Amram (Dylan Zitsow), from Temple Sinai Nursery School, are very sad because they have to put their son Moses into the Nile River to save him.

MATZAH MEETING

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen, left, and his son, Mendy, presented matzah to MPP Monte Kwinter at Queen's Park on March 22. Kwinter also sold his chametz during the meeting.

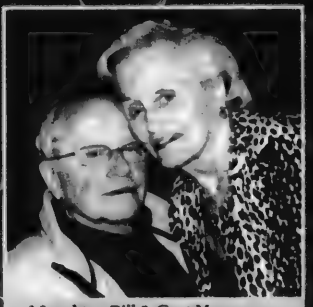
HELPING VE'AHAVTA: Grade 5 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School worked together to donate 25 food baskets to Ve'ahavta in honour of the agency's Tikun Olam Community Passover Seder. Pictured is the entire 5B class, along with Jewish studies teacher Hava Bercovici and Ori Belmont of Ve'ahavta.

Mazel Tov

מזל טוב

Our 5th generation has arrived! Jamie Logan, born Dec. 28, great-great-grandson of Sadie Brenner, great-grandson of Ida Dick, grandson of Susan Dick & son of Lauren Greenbaum.

Mazel tov to Ashley & Michel on your engagement! Love from Dennis Malet, Jacques & Isabel Ohayon, and families. Sadly missed is Paula Malet.



Mazel tov Bill & Gert Nyman on your 65th wedding anniversary. May you share many years of happiness. With love from you children and grandchildren.

Happy 90th Birthday Eleonora Berku The most dynamic safta, mother and friend. With love and admiration Dida, Jacob, Nami, Ariel and Naomi

Brenda & Jack Noodelman and Fagie & Sol Zbriger are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children, Carly & Michael.

Welcome Jack Sawyer Trister, born Nov. 16 to Carly Pouchet & Noah Trister. Grandparents, Elaine & Ricky Pouchet, Gail & Neil Trister.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: April 8 is the deadline for the issue of April 18. April 15 is the deadline for the issue of April 25. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 4

YOM HASHOAH

George Gedeon discusses "Antisemitism in Greece During the Holocaust," 7 p.m., Temple Sinai.

Friday, April 5

THE WAY WE PRAY

Rabbi Richard Sarason, scholar-in-residence at Temple Kol Ami's weekend, discusses "The Way We Pray." Workshops will be held tonight at 7:30, tomorrow at 9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. To register, 905-709-2620; www.kolami.ca.

Saturday, April 6

TORAH STUDY

Lou van Delman discusses the parashah at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Sunday, April 7

JEWISH HISTORY

Paul Liptz discusses "The Jewish People: Forging New Links in an Ancient Chain," 10 a.m., Temple Har Zion. $20. RSVP to karen@arzacanada.org.

PAMPER PARTY

Na'amat Canada Toronto holds a pamper party, with pamper stations, guest speakers and prizes, 1-4 p.m., Borochov Centre. $20 in advance, $25 at the door. 416-636-5425 or www.naamat events.com.

FALSETTOS

Artistic directors **David Eisner** and **Avery Saltzman** discuss their play *Falsettos*, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. RSVP 416-487-3281.

YOM HASHOAH

Oraynu Congregation holds a Holocaust remembrance service, 7 p.m., 18 Wynford Dr. www.oraynu.org.

Vera Schiff, a survivor of Terezin, speaks at a Holocaust memorial service, hosted by Beth Zion Congregation and B'nai Shalom V'Tikvah, 7 p.m., 144 King St. E., Oshawa. 905-493-0167.

Monday, April 8

BOOK CLUB

Ruby Newman discusses "My Russian Grandmother and Her American Vacuum Cleaner" by **Meir Shalev**, Beth Tzedec Synagogue. Dessert at 1 p.m., review at 1:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

JEWISH ITALY

Information night about City Shul's trip to Italy (Nov. 3-11), Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. RSVP rabbi@cityshul.com; 647-799-3557.

YIDDISH CONVERSATION

A Yiddish conversation group starts today, 1:30 p.m. at the Prosserman JCC and April 10, 7:30 p.m. at the Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. To register, call United Jewish People's Order, 416-789-5502, or the Prosserman JCC, 416-638-1881, ext. 4235.

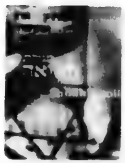
Tuesday, April 9

SATELLITE AT SINAI

Temple Sinai broadcasts a discussion in honour of the Anti-Defamation League's centennial. Doors open 7:30, program starts at 8:15 p.m.

Continued on page 25

Yom Hashoah
10th Annual Public Reading of



Megillat Hashoah: The Shoah Scroll

A Community Commemorative Service at
Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am
55 Yeomans Road, Toronto
Sunday, April 7 at 7:30 p.m.

with Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, Rabbi Philip Scheim
Cantor David Edwards, Cantor Marshall Loomer, Cantor Alex Stein
The Renanim Youth Singers, *Susan Michaels, Director*
Josef Peleg, *Violin* and Judith Peleg, *Piano*

Untold numbers were forced out of their homes, torn from their families, trampled in the dust, worked to death... Countless trains stuffed with human cargo sped to the camps, where from chimneys smoke ascended to God. Megillat Hashoah 1:8-9,13
Never will I be able to forget, and never will I have the power to understand.... For these do I weep... for those who sanctified God's name and the name of the people of Israel, refusing to be subdued, fighting to the death... for infants who never learned to say "Mommy," for boys and girls whose youth was stolen from them. Megillat Hashoah 5:13,15

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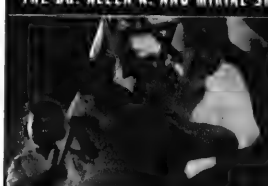

The Next Generation of Israeli Leaders

April 13 to 14

Shabbat, April 13—Services at 8:45 AM

Pulpit Lecture by Rabbi Richard Yellin
Pressure Cookers on Campus: From Students to the Next Generation of Israeli Leaders

Following Services and a special Kiddush, **Pnina Gaday** will speak on ***My Zionist Dream: From Ethiopia to Jerusalem*** with an introduction by Rabbi Yellin

Rabbi Richard (Yitzhak) Yellin
Educational Consultant to the Hillel organization on the campuses of Israel's universities

Sunday, April 14 at 10:00 AM

Pnina Gaday will discuss ***The Challenges of Being Jewish on Israel's Campus: My Role as Hillel Director***

Pnina Gaday
Director of Hillel at Tel Aviv University

No charge. Everyone welcome.

Beth Tzedec Congregation
[illegible] Bathurst Street Toronto, ON
[illegible]-3511 Email info@beth-tzedec.org
[illegible]tzedec.org

בית צדק
Beth Tzedec Congregation

Continued from page 24

IDENTITY FRAUD

Ellen Roseman discusses "Identity Fraud and Credit Card Theft," Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Lunch at 12:15; program at 12:45. 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

BIBLE STUDY

Mitch Parker teaches a 4-session course on "A Psychologist Looks at the Book of Genesis," 7:30 p.m., Pride of Israel Synagogue.

Carl Ehrlich discusses the Book of Psalms, Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 10

ORCHESTRA OF EXILES

StandWithUs Canada shows the film *Orchestra of Exiles*, 7 p.m. Varsity Cinemas, 55 Bloor St. W. For tickets, 416-966-0722 or merylek@standwithus.com.

Thursday, April 11

TEMPLELICIOUS

Rose Reisman demonstrates recipes, Temple Sinai, 7 p.m. $25. 416-487-3281.

TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL

Israeli Consul General **DJ Schneeweiss** discusses current events in Israel, 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Other News

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

Registration is open for Temple Emanu-El's lecture series on Mondays, 2 p.m., April 15-May 13. $45 for the series/$10 lecture. Call 416-449-3880.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Meals on Wheels needs volunteers to deliver meals to seniors. Call **Karen Sacke**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES

Sylvia Warsh teaches creative writing at Bernard Betel Centre, Thursday mornings, starting April 12. Call 416-225-2112.

CARD GAMES

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays 1:30 p.m. Lessons at 12:30 p.m., Mondays. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

High Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents to lessen the impact of divorce on their children. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. April 4, 6:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage-preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the next year. Starts April 4, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec synagogue.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts April 16, 7 p.m.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 27, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m.; April 25, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers +65: A 6-session group for men and women over 65 who have recently lost a partner or spouse, starts April 18, 1 p.m.

Younger Widows/Widowers: A 6-session group for people under 60 who have recently lost a spouse, starts April 23, 7:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Function in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals about higher-order thinking skills and children, April 24, 7 p.m.

Adult Children Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts April 30, 7:30 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association for Jewish Seniors. "Tax Tips for Seniors," with **Jamie Golombek,** April 18, Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. RSVP 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Bingo, April 9, 12:30 p.m.; Casino Rama, April 17; Sunday dance, April 21, 7 p.m.; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. An archeology class, "The History of Ancient Israel," taught by **David Lipovitch**, begins Thursdays, April 4, 1 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starting in May. Become a more informed patient, a better caregiver or a more competent guardian of your well-being. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Baycrest is offering a falls-prevention course for older adults living in the community who have fallen or have a fear of falling. OHIP covered. Course starts April 15. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

Hadar Senior Citizens Social Club is looking for new members. The club meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food, card games and casino trips. 416-256-1892.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. **Corey Keeble** speaks about synagogue architecture in North America, April 4 and 11, 1:30 p.m.

Osnat Lippa presents "Influential Jewish Artists and Their Art," April 16, 23, 30. $36.

Circle of Care/Baycrest Day Centre for Seniors provides a secure Jewish environment for seniors with dementia. Transportation provided. Call 905-738-1128.

A Support Group for Russian-Speaking Seniors is offered by Circle of Care. Call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or ext. 477.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

One Step Ahead Mobility offers a dance class for all abilities, starting April 4. Call ext. 4235

Tickets for theatre day trips now on sale. Registration now open for spring courses.

Courses offered: Bridge levels 1-3 start April 8; Mah-jong evening class starts April 8, daytime class starts April 10; Advanced bridge starts April 11.

"Europe United and Divided," taught by **Hugh Innis**, starts April 9; "What's So Funny: The Complex World of Comedy," taught by **Kevin Courrier**, starts April 10; "Influential Jewish Artists," taught by **Osnat Lippa** starts April 11; Yoga with **Dorry Korn** starts April 11.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Registration for spring classes is now open.

What Is Toronto? A performance curated by Toronto historians and civic thinkers will be presented April 5, Al Green Theatre. Pre-show chat 7:30 p.m., show at 8 p.m.

Zuzana Sermer, author of *Survival Kit*, gives a Yom Hashoah lecture, April 7, 11 a.m.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers. April 8, "Adaptation/Americana," 7 p.m.

MNJCC Hebrew Institute. Hebrew literacy and conversation for adults, starts April 8.

Adult and children swim classes start April 20. Call ext. 530.

The MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

The Women's Chorus with conductor **Gillian Steyck** meets Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m. No auditions needed.

Jewish Chanting Circle meets April 10, 7:30 p.m. with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**.

Baruch Sienna teaches "Introduction to Judaism," April 11- May 2, 7:30 p.m.

Nurture: Stories of New Midlife Mothers is in the gallery until April 21.

Young Frankenstein presented by the Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre, April 11-21. 416-324-1259.

Call for submissions for the Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition 2013. Deadline is July 2, 2013. For guidelines, see www.mnjcc.org/CJPC.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

StrollerFit class for mothers and babies starts April 11. Call **Tonya**, ext. 3028.

Registration now open for the centre's big band, starts April 10. Call **Staci**, ext. 3037.

PJ Library time with a Yiddish twist, May 5, 3:30 p.m.

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BDS resolution passed at York University

Undergrad student union represents over 52,000

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Canada's largest university student association has passed a resolution to endorse the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel.

The York Federation of Students (YFS), which represents more than 52,000 undergraduates at York University, voted on the resolution at a March 21 board meeting, after the Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA), a campus group, collected the requisite 5,000 student signatures to force the item onto the YFS' agenda. SAIA began collecting the signatures last fall.

The vast majority of YFS members present at the meeting voted for the motion, with 18 in favour, and only two against, according to a statement from SAIA.

In addition to having the YFS endorse the BDS campaign, the resolution also calls on York itself to "abide by the BDS call; specifically urging the university to withdraw its investments from Northrop Grumman, BAE Systems, Amphenol and other companies that are selling weapons and military equipment to Israel," SAIA said.

The YFS is the third student union in Toronto to endorse the BDS campaign in the current school year. The University of Toronto's Graduate Student Union and York's Graduate Students Association both voted to do so last fall.

Chaim Lax, president of Hasbara at York, a pro-Israel group, said he was upset by the March 21 result, since he believes the majority of York students don't support the boycott.

In a joint statement issued by Hillel and Hasbara groups at York, Lax called the BDS endorsement "fundamentally racist, and a possible violation of the university's anti-discrimination codes."

Ever since York's graduate students association passed its BDS motion last November, Jewish and pro-Israel groups at York have tried to galvanize student opposition to the BDS campaign, collecting some 4,000 signatures on a petition against it.

Five members from Hillel and Hasbara, including Jessica Cherkasov, president of the Hillel-affiliated York Students for Israel, spoke at the March 21 YFS meeting, presenting their own petition against BDS and urging the student federation not to vote on SAIA's motion.

Some pro-Israel supporters also questioned the vote's validity, saying they were surprised the YFS allowed SAIA to present the motion immediately after the group said it had gathered 5,000 signatures from York students, since the signatures hadn't been checked.

SAIA said it reached its total on March 19, but an external audit to verify the authenticity of the signatures had not been completed before the YFS meeting.

The issue of the signatures' validity was raised at the meeting, but did not affect the outcome of the vote, Lax said.

"Those signatures have not been verified for authenticity or duplication," said Howard English, senior vice-president of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. "We don't really know whether these are 5,000 genuine students."

The decision to hold the March 21 vote was made the previous day, giving pro-Israel students little time to mobilize.

Nevertheless, about 100 pro-Israel students showed up to the meeting, carrying Israeli and Canadian flags, Cherkasov told *The CJN*.

Cherkasov added that she's dismayed that the YFS, which is supported by mandatory dues from York undergraduates, would take a stand on a non-student issue, especially one that it says doesn't have strong student support.

"While we may have lost the vote, we do feel like we do have the support of the majority of students on campus who don't want to see their student government, to which they owe money, radicalized or politicized," Lax said.

Now that the motion has passed, SAIA will try to "bring its demand for divestment to the York University administration by lobbying for the implementation of a socially responsible investment policy," the group said in its statement.

However, York spokesperson Janice Walls noted that the YFS is completely independent from the administration.

"York University uses best practices in developing its policy on investments, and this is built on advice from major investment consulting firms," Walls said.

The pro-Israel students say the YFS vote has only strengthened their resolve.

"We will not let the YFS intimidate us and other groups," Cherkasov said. "We came in with a very positive attitude. We wanted to show that we have a unified front, as we always do."

The motion passed just two weeks after SAIA hosted Israeli Apartheid Week at York.

Representatives of SAIA and the YFS could not be reached for comment.

Jews, Rwandans to hold joint commemoration

Compiled by CJN Staff

More than half of Canada's Holocaust survivors and more than 5,000 members of the Rwandan community call Toronto home. This year, the commemorations of the atrocities that affected their communities fall on the same date.

In recognition of both Holocaust Remembrance Day and Rwanda Genocide Memorial Day, a compelling program hosted by the Azrieli Foundation on April 8 at Ryerson University will bring together survivors from the two communities.

"People from both these communities have had to overcome so much in their native countries and have contributed so much to their new homes in Canada. There is a great deal to learn from one another and much to share as they remember their distinctive pasts," said Naomi Azrieli, chair and executive director of the Azrieli Foundation.

"First-hand testimony is a powerful way to understand the incredible lives they have lived and remember those whom they have lost. It is our collective responsibility to make sure the next generation is aware of the atrocities that still face so many people around the world today, and with this knowledge, stand up for human rights in the future."

"Write to Heal: Genocide and Memoir" will explore the process of healing through writing and the power of personal testimony with survivor and academic speakers:

- **Rachel Shtibel**, Holocaust survivor and author of her memoir, *The Violin*.
- **Dr. Régine King**, assistant professor of social work at the University of Manitoba and Rwandan genocide survivor who is currently writing her memoir.
- **Dr. Paula David**, Institute for Life Course and Aging and the faculty of social work at the University of Toronto, who will discuss her work with Holocaust survivors and the challenges, benefits and effects on older adults of sharing their personal narratives.
- **Leora Schaefer**, Canadian director of Facing History and Ourselves, who will discuss the impact of memoirs on future generations.

The event will run from 7 to 9 p.m. at Ryerson University, 350 Victoria St., Toronto, Library 22. The event is open to the public but requires an RSVP to: susan@azrielifoundation.org or 416-322-5928.

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Bulgaria: EU could still act against Hezbollah

JTA

SOPHIA — Bulgaria will provide further evidence to persuade the European Union to designate Hezbollah's armed wing as a terrorist entity, the country's premier said.

Some EU countries were "not sufficiently convinced" by Bulgaria's evidence of Hezbollah's involvement in a suicide bombing last year that killed five Israeli tourists and a bus driver, Marin Raikov, Bulgaria's interim prime minister, said in Brussels on March 27.

"We will continue the investigation," he said. "We will continue to work on this very seriously, very actively. We will provide the needed evidence."

Raikov also said his country would not request the classification of Hezbollah as a terrorist entity. "It's not for Bulgaria to initiate the technical procedure for the listing. I think that our partners will be able to do this once they reach a certain level of consensus on this issue," he said.

Bulgaria accused the Lebanese militant movement on Feb. 5 of carrying out a bomb attack on a bus in the Black Sea city of Burgas that killed the Israelis and their Bulgarian driver last July.

This led the EU to consider putting the group on its list of terrorist organizations, and discussions are now underway about whether to do so.

Many European governments are cautious about imposing sanctions on Hezbollah, arguing it could fuel tensions in the Middle East. Some have demanded evidence that withstands a trial.

A number of European diplomats have said that the conviction in Cyprus last week of a Hezbollah operative charged with plotting attacks on Israeli tourist targets, combined with the Bulgaria findings, has increased the likelihood of a designation.

The Netherlands is the only EU member state to officially consider the South Lebanese Shi'ite Hezbollah movement and militia terrorist entities, as do Israel, Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Britain considers only the group's military wing a terrorist entity.

Russian-Jewish oligarch was hanged, autopsy finds

JTA

LONDON — Russian-Jewish oligarch and Kremlin critic Boris Berezovsky was hanged, a post-mortem examination found.

There was no sign of a violent struggle, the *Independent* reported, citing Thames Valley Police. Further tests will take several weeks, the newspaper reported.

Berezovsky's body was found March 24 in the bathroom of his home in the London area.

Berezovsky, 67, once the richest man in Russia, fled to Britain about 10 years ago following a falling out with Russian President Vladimir Putin amid fraud charges that Berezovsky said were politically motivated. The Moscow native, the son of a Jewish father and a mother with Jewish roots, immigrated to Israel in 1993 but later renounced his Israeli passport, according to the Israeli news website Walla.

Berezovsky became a strident and frequent critic of Putin, accusing the leader of ushering in a dictatorship.

He accumulated his wealth in the years following the collapse of Soviet Russia by acquiring local firms, including oil companies and television stations, rising to prominence during the term of Boris Yeltsin in the 1990s. Russian media reported recently that Berezovsky had suffered heavy financial losses.

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ABOUT YAD VASHEM
Yad Vashem The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, is the universal guardian and imparter of the *Shoah's* (Holocaust's) legacy and the protector of human values. Visited by over one million people annually, Yad Vashem is internationally recognized as being at the forefront of Holocaust commemoration, education, documentation, and research.

ABOUT THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM
The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem is one of Yad Vashem's largest and most prominent societies of its 28 representative bodies worldwide. The Society supports Yad Vashem's initiatives and implements its important vision across Canada. Through its educational and commemorative activities, the Society carries out Yad Vashem's mission of ensuring that the Holocaust and its lessons are forever engraved in the memory of humankind.

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Mixed response to Israel's flotilla apology

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Minister of Economics and Trade Naftali Bennett criticized Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's reaction to Israel's apology to Turkey on March 22 for the May 2010 Gaza flotilla incident in which nine Turkish nationals were killed.

"Since the apology was made public, it seems Erdogan is doing everything possible to make Israel regret it, while managing a personal, vitriolic campaign at the expense of Turkish-Israel relations," Bennett, who is the head of the national religious Jewish Home party, wrote on his Facebook page on March 27, in a post titled "IDF fighters, we are always with you."

Naftali Bennett

On March 26, Erdogan outlined, Turkey's conditions for full normalization with Israel. In addition to an apology over the Marmara episode and compensation to the victims, Turkey was also insisting that Israel lift its naval blockage of Gaza, he told lawmakers in the Turkish parliament.

The Turkish leader called the Israeli apology a "victory" for his country and its allies in the region, including Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal, the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* reported. While the apology was initially welcomed as an important first step toward patching up relations, Erdogan said that an Israeli refusal to lift the blockade would be a deal-breaker.

Bennett warned Erdogan in his post that should "any future terror be aimed at us, our response will be no less severe," adding that "no country is doing Israel a favour by renewing ties with it."

Bennett ended his post by praising the Israel Defence Forces, telling its fighters that it is their duty to do everything to protect Israeli citizens, making sure they know that "the people of Israel are behind you."

Jewish Home MK Ayelet Shaked called Erdogan an "Islamist antisemite" on Channel 2 and reiterating that he was making Israel regret its apology.

MK Hanin Zoabi, who represents the Balad, was on the Mavi Marmara when it was boarded by the IDF's Shayetet 13 naval commandos on May 30, 2010. He said on Channel 2 that "what happened on the Marmara was not an operational mistake. What happened was a hijacking of the boat, an attack on the boat and the killing of nine activists."

She added that Turkey should demand an apology about the killings, the violence and the hijacking of the boat, but said that if she were Turkish, she would also feel national pride over Israel's apology Friday. "Israel refused to apologize for a long time... and, in the end, Israel gave in to the Turks and it's a source of pride," said Zoabi.

The Prime Minister's Office issued a statement on March 22 announcing that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had spoken with Erdogan and "expressed regret" for "operational errors" made during the raid on the blockade-busting Mavi Marmara. The announcement came just as U.S. President Barack Obama wrapped up his three-day visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories and was about to fly to Jordan.

Erdogan has consistently and sometimes vehemently opposed Israel in the international arena. In February, he compared Zionism to antisemitism and other "war crimes," precipitating a torrent of criticism from Israel and the international community.

Netanyahu, according to his office's account of the phone call, did not agree to lift the blockade. Netanyahu told Erdogan "that Israel has already lifted several restrictions on the movement of civilians and goods to all of the Palestinian territories, including Gaza, and added that this will continue as long as the quiet is maintained," his office said in a statement. "The two leaders agreed to continue to work on improving the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories."

Israel and Turkey have entered negotiations on a compensation package for the affected families, but these talks hit a snag on March 27 when it appeared disagreements arose over the sum of payments to the families, with Turkey demanding $1 million per victim, and Israel offering $100,000.

Timesofisrael.com

'Turkey has been a friendly country to Israel'

Continued from page 1

In response to these developments, Babali, a career diplomat who has served in Washington, D.C., London and Sofia, Bulgaria, said that Israel's apology was a long-standing demand after Israeli troops stormed the Mavi Marmara, the lead ship in a flotilla of ships heading toward Gaza.

"We never bluffed. We just insisted on a case we thought we were right. We stressed time and time again that Turkey has been a friendly country to Israel and the Jewish people. That was the main reason we expected an apology," Babali said.

"If we had not considered Israel as a friend we respected or valued the centuries-long historical bonds between our two nations, our reaction since the very beginning would have been totally different. Only true friends apologize to each other."

Tuncay Babali

Israel's apology was the outcome of "arduous negotiations" stretching back three years, he said.

The dispute worsened in February when Erdogan, a sharp and outspoken critic of Israeli policy vis-a-vis the Palestinians, described Zionism as a "crime against humanity" on a par with antisemitism and fascism. Erdogan claimed he had been misunderstood, but his slur sparked an international furor.

Netanyahu called it a "dark and slanderous remark." United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon described it as "hurtful and divisive." U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said he found it "objectionable."

A March 22 communiqué issued by Netanyahu's office elaborated on his apology by phone earlier that day: "In light of Israel's investigation into the incident, which pointed to a number of operational mistakes, the prime minister expressed Israel's apology to the Turkish people for any mistakes that might have led to the loss of life or injury and agreed to conclude an agreement on compensation."

Erdogan accepted the apology, saying he attaches "importance" to "the shared history and centuries of old ties of strong friendship and co-operation between the Jewish and Turkish peoples." He added that the deterioration of relations had been "regrettable," given Turkey's "vital strategic" relationship with Israel.

Erdogan, who plans to visit Gaza in April, also noted that Israel has substantially eased restrictions on the entry of civilian goods into the Palestinian areas, including Gaza, and that Turkey and Israel would work together "to improve the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories."

On March 25, Erdogan suggested that normalization would take effect only after Israel pays compensation and lifts its siege of Gaza. On March 27, the *Jerusalem Post* reported that a dispute on the level of compensation has broken out, with Turkey reportedly demanding $1 million for each person killed and Israel apparently prepared to pay $100,000.

Israeli President Shimon Peres had words of praise for the reconciliation agreement, while Gen. Benny Gantz, the Israeli chief of staff, said it "advances our interests."

Netanyahu said the current civil war in Syria was a major factor in his decision to issue an apology. Avigdor Lieberman, the former Israeli foreign minister, called the move "a serious mistake."

Babali, noting that Turkey was the first Muslim nation to recognize Israel and pointing out that Turkey and Israel had "strong political, economic and strategic" relations before the Mavi Marma incident, said that Turkey values its historical ties with Jews.

"We never had any problem with the Jewish People," he said. "When Jews were expelled from Spain, Portugal and elsewhere in Europe, the Ottoman sultan issued a formal invitation and sent his navy to bring them to Ottoman lands.

"During the 19th century, Jews from Russia found sanctuary in Ottoman land. And in the 1930s, a new era of Turkish assistance to Jewish refugees began when thousands of Jews fleeing Nazi persecution found refuge in Turkey or safely moved to Palestine [from Turkey]. Turkish diplomats in Vichy France, the island of Rhodes, in Greece and in other places put their lives on the line to save Jews."

Claiming that Erdogan is not an antisemite, Babali declared, "I categorically reject the smear campaign of labelling our prime minister, or other [Turkish] leaders, as antisemitic. Our leaders have stated on numerous occasions that they, like the rest of the Turkish people, are not antisemitic. Antisemitism is alien to the Turkish people, culture and tradition. Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu have said numerous times that antisemitism is a crime against humanity, and never questioned Israel's legitimate right to exist and its security concerns. Our sincere efforts in mediation between Israel and Syria between 2002 and 2009 should be seen as an indication of our approach."

Turkey supports all efforts to find "a just, lasting and comprehensive" solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of a two-state solution, Babali said.

Early this year, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon disclosed that Israel was prepared to mend relations with Turkey. Shortly afterward, Israel sent messages to Ankara voicing an interest in creating a more "positive dynamic" in its badly strained ties with Turkey. In the wake of this report, *Ha'aretz* reported that Netanyahu had rejected an offer by the then-Israeli defence minister, Ehud Barak, to write an apology to his Turkish counterpart.

In February, the Turkish newspaper *Radikal* reported that Israel might be ready to apologize. The report was published as Israeli and Turkish officials met in Rome to resolve the conflict.

Netanyahu's national security adviser, Yaakov Amidror, accompanied by the former director of the Israeli foreign ministry, Joseph Ciechanover, held talks with the director of Turkey's foreign ministry and Turkey's former envoy in Israel, Feridun Sinirlioglu. These discussions, however, ended in failure.

Late last year, Tzipi Livni, Israel's current justice minister and former foreign affairs minister, attempted to defuse the tension by seeking a meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, but he declined to see her.

'When good people do nothing', evil can triumph

Compiled by CJN staff

U.S. President Barack Obama visited Yad Vashem on March 22. He visited the Hall of Names, the Museum of Holocaust Art, participated in a memorial ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, and visited the Children's Memorial, before signing the Yad Vashem guest book. He was accompanied by Israeli President Shimon Peres; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; chair of the Yad Vashem directorate Avner Shalev, and chair of the Yad Vashem Council, Rabbi Israel Meir Lau.

In the Yad Vashem guest book, President Obama wrote, "We are ever mindful of the incredible human cost of the Holocaust, an evil unprecedented in the annals of history. And yet we recognize, through this place, the triumph of the Jewish people and the human spirit, and vow to be ever vigilant in preventing such horror from ever happening again."

From left, Israeli President Shimon Peres, U.S. President Barack Obama, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, chair of the Yad Vashem directorate, Avner Shalev, and chair of the Yad Vashem Council, Rabbi Israel Meir Lau.

At the conclusion of visit, President Obama said the following:

"And to them I will give my house and with my walls a memorial and a name, an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. President Peres, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Chairman Shalev, Rabbi Lau, thank you for sharing this house, this memorial with me today. Thank you the people of Israel for preserving the names of the millions taken from us, of blessed memory, names that shall never be forgotten.

"This is my second visit to this living memorial. Since then I've walked among the barbed wire, the guard towers of Buchenwald. Rabbi Lau told me of his time there, and we reminisced about our good friend Eli Wiesel and the memories that he shared with me. I've stood in the old Warsaw Ghetto with survivors who would not go quietly.

"But nothing equals the wrenching power of this sacred place where the totality of the Shoah is told. We could come here a thousand times and each time our hearts would break. For here we see the depravity to which man can sink, the barbarism that unfolds when we begin to see our fellow human beings as somehow less than us, less worthy of dignity, and of life. We see how evil can for a moment in time triumph; when good people do nothing, how silence can abet a crime unique in human history.

"Here we see their faces and we hear their voices. We look upon the objects of their lives, the art that they created, the prayer books that they carried. We see that even as they had hate etched into their arms, they were not numbers, they were men, and women and children, so many children, sent to their deaths because of who they were, how they prayed or who they loved. And yet here alongside man's capacity for evil we also are reminded of man's capacity for good. The rescuers, the Righteous Among Nations who refused to be bystanders, and in their noble acts of courage, we see how this place, this accounting of horror, is in the end a source of hope, for here we learn that we are never powerless, in our lives we always have choices. To succumb to our worst instincts, or to summon the better angels of our nature, to be indifferent to suffering wherever it may be, whoever it may be visited upon, or to display empathy that is at the core of our humanity, we have a choice to acquiesce to evil or to make real our solemn vow never again. We have a choice to ignore what happens to others or to act on behalf of others and to continually examine in ourselves, whatever dark places there may be that might lead to such actions or inactions.

"This is our obligation, not simply to bear witness, but to act. For us in our time, this means confronting bigotry and hatred in all its forms, racism, especially antisemitism. None of that has a place in the civilized world, not in the classrooms of children, not in the corridors of power, and let us never forget the link between the two. For our sons and daughters are not born to hate. They are taught to hate.

"So let us fill their young hearts with the same understanding and compassion that we hope others have for them. Here we hope, because after we walk through these halls, after you pass through the darkness there is light. The glorious view of the Jerusalem forest, with the sun shining over the historic homeland of the Jewish people, a fulfilment of the prophecy: You shall live again, upon your own soil. Here on your ancient land let it be said for all the world to hear, the State of Israel does not exist because of the Holocaust, but with the survival of a strong Jewish State of Israel such a Holocaust will never happen again. Here we pray that we all can be better, that we can all grow like the sapling near the Children's Memorial, a sapling from a chestnut tree that Anne Frank could see from her window. The last time that she described it in her diary she wrote: 'Our chestnut tree is in full bloom; it is covered with leaves. It is even more beautiful than last year.'

"That's a reminder of who we can be. But, we have to work for it. We have to work for it here in Israel, we have to work for it in America, we have to work for it around the world. To tend the light and the brightness as opposed to our worst instincts. May God bless the memory of the millions. May their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal life, and may each spring bring a full bloom even more beautiful than the last."

Reprinted from the Yad Vashem website.

Israel Briefs

Arab Israeli is top singer

A Christian Arab from Acre became the first Arab contestant to win the popular television talent show *The Voice*. Lina Mahoul, 19, beat out Ophir Ben Shitrit, an Orthodox girl from Ashdod, to win the second season of the series. Mahoul sang Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah* in the final episode of the program to clinch the win. Throughout the season, she had been mentored by Israeli singer Shlomi Shabat, who chose her in a blind audition. Last season, Canadian-born immigrant Kathleen Reiter took home the win.

Zygier's inadvertent costly leak

The man known as "Prisoner X" unwittingly caused the arrest of two Hezbollah supporters who were spying for Israel, a German magazine claims. Ben Zygier, the Australian-Israeli who allegedly was a Mossad agent, leaked highly classified information in a botched attempt to recruit a spy for the agency, according to an expose in *Der Spiegel*. Zygier, who had been returned from the field to a desk job at Mossad headquarters, was attempting to restore his reputation at the spy agency by attempting to turn an enemy into an ally, the magazine wrote. In the end, however, Hezbollah managed to extract from him the names of two Lebanese men working for the Mossad – Ziad al-Homsi and Mustafa Ali Awadeh – who were arrested in 2009 and sentenced to 15 years in jail, the magazine said. The report said Zygier started working with the Mossad in 2003, but was ordered back to Israel in 2007 because he was not delivering for the agency. He returned to Melbourne and operated independently in an attempt to restore his reputation, the magazine claimed. But, as he tried to prove his bona fides to a man linked to Hezbollah whom he wanted to become a double agent, he was the one who became the double agent, leaking the classified information.

UN worried at Syrian rebel movement

The UN Security Council voiced concern about the presence of Syrian government and rebel troops in the demilitarized area separating Syria from the Israeli-held Golan Heights. "The members of the Security Council expressed their deep concern at the risks that all military activities in the area of separation, conducted by any actor, pose to the long-held ceasefire and the local population," the Security Council said in a statement read aloud Wednesday by the Russian ambassador, Vitaly Churkin. A Security Council release named Syrian government and rebel troops as entering the demilitarized area. The UN Disengagement Observer Force monitors an "area of separation" between Syrian and Israeli forces, a narrow strip of land running 45 miles from Mount Hermon on the Lebanese border to the Yarmouk River frontier with Jordan.

Files from JTA

Obama meets wannabe future head of Intel

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — With the retirement of Intel CEO Paul Otellini, the company is looking for a replacement who can help lead it to greater success. Various names have been bandied about, including Intel executive vice-president David (Dadi) Perlmutter from Israel.

But there's another candidate from these parts: Jerusalem resident Sa'id Haruf, 26, a top-level Intel engineer who'd like the opportunity to run Intel himself. That, at least, is what Haruf told U.S. President Barack Obama when he visited the Israel Museum for a look at top Israeli high-tech inventions and innovations.

Haruf was there representing Intel, as well as Maantech, the hi-tech "finishing school" for Israeli Arabs, which was developed to help them become more integrated into Israel's hi-tech scene. Haruf told Obama about Maantech, which trains Israeli Arabs to interview, prepare resumes and improve their Hebrew and English skills.

The encounter impressed the president sufficiently that he referred to Maantech when he later spoke at a press conference in Ramallah. Israelis and Palestinians, Obama said, "are both very entrepreneurial peoples," and could work together to advance the entire region, as they do "in a program that helps Israeli Arabs" in Israel's hi-tech industry "started by Cisco CEO John Chambers." Obama added that he had heard about the program at the museum.

"Imagine if you could have a strong Palestine that could create jobs and prosperity for all," Obama said.

Haruf was being just a bit tongue in cheek when he told Obama that he wanted to run Intel. "I would settle for something smaller, too," he told the *Times of Israel*. But for Arab college graduates seeking a hi-tech career in Israel, Intel is one of the best places to apply. The company has 600 engineers from the Arab sector. It's the largest hi-tech employer of Israeli-Arabs – and it has been for decades – Haruf said.

"My message to Israeli Arabs is that with determination and hard work, they can get jobs in hi-tech, and advance to senior positions. I want to increase the motivation of other young people to study engineering and other hi-tech subjects, and not be afraid to look for work in the industry," Haruf told Obama.

Then, he told Obama about his own plans. "In 20 years' time, I want to be president of Intel" or some other large hi-tech company "that provides opportunities and jobs for Arab students."

Obama's response? "He sort of chuckled, and said 'Why not?'" Haruf said.

Haruf studied in Lebanon and is now working on a master's degree at the Technion in Haifa. He lives in east Jerusalem, and admits to feeling uncomfortable among Israelis, mostly because of the different cultures among Jews and Arabs, and the language barrier. There's also discrimination in the workplace against Arabs, he said, because many Jews, in their turn, are ill at ease with Arabs.

But he feels quite comfortable at Intel, where his wife also works. "I have never experienced any discrimination in the company, neither in Israel nor in the United States, where I was working for several years. In addition, there is only full respect for my culture, from all perspectives. Intel has made it a policy to seek out people from other cultures and to promote diversity, in the belief that different people will contribute different ideas, which can be used to revolutionize technology."

Maantech is a great tool to ensure that engineers and other tech workers from the Arab sector can cope in the Israeli hi-tech sector, Haruf said.

The program was established in 2011, after President Shimon Peres and Cisco CEO John Chambers met at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. At the meeting, the two discussed ways to help bridge the gap between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as with its own Arab population. Hi-tech seemed an obvious solution, and to that end Peres and Chambers established the program.

Making water better, molecule by molecule

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

BE'ER SHEVA — Israel's got one of the most advanced water desalination programs in the world and dozens of successful water conservation and reclamation projects.

Now, cutting edge Israeli research on water technology will make its way to American academia, as the University of Chicago (UChicago) and Ben-Gurion University (BGU) have signed a partnership agreement to create new water production and purification technologies for deployment in regions of the globe where freshwater resources are scarce – based on nanotechnology.

Israel is a world leader in desalination technology. At this plant near Hadera, salt water is converted to fresh water that can be used in agriculture or for human consumption. *(Flash90 photo)*

The plan includes the establishment of a research centre based in both Chicago and Be'er Sheva where "the molecular aspects of water science and technology will result in a powerful new approach for addressing the various and pervasive challenges to the global water supply," said UChicago president Robert Zimmer at a recent signing ceremony in Chicago with BGU president Rivka Carmi.

Nanotechnology is the science of manipulating molecules to achieve positive results, and is responsible for major advancements in areas such as medicine and energy. As applied to water, nanotech could speed up and lower the cost of desalination, more effectively recycle waste water, save water in manufacturing, utilize water better for energy production, and others. Ben-Gurion, located on the cusp of the Negev desert, is one of Israel's most experienced water technology institutions; the school has hundreds of patents for water technologies.

Leading the Chicago side of the collaboration will be Matthew Tirrell, the Pritzker director of UChicago's Institute for molecular engineering. Tirrell's team will include scientists from Argonne National Laboratory, which UChicago manages for the U.S. Department of Energy. Leading the Israeli side will be Moshe Gottlieb, BGU's Frankel Professor of Chemical Engineering.

"Water is the most fundamental molecule for sustaining all forms of life, but it is in dramatically short supply in many parts of the world," Tirrell said.

"Water in all parts of the world faces numerous threats, which in turn endanger human and economic health."

The dangers include increased demand driven by energy production, agricultural run-off, depletion and contamination of aquifers by salt water and by industrial, organic and biological toxins.

"Such large-scale problems must be met by solutions developed from a comprehensive and integrated science and technology base of the type we will establish between the University of Chicago and Ben-Gurion University," Tirrell said.

UChicago and BGU researchers will meet next month in Be'er Sheva to begin discussing interdisciplinary collaborative water-related research projects of technical and societal significance. Joint activities may include the exchange of visiting faculty members, researchers and students; the development of funding proposals for collaborative work; and the creation of innovative commercial technologies and new business ventures, BGU said.

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A definitive biography of Leonard Cohen

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Everybody knows that Leonard Cohen is the man. An acclaimed poet, novelist and songwriter, he is Canada's answer to America's Bob Dylan.

Cohen's advancing years should indicate he is well past his prime, but the opposite is true. Like old wine, Cohen gets better with age, at least judging by a concert in Toronto I attended last December. For three hours, he regaled thousands of fans, who burst into applause when he finished one of his signature brooding numbers.

Although Cohen is a public figure, he is a shy, private person. Sylvie Simmons, in *I'm Your Man: The Life of Leonard Cohen* (McClelland & Stewart), breaks past his façade in a definitive biography.

A music journalist who has closely followed Cohen's career, Simmons is nothing if not meticulous. Her book is a primer on the importance of excellent research.

She starts with his "privileged" background in Montreal. The scion of a wealthy and accomplished family originally from Lithuania, Cohen was born in 1934 and raised in the lap of luxury in Westmount, a fashionable neighbourhood in the folds of Mount Royal. Cohen's father, Nathan, was a manufacturer of formal wear. His mother, Masha, was a rabbi's daughter who spoke Russian and Yiddish.

At Masha's encouragement, Cohen took piano lessons, only to switch to the clarinet. Along with two McGill University friends, he formed a country-and-western band, The Buckskin Boys, which catered to the then popular square-dancing market.

Cohen was drawn to poetry after reading *The Selected Poems of Federico Garcia Lorca*. But like some men of his generation, he trafficked in poetry to attract women, having learned that "stories and talk" were an irresistible combination.

In Simmons' estimation, he became a poet at McGill, his talents honed, in part, by the courses of Louis Dudek. Cohen's first published collection of poems, *Let Us Compare Mythologies*, edited by Dudek, brought him to the attention of the media. His second volume of poetry, *The Spice-Box of Earth*, published five years later in 1961, prompted a *Toronto Star* reviewer to hail him as "probably the best young poet in English Canada right now."

Thanks to his foray into poetry, he met Irving Layton, 22 years his senior. They could not have been more different, suggests Simmons. Layton was a brazen self-promoter, while Cohen was modest and self-effacing. Yet the pair maintained a durable friendship until Layton's death.

Simmons devotes considerable space to Cohen's sojourn on the Greek island of Hydra, and her focus on it is justified. After visiting Israel for the first time, Cohen discovered Hydra, a haunt of bohemians where he felt at home. There he met Marianne Ihlen, the first love of his life, and wrote his first two novels, *The Favourite Game* and *Beautiful Losers*.

Disappointed by their lack of financial success, Cohen talked about becoming a folk music performer and making records. But it was not until 1967, with the *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, that he finally made his debut.

Curiously enough, he did not like touring. He had a problem with stage fright and feared that his songs would not be appreciated. As Simmons writes, "He wanted to protect them, not parade and pimp them to paying strangers in an artificial intimacy."

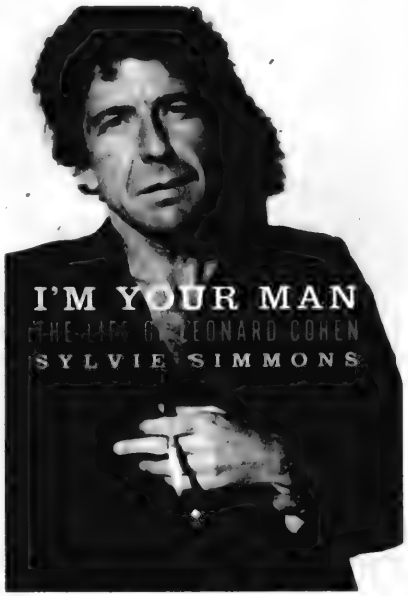
Nonetheless, he flew to Israel to perform for Israeli troops during the Yom Kippur War. His motives were pure. "I've never disguised the fact that I'm Jewish, and in any crisis in Israel I would be there. I am committed to the survival of the Jewish people."

For the next few weeks, Cohen travelled by truck, tank and jeep to entertain soldiers up to eight times a day. And he wrote a song, *Lover Lover Lover*, in Israel.

Despite his affinity for his Jewish background, he was attracted to Buddhism, a topic Simmons explores at length. Cohen joined the Mount Baldy Zen Center, high in the San Gabriel mountains and some 80 kilometres east of Los Angeles.

He lived austerely in a simple cabin set on the grounds of a monastery, and according to Simmons, he was quite happy performing menial tasks and cooking for and chauffeuring around its spiritual leader.

Cohen likened the Zen Center to a hospital and himself and his fellow residents to "people who have been traumatized, hurt, destroyed and maimed by daily life."



Leonard Cohen

In 1996, three years into his experience on the monastery, he was ordained a Zen Buddhist monk. But in 1998, he left Mount Baldy, where at times he had found contentment and where he wrote 250 songs and poems in various states of completion.

Cohen prospered as an entertainer, only to find out in 2004 that his longtime manager, Kelley Lynch, had swindled him out of millions of dollars and brought him to the brink of bankruptcy.

As Simmons observes, Cohen was tempted to cut his losses and walk away from the disaster that had befallen him. His lawyers balked, informing him that a lot of the missing money in retirement accounts and charitable trust funds left him liable for crippling tax bills.

Eventually, Cohen recovered some of the stolen funds, but the fiasco prompted him to return to the stage. "Of all the options available to him for making a living, the only one that appeared even remotely feasible was going back on the road," writes Simmons.

He was 73 when he began to consider the possibility of resurrecting his concert career. Yet he was torn by nagging doubts, fearing he might embarrass himself in front of audiences.

His fears were misplaced. Cohen's first gig, in Fredericton, N.B., on May 11, 2008, was a resounding success.

More bookings kept coming and again he triumphed, in countries as far-flung as Serbia, Israel and Turkey.

Cohen's concerts in 2008 and 2009 grossed more than $50 million, and in the process, he earned back all that he had lost.

At this point, he could have retired without too many qualms, she writes. Instead, with his *Old Ideas* tour, which touched down in Toronto's Air Canada Centre late last year, he has chosen to enlarge his already considerable fan base and burnish his reputation as a Canadian legend.

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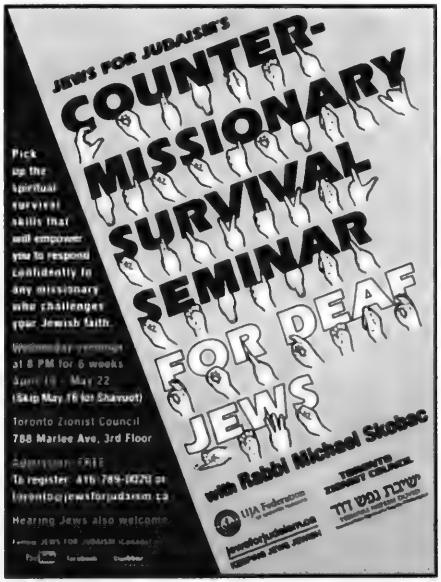
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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

ISROCK FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE ISRAEL'S 65th INDEPENDENCE DAY

In celebration of Israel's 65th Independence Day, Motek Cultural Initiative presents the Isrock Festival, featuring top Israeli entertainers, including the renowned Israeli hip-hop ensemble **Hadag Nahash**, the popular Israeli rock band **Mashina** and Israel's new "it girl," **Yael Deckelbaum**.

The event also features authentic Israeli cuisine and more. Sound Academy, 11 Polson St. Sunday, April 28, doors open 7 p.m., concert starts 8 p.m. General admission $65, students $55. VIP tickets $180 include pre-reception, open bar, reserved box seating, artist meet and greet, and more. For details or to order tickets, visit www.motekculturalinitiative.com or http://www.motekToronto.com

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Golden Oldies for a Good Cause: Adath Israel Congregation hosts a doo-wop concert as a "Guys & Dolls Nite Out" in support of the Jewish National Fund. Stellar list of performers includes **Charlie Thomas** of the **Drifters**, **David Somerville** of the **Diamonds**, **Kenny Vance** and the **Planotones**, the **Marcels**, **Kathy Young** and **Jay Siegel**'s **Tokens**. Hear such oldies as *The Lion Sleeps Tonight, Blue Moon, Stand by Me, Under the Boardwalk, Why Do Fools Fall in Love?* and more.

General admission $100, premium admission $250 (reserved section). Partial tax receipts available. Adath Israel, 37 Southbourne Ave. Tuesday, May 28. Doors open 6 p.m., concert starts 7 p.m. Funds raised help renovate schoolyards of the Ilanot Special Needs School in Jerusalem. 416-638-7200, ext. 130; email jnftoronto.ca

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Classical Music: Pianist **Daniil Trifonov** and violinist **Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg** make their Koerner Hall debuts on April 14 and 19 respectively. As part of the Invesco Piano Series, the charismatic young Russian, Trifonov, whom the *Washington Post* has described as "freakishly brilliant," plays a program of **Scriabin**, **Liszt** and **Rachmaninov**'s *Variations on a Theme of Chopin*. Salerno-Sonnenberg and pianist **Anne-Marie McDermott** perform Dark & Light, a concert of works by **Arvo Pärt**, **Prokofiev** and **César Franck**. 416-408-0208, www.performance.rcmusic.ca

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Tribute to Marlene Dietrich: Hungarian-born singer-model **Masi (Eisler)**, who studied at the Budapest Conservatory and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, performs the signature hits of legendary singer Marlene Dietrich, accompanied by **Norman Amadio** at the piano. Numbers include *Lili Marlene, Falling in Love Again* and *The Boys in the Back Room*. Barbara Frum Library, Wednesday, April 10, 2 p.m.

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Educational Outreach with Film: FilmMatters is the Toronto Jewish Film Festival's popular educational outreach program for students. The screenings are free and include a special guest speaker from the film, as well as a teacher resource package, prepared by FilmMatters curator **Susan Starkman**. The films are screened at the Royal Ontario Museum Theatre on April 15, 16, 18 and 19, and are recommended for students of varying ages who attend with their classes from school.

Rabbi Miriam Margles

This year's lineup includes the Azrieli Short Film Series with guest **Judy Abrams**, author of the memoir *Tenuous Threads; Nono, the Zig Zag Kid*, a Dutch-Belgian production based on a novel by **David Grossman**; *Louder Than a Bomb*, which tells the story of four Chicago high school poetry teams as they prepare for and compete in the world's largest youth slam, with guest **Nate Marshall**, slam poet featured in the film. *400 Miles To Freedom*, about the ancient Beta Israel community of Ethiopian Jews, with film director **Avishai Yeganyahu** in attendance.

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Arts in Brief

• Pianist **Fern Lindzon**, also gifted on the harmonium and melodica, plays during the Toronto Silent Film Festival presentation "1000 Laffs: Slapstick Smorgasbord." Fox Theatre, 2236 Queen St. E. $12. Sunday, April 7, 4 p.m. www.ebk-ink.com. Lindzon also plays piano and sings with various artists at the Rex Jazz and Blues Bar, 194 Queen St. W., on April 9, 16, 23 and 30, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. http://therex.ca

• Critic **Adam Nayman** presents "The Coen Brothers in Nayman's Terms," a series of discussions of the films of the acclaimed film artists **Joel and Ethan Coen**. The focus is on "Adaptation and Americana" as Nayman discusses the films *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and *No Country for Old Men* at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Monday, April 8, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 drop-in per class, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Awakening the Voice, Sounding the Soul is a Jewish chanting circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles**. Chants range from stirring traditional prayers and chassidic niggunim to contemporary Jewish chants. Miles Nadal JCC, Wednesday, April 10, 7:30 to 9 p.m. $10 drop-in.

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents **Osnat Lipa** discussing influential Jewish artists. $36 series, $15 at the door. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesdays, April 16, 23 and 30.

• Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre present *Young Frankenstein*, the new **Mel Brooks** musical that is "lab-tested and scientifically guaranteed to be electrifyingly exuberant entertainment." Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, April 11 to Sunday, April 21. $32, students and seniors $27. 416-324-1259.

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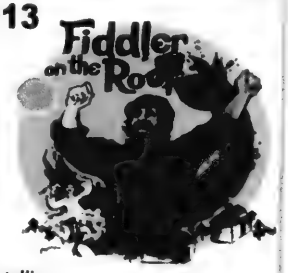

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Film Festival offers an eclectic lineup

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

This year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival, which runs from April 11 to 21, has an eclectic lineup of movies from around the world.

A sampler:

Roberta Grossman's rousing documentary, ***Hava Nagila (The Movie)***, joyously explores the origins and success of a song that has seeped into Israeli and American cultures and graced countless Jewish weddings and bar mitzvahs. Described as a kitschy yet profound tune signifying hope, *Hava Nagila* is, depending on your view, a "portal" into Jewish history and tradition or a "greasy cliche" of Jewish music.

Rainbow **unfolds in the Gaza Strip after an Israeli army patrol is ambushed.**

Grossman takes us on a sentimental journey to the rustic Ukrainian town of Sadagora, where *Hava Nagila* was apparently born, the brainchild of a cantor named A.Z. Idelsohn, who was inspired by chassidic *nigun*. Or maybe, as she suggests, it was written by Moshe Nathanson, whose proud American descendants sing his praises.

Hava Nagila, fused with the Romanian hora dance, became the unofficial folk song of a nascent Jewish nation in Palestine. In contemporary Israel, however, it is not so popular. But in the United States, it was immensely popular in the Jewish community and a mainstream hit sung by the likes of Connie Francis, Harry Belafonte and even Bob Dylan. In the former Soviet Union, chanteuse Regina Spektor claims, it was a symbol of resistance to cultural and religious oppression. *Hava Nagila (The Movie)* moves along at a steady clip, and is hugely entertaining.

Bloor Cinema on Sunday, April 21 at 8 p.m.

Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy, by Michael Kantor, contends that the Broadway musical is basically a construct of the Yiddish theatre and of cantorial melodies, and that it played a meaningful role in giving American Jews "a shot at acceptance" in the United States.

The evidence is irrefutable, judging by the preponderance of Jewish composers and lyricists on Broadway. Their plays have run the gamut from *Show Boat*, *Oklahoma* and *South Pacific* to *West Side Story*, *Funny Girl* and *Cabaret*.

Among such shining luminaries as Oscar Hammerstein, George and Ira Gershwin, Jerome Kern and Irving Berlin, Cole Porter was singularly the only gentile in the pre-World War II period who composed for Broadway. And he supposedly claimed that he was successful solely because he wrote "Jewish tunes."

In the more modern era, the authorship of Broadway musicals has rested with, among others, Alan J. Lerner, Stephen Sondheim, Leonard Bernstein, Jerry Herman and John Kander.

Broadway Musicals, featuring interviews with composers and historians, is thoroughly fascinating.

Royal Ontario Museum, Thursday, April 18 at 1 p.m.

The festival's opening night film, ***CowJews and Indians: How Hitler Scared my Relatives And I Woke Up In An Iroquois Longhouse – Owing the Mohawks Rent***, is an original film that teeters on the edge of the surreal and the absurd. It is also, sometimes at least, hilariously funny.

The filmmaker, Marc Halberstadt, tries to reclaim property his Jewish parents lost after the rise of Nazism in Germany. He devises an ingenious scheme to achieve his objective: Let native American people lodge the reparation claim.

What, you may ask, is the connection between the Nazis and aboriginal Americans? Halberstadt's mother, Milly, who immigrated to the United States in 1937, bought a house in Malone, N.Y. on land owned by Indians. Get it?

Halberstadt leads a native American delegation to Germany, and the Germans react with a mixture of puzzlement and bemusement.

Bloor Cinema on Thursday, April 11 at 8:30 p.m.

Rainbow, by Eliran Elya, is set in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip in 2004. After an Israeli army patrol is wiped out by Palestinians in an ambush, a group of Israeli soldiers move in to secure the area and retrieve body parts. They decamp in a Palestinian home, expecting to leave shortly. As they wait, boredom descends and tension breaks out. What happens next is the stuff of grief and tragedy.

Elya keeps the film moving at a breathless pace, and the acting is on a high level.

Innis Town Hall, Monday, April 14 at 8:30 p.m.

Aya, directed by Mihal Brezis and Oded Binnun, unfolds during one afternoon and evening in Israel as a Danish music researcher arrives and is met at the airport by a total stranger who drives him to his destination in Jerusalem.

Aya (Sarah Adler) is waiting in the

Continued on page 37

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Novelist inspired by his grandmother's stories

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

When Kenneth Bonert was a boy in Johannesburg, South Africa, his grandmother would regale him with nostalgic stories about her shtetl in Lithuania, where she was born and raised.

Speaking mostly in Yiddish, with snippets of broken English thrown in, Hanna-Raizel, a gentle and loving person considered the matriarch of the family, would recall the village of Dusat, which might as well have been as far away from Africa as a distant alien planet.

"I would sit with her in the garden of our suburban home and listen to her stories," he said. "She would tell me about the kinds of things they would bake, about cold winter nights and Shabbat routines, about walks in the woods to pick berries and how the lake would freeze over in winter."

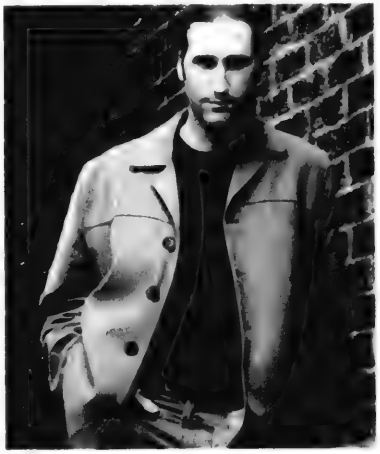
Hanna-Raizel, too, would talk about a cow she cared for and milked in a shed behind their house and describe a communal winter cellar where food would be stored in different pots marked with people's names.

"There were also stories about hard times – bombs falling during World War I, German troops moving into villages, fires and anti-Jewish riots," he added. "These things played a much smaller role in her stories," he said.

In general, Hanna-Raizel harboured sweet memories of Dusat, which had a Jewish population of about 400 on the eve of World War II.

Hanna-Raizel left Dusat in the mid-1920s, following her husband, a shoemaker, to South Africa in search of better prospects. Hanna-Raizel died in 1995, but her Lithuanian stories have exerted a lasting impact on Bonert. So much so that he dipped into them for inspiration in his debut novel, *The Lion Seeker* (Alfred A. Knopf Canada), which was published recently and hailed as "riveting" and "lyrical" by critic Charles Foran.

A coming-of-age historical novel set largely in South Africa in the years leading up to World War II and filled with unspoken family secrets, *The Lion Seeker* turns on two characters, Issac Helger, the son of Jewish immigrants from Lithuania, is trying to fight his way out of poverty. His emotionally scarred mother, Gitelle, is desperate to extricate her relatives from Dusat.



Kenneth Bonert

"What happens is that these two drives intersect, forcing a terrible choice on Isaac," explained Bonert, a former journalist who immigrated to Canada with his parents in 1989, before the long night of apartheid in South Africa was supplanted by a multiracial democracy.

Bonert, 40, is thrilled by the publication of *The Lion Seeker*, the U.S. edition of which comes out in October.

"I've always wanted to be a writer, and to be one on a high level," he explained. "To become a great novelist has been and still is my life's ambition. I've worked hard and stayed committed to this goal, made a lot of sacrifices along the way, and now that I've finally published a novel that I'm proud of, I feel satisfied to have taken a major step forward."

It took him five years to write *The Lion Seeker*, which is essentially a moral exploration of how wider social forces affect individuals and families.

Although he did not visit Lithuania, he did the next best thing. He interviewed a woman who had spent years documenting the oral histories of Jews from Dusat, including members of his own family.

When he began, he thought he would write the novel in two separate parts, the first taking place in Dusat and the second unfolding in South Africa. He was not pleased by the result, but it was not an exercise in futility. He had formed a broad understanding of his fictional characters and had learned how to transliterate Yiddish into English in a fresh way.

Putting pen to paper again, Bonert decided to focus on the South African segment. "I struggled to find the right narrative voice for Isaac, but once I slipped into the present tense, the story became alive and vibrant and I knew I had something."

The next challenge was to weave Dusat into the fabric of the narrative. He achieved his goal by telling the story from Isaac's point of view. "I think one of the main achievements of the book lies in the dialogue, the fluid movement between languages – Yiddish, English, Afrikaans and South African slang – that has never been recorded before. I had to create a unique form of punctuation to convey this fluidity, and had to find a way of making the meaning accessible while still retaining authentic expressions."

In Issac, he believes he has created an enduring character. As he put it, "I wanted him to transcend the novel and become a memorable figure in Jewish literature, a new kind of tough and authentic Jewish South African I hadn't seen previously portrayed."

But as he hastened to add, Dusat is also an integral part of *The Lion Seeker*, a place that exists in the memories of the characters, influenced their lives and set them on their respective trajectories. "So my novel is as much about how you cannot escape the past as it is about life in a new country."

As he reflected on his beloved grandmother, Bonert expressed sadness that the shtetl of her youth has vanished.

"There were probably around 1,000 Jews in Dusat at the beginning of the 20th century. Due to emigration, its Jewish population gradually dwindled."

In 1940, the Soviet army occupied Lithuania, snuffing out its short-lived independence. Many Lithuanians welcomed the subsequent Nazi occupation, regarding it as a blessed liberation from Soviet tyranny.

But for the Lithuanian Jewish community, the Nazi presence was an unmitigated disaster, ushering in a genocide in which more than 95 percent of Jews were killed, the highest murder rate during the Holocaust.

Jews in Dusat, having been squeezed into a ghetto and forced to perform hard labour, were marched into a forest on Aug. 26, 1941 and shot along with Jews from surrounding towns.

Bonert, a native of Johannesburg, grew up in the shadow of these horrific events. Ironically, the teachers in the Jewish schools he attended never taught him that apartheid, or institutional segregation, was evil and unjust.

"With the exception of my father, I don't remember any other adult talking openly and vociferously against it. The Jewish community tended to underplay apartheid as a relatively minor, if disagreeable, characteristic of South African society. The community generally prospered and benefited from the system without making too many waves."

Bonert, who earned a degree in journalism from Ryerson University, was a staff reporter for the *Canadian Press* and the *Pembroke Observer*. On the side, during his spare time, he was a creative writer, publishing short stories in literary journals and a novella, *Peacekeepers*, 1995.

"Right now," he said, "I'm polishing a collection of short stories and working on another novel."

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Bodybuilding legend Joe Weider dies at 93

Compiled by CJN Staff

Joe Weider, who, with his brother Ben, built the biggest bodybuilding empire in the world, died March 23 at age 93 in Los Angeles.

Weider, the Montreal-born son of poor Jewish immigrants, left Montreal for New York in 1947, and had lived in California since the early 1970s.

His younger brother, Ben, who remained in Montreal, died in 2008.

Obituary

Joe Weider became famous for having discovered an unknown Austrian hunk named Arnold Schwarzenegger, who would go on to be an international superstar on the bodybuilding circuit, a Hollywood actor and governor of California.

According to their autobiography, *Brothers of Iron*, Joe Weider began lifting weights to put some muscle on his scrawny frame.

Building his strength and improving his appearance boosted his confidence, and he realized that many others would also benefit from such training.

In the depths of a Depression and with only a few dollars, the teenaged Weider launched a muscle magazine that he put together himself on his family's dining room table. That modest periodical laid the foundation for the brothers' multimillion-dollar publishing business, which expanded to include fitness equipment and nutritional supplements.

The Weiders transformed bodybuilding from what was then the obscure pastime of a few physique-obsessed people into a respectable sport, organized under its own international federation.

Joe Weider

Weider also created the Mr. Olympia contest, which his protégé Schwarzenegger won seven times. Weider, who developed a rippling masterpiece of a physique in his heyday, was the trainer of many other bodybuilding champions.

The honour Weider said he was most proud of was the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Boy Scouts of America in 1991, which hailed him as "the father of fitness."

In the foreword to *Brothers of Iron* (2006), Schwarzenegger, then still California governor, wrote: "One word sums up Joe's role in my life – father. After my own father passed away, Joe more than filled the gap… Joe's generosity to me knew no bounds. I honestly don't know where I'd be or what I'd be doing if Joe had not come into my life."

Former NBAer enjoying Israel's hoops Super League

Deena Rosenblatt
Tazpit News Agency

JERUSALEM — Over the years basketball has become increasingly popular in the Holy Land. The Israeli Basketball Super League, the top echelon of the sport, attracts athletes from around the world, including former NBA players.

Hapoel "Migdal" Jerusalem is home to nine Israeli players and five from abroad, including four Americans. Its most recent recruit is power forward/centre Craig Smith, who played for six seasons with the Minnesota Timberwolves, the Los Angeles Clippers and the Portland Trailblazers.

Originally from Inglewood, Calif., Smith graduated from Fairfax High School and went on to play Division I basketball at Boston College. Smith graduated as the team's leader in rebounds and was the second highest scorer. After college, he went on to be drafted into the NBA. After six years, he came overseas to continue his career in his seventh pro season.

Although it was difficult for Smith to leave his family and fiancé, they have been very supportive. "It's a once in a lifetime experience living in Israel for a year, [especially] with so much history [and] biblical aspects," Smith said. He finds a lot of meaning in playing "where [his] homey Jesus is from."

Smith views coming to Israel not only as an opportunity to play basketball, but also as a "learning opportunity on and off the court." He had lived in the United States his whole life and explained that he was "always curious to know what it would be like to live abroad [and also] learn another culture and adapt to it….Jerusalem felt right in this situation."

Another factor in cementing Smith's decision to play in Israel was the encouragement he received from former American Hapoel Jerusalem player Roger Mason. Smith also cited the weather, which is similar to that in his native California.

Since Smith stepped off the plane, Hapoel has opened its arms and welcomed him warmly to its hoops family. The Israelis and Americans on the team are very close and "often joke around with each other," Smith said.

He's also been invited by his teammates to several Shabbat meals, which have all been eye-opening experiences. When Smith encounters religious people in Israel, he enjoys learning about their traditions. "They will explain to you what the process is before you can eat….all the different types of Jewish culture here are pretty cool," he stated.

When asked about the differences between NBA and Israeli-style basketball, Smith points to variances in rules.

"In the NBA, a player cannot stay in the key for more than three seconds or it is a violation, while in Israeli basketball there is no such rule."

In addition the game in Israel is more physical "which is a little tough," Smith said. The Super League plays "a little bit more of a team game" in contrast to the NBA where there is more of an individualized effort. In the Israeli league, Smith feels he is more of a focal player and a target, which he explains is "a great honour."

Based on Smith's overall experience, he recommends the overseas experience to any basketball player. It "will definitely enlighten you; make you a better person at the end of the day and more knowledgeable about the world."

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The ailments of the elderly

Continued from page 33

crowded terminal for a friend to appear when a taxi driver asks her to greet the Dane (Ulrich Thomsen) for him while he takes a break. Aya's life thus takes a turn in a different direction. By default, Aya becomes his host, driver and confidant, and as they talk, they connect on an emotional level.

Aya, distinguished by two stellar performances, is an unusual and riveting drama about the nature of relationships.

Sheppard Cinema 3, Sunday, April 14 at 3 p.m. and Bloor Cinema on Thursday, April 16 at 7 p.m.

Aliyah, a French film directed by Elie Wajeman, takes place mostly in Paris as Alex, a 27-year-old drug dealer, prepares to make aliyah. For no apparent reason, Alex and his friend have decided to open a restaurant in Tel Aviv. Quite possibly, Alex thinks he can rehabilitate himself in Israel. But his older brother, Isaac, a good-for-nothing, continues to be a financial drain on him.

The film unfolds as Alex raises funds for his upcoming trip, goes about his usual business, confers with low-life associates, learns rudimentary Hebrew, visits relatives on a Jewish holiday and flirts with his girlfriend.

Aliyah, regrettably, is a run-of-the-mill production that leaves no trace in its wake.

Bloor Cinema, Wednesday, April 17 at 7 p.m.

The children of coffee farmers in Uganda.

Delicious Coffee Grows in a Ugandan Coffee Bean, directed by Curt Fissel, uplifts the spirit. When the price of coffee – the most traded commodity after oil – in Uganda falls precipitously, Christian, Muslim and Jewish coffee farmers in that African nation band together to form the Delicious Peace Coffee Co-operative. They attract the attention of a Jewish coffee distributor in the United States, who's impressed by their organic/fair-trade beans. Much of the action centres around a hard-working Jewish farmer who gets the co-operative up and running.

Sheppard Cinema 3 on Friday, April 12 at 1 p.m. and Royal Ontario Museum on Monday, April 15 at 1 p.m.

Epilogue, an Israeli feature film by Amir Manor, focuses on Berl and Hayuta Hoz, an ailing and financially pressed elderly couple who fend for themselves in their twilight years. They live together in a modest flat in Tel Aviv, but spend their days virtually alone in near solitary isolation.

Berl, vigorous of mind, visits a relative in hospital and tries to start a mutual aid society for needy families. Hayuta buys medication and goes to a movie. Tears roll down her cheeks as she speaks to her son on the phone. He lives in New York City.

Manor succeeds in drawing a potent portrait of the ravages that afflict seniors.

Sheppard Cinema 5 on Wednesday, April 17 at 6 p.m. and Innis Town Hall on Thursday, April 18 at 4:45 p.m.

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HEEBONICS

Jordan Satok's mobile program recommends relevant apps

David Silverberg
Special to The CJN

Jordan Satok finds early success in mobile app development. *(Daniel Jourdan photo)*

Few 19-year-olds see $1.8 million cheques written to the company they founded, but that's commonplace for Toronto resident Jordan Satok, who is one of the youngest entrepreneurs ever to raise venture financing.

Satok is deeply focused on his company AppHero, a smartphone app that helps you find other applications ideal for your interests. It personalizes the app discovery process, so if you say on Facebook you like marathon running, it'll seek to show you apps related to your passion for running. With your permission, AppHero accesses your Twitter and Facebook feeds to see what kinds of things you like, are talking about and are relevant to you.

For smartphone users, tools such as AppHero are helpful in sorting through the plethora of downloadable apps – 800,000 apps are available on Apple's App Store alone.

Satok says his love for software development can be traced back to when he was a young child who would spend time building with Lego blocks.

"If you like playing with things and making things, coding is a natural evolution of that," he says. By the time he was 13, he was programming websites and running a blog where he would talk about various apps, though at the time, it was computer software rather than apps for mobile devices. He would look at what he and his friends needed, and would build an app to help them. For example, when he wanted to work on time management for school, he would create a program that would do that.

He says he's always been fascinated by apps. You buy a new device, like a computer or phone, and out of the box, it doesn't do much, he says. Then you add software and it becomes really powerful.

With an office based in Toronto's Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue area, Satok is all AppHero, all the time. Although he was given a full scholarship to the University of Waterloo the same year he was offered venture capital money, he chose to move straight from Upper Canada College to being a full-time entrepreneur.

"It's exciting," he gushes in a phone interview. "I get to work with some of the most amazing people in the world."

The people he works with range from about 25 to 35, but the fact that he's so much younger rarely poses a problem, he says. "We're a team. We make decisions as a team," he says, adding that he would never let his age stand in the way of his passion.

He says he's never wanted to go the "traditional" route of going to university, graduating, and finding a job in a company that matches your interest. That method, he said, won't necessarily find something that will truly feed your passion. "You have to go out into the world and meet people and start networking," he says.

Being part of the Jewish community has helped him meet people, which he credits to the "communal nature" of the religion. He says when he meets successful Jews, they're often willing to answer questions from a "mentorship perspective" and give him useful advice.

AppHero began two years ago, only a couple years after Satok created an App of the Day website. As a 15-year-old app fiend, he wanted to help smartphone users discover the apps useful to them, which is when the AppHero idea began to percolate.

It's a technically difficult challenge to see why a certain app works for you but not your friend, Satok explains. The complex algorithm in AppHero is constantly being tweaked and improved, evidenced by a 2.0 version recently released.

Investors have taken notice of Satok's determination to build an all-star app. In July, AppHero secured just under $1.8 million in seed financing from OMERS Ventures, Golden Venture Partners and ENIAC Ventures. "It's awesome to see investors taking a chance on me, seeing the value in what I'm doing," Satok says.

That was the biggest challenge at the beginning, he says. Having no degrees to his name, and just a little job experience, he was asking investors to have faith in him. However, his experience at a software company gave him the opportunity to prove himself to that team, and likewise to its investors, many of whom later invested in AppHero, he says.

AppHero is a smartphone app that helps you find other applications that interest you.

What's his day like? He'll engage in team meetings in the morning, discussing what the engineering crew needs to work on and what should be coded. Even though Satok doesn't have an engineering degree, he'll spend time at a terminal window, figuring out anything that needs to be fixed. He'll carve time out of his day to chat with AppHero users to gauge their response to the personalized service. He'll talk to media one week, or meet with investors in Boston another week. "No day is the same in my life," Satok admits.

Although some kids his age are going out to party and dating fellow students, Satok has no regrets about his chosen path. "This whole process is fun. I solve interesting problems. I work with smart people. I wouldn't change this for the world."

– With files from Cara Stern

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אז אני צפונית

נינה שנהב
nina.shenhav@gmail.com

אני יושבת בבית הקפה ומשחקת לי עם הסלולארי החדש שלי. לא שאני אוהדת סלפונים בכלל, או את החדשני הזה בפרט, אבל אומרים שהוא הכי שיק וסטייל שיש, אז שיראו אותי שיקית וסטייליסטית. טלי מתיישבת מולי. "הזמנת כבר?" היא שואלת. "תורך להזמין, אז אולי מספיק עם ההתחמקויות הקמצניות שלך?" אני מגיבה. הסלולארי החדש מזמזם לו את העיקצוץ המעצבן ואני עושה את המנירות המתבקשות ועונה בהתנשפות כשבליבי רינה ודיצה.

אני (לסלפון): האלו? מה נשמע. (מקשיבה) לא, באמת. אז בגלל זה אתם מבטלים את הארוחה? זה יפריע למנוחת הכלב שלכם? טוב, פעם אחרת. ביי.

טלי: צרות בגן עדן? מי זה היה?

אני: סימה ואלי ביטלו את ההזמנה שלהם לארוחת ערב. מסתבר שהכלב שלהם פיתח שיעול אלרגי והם לא רוצים שנפריע, או משהו הגיוני לחלוטין שכזה.

טלי: הגיוני לחלוטין. שכזה.

אני (מוטרדת): לא, שתבין. זו כבר פעם שלישית שזה קורה לאחרונה. כל תורנהיל ודרומה לא סובלים אותי לאחרונה. נשבעת לך. ביטולים ופרצופים.

טלי: למה להצטנע? גם צפון לתורנהיל יש לך אויבים. מה עם ריצ'מונד-היל?

אני: לא, אני רצינית. ביום רביעי שעבר אני מדברת עם הדו פרצופית המגעילה הזאת, שירה? אנחנו קובעות להיפגש עם הילדים המטורפים שלה והאפרוחים שלי לסרט. בדיוק אמרתי למאיר אחרי שקבענו, שצריך לאבחן את הילדים שלה. משהו בבירור פסיכוטי שם. בקצור, אחרי חמש דקות היא מבטלת לי.

טלי: תמוה ביותר. מה דעתך אגב על הבנות שלי, גם אותן צריך לאבחן דחוף?

אני: אולי לא בדחיפות. זה סובל דיחוי. תגידי למה את אגרסיבית כלפי? זה בגלל שביטלתי את הפגישה השבועית שלנו? תביני, מאיר היה חייב להסתפר, ואני לא מרשה לו ללכת לספרית בלעדי. הוא לא רגיל ולא צריך להתרגל לאישה שעושה לו טוב... אפילו אם מעורב בעניין שמפו זול, מסטיק וצינור.

טלי: מעניין שהרגע ראיתי את מאיר יוצא מהקניון. הוא לא ניראה מסופר בכלל

אני: כן, הוא הסיע אותי לפה והלך. תגידי את מחזירה אותי הביתה, או שאת מעדיפה שאני אלך ברגל בקור ברוח ובסופה?

טלי: את יודעת את התשובה, אבל כבר הבטחתי למאיר שאני מחזירה אותך... ואגב, כדאי שתלמדי לכבות את הסלולארי החדש שלך!! שומעים כל מה שאת אומרת אחרי השיחה. ואני מצטטת: "אתה שומע מאיר, הברזתי לטלי. אמרתי לה שאני הולכת איתך להסתפר. אין לי כוח היום לבהמה המטומטמת הזאת!"

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1 tsp baking powder	1 c hot strong coffee
1 tsp kosher salt	

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease cake pan. Combine all dry ingredients in bowl of stand mixer; mix until combined. In a small bowl, combine buttermilk, oil, eggs and vanilla. Pour buttermilk mixture into dry ingredients; beat just until smooth. Add coffee; mix just until incorporated. Batter will be very runny. Bake 35-50 min.; test with a toothpick in center of cake; if it comes out clean. Remove from oven; cool in pan 10-15 min, before turning out onto wire rack to cool completely. Frost cake.

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Israeli lawyer and political pundit Claude Klein, who talks about the new Israeli government coalition.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa applauds President Barack Obama's prescription for peace.

Canadian culture owes much to 'fiery' John Hirsch, says his biographer.

The unprecedented $2 million in federal funding to Montreal's Segal Centre for Performing Arts will help ensure its future, but that money cannot be used for operations, chief executive officer Manon Gauthier clarified. The $2 million will go into the Segal's endowment fund, managed by the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal, and only the revenue that fund generates may go toward day-to-day costs.

Segal Centre CEO Manon Gauthier and artistic producer Paul Flicker speak at the Segal Centre's 2013-2014 season launch.

The Josh committee

The following is the job of our entire community. Please post.

All of us have to work to find a "forever home" for a 10-year-old Jewish boy, whom we'll call Josh. OK? Please, consider yourself part of a committee, which we'll call the Josh committee, an entity that cannot be disbanded until this child has what you and I have – a "forever family."

I think that's fair.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

For two years, Jewish Family & Child (JF&Cs) has worked arduously to find this enthusiastic, handsome and intelligent child a home. Throughout that time, Josh has been in two foster homes. Both have given the little guy outstanding marks for behaviour, ability to love and to be an integral part of a family.

But foster parents, God bless them, are not forever. It is therefore up to us, the Josh committee, to get Josh adopted. So what's the challenge? After all, according to adoptioncanada.ca, there are 40 qualified couples for every infant placed for adoption and only two per cent of children born are put up for adoption.

The tough thing is, Josh is 10 years old, and according to JF&CS professionals, many Jewish families want to adopt children but look for babies. OK, so Josh is 10. What's the worry?

Well, he doesn't have a "forever home," so he can be somewhat insecure. There are some medical issues, but nothing insurmountable. It's more expensive to adopt a 10-year-old, for sure, but the government and JF&CS have adoption subsidies to assist Josh's "forever parents," should they need it.

Basically, people figure because Josh is 10, he'll come with a whole set of problems. I haven't met Josh, but those warriors at JF&CS assure me he's nothing less than "delicious." I believe them.

I believe our committee's mission statement of finding a "forever home" for our fellow community member is holy. Rabbi Benjamin Hecht, the director of the Jewish educational organization Nishma (www.nishma.org), told me that while Josh is not an orphan, he is to be taken care of like one. That's a big deal. This imperative, to embrace the orphan, is repeated throughout the Torah many times as in, "You shall not cause pain to any widow or orphan." Exodus 22:21.

Further, according to Judaism, an adopted child is considered a full-fledged family member, and he/she is duty bound in the laws of death and mourning in the event of lost parents. In essence, by adopting Josh, by making him family, you are finding your son.

Remember when you read: *Anne of Green Gables, Tom Sawyer, David Copperfield, Little Men, Oliver Twist, Pollyanna,* and the story of Wart in *The Once and Future King*? Do you recall how your heart opened for those children without parents and how you just wanted to take them home and hold them?

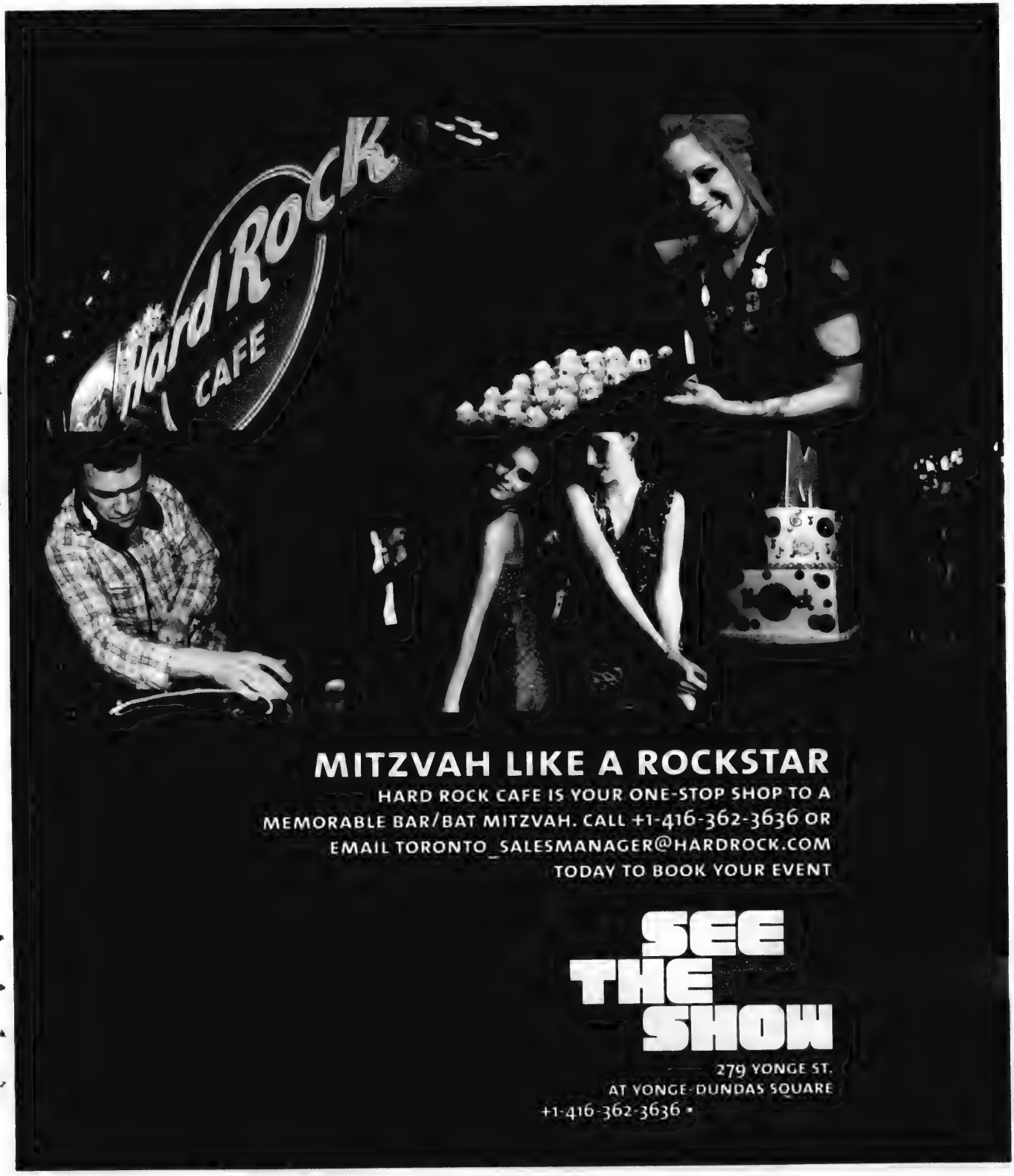
That's Josh!

So, if you've considered adopting a child or you know someone in your contact list trying to make a family, call them and tell them you're on the Josh committee. Let them know they can learn more about this "delicious" community member by contacting Marsha Urowitz at JF&CS at 416-638-7800, ext. 6306.

The Josh committee will report back to you through this column. Make Josh your son. Find him a "forever home." Maybe it's yours.

Josh is "friendly, charismatic, loving and inquisitive. His smile and big blue eyes are hard to resist." – Sheryl Ederman, practice team manager, JF&CS

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org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Israel's Chief of Staff, Benny Gantz, stands next to the ovens in one of the crematoria at Auschwitz-Birkenau. He led the March of the Living as part of the group from Israel that participated this year. It was the first time that an Israeli chief of staff led the march. [*Flash 90 photo*]

'Jewish blood will never be abandoned'

Israeli chief of staff leads March of the Living

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

OSWIECIM, Poland — Israel Defence Forces Chief of Staff Benny Gantz led Monday's March of the Living ceremonies at Auschwitz-Birkenau, along with Tel Aviv Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, himself a child survivor of the camp.

Some 10,000 participants made the three-kilometre walk on Monday afternoon.

Delivering a recorded message to participants, Israeli President Shimon Peres said his country would not forget the pain of the Holocaust, continuing a theme from his speech at the state's official ceremony the night before.

"It is not a matter of remembering or forgetting – their blood flows in our blood, boiling till this day," Peres said. "We will not be calmed. The distance is not that big. It happened 74 years ago, it is part of our biography, not part of our history."

Peres said the Jewish population of the world has not recovered from the Holocaust, and its numbers are still fewer than they were on the eve of World War II.

"The pain, the wound, the lacking is still there," he said. "They live inside us. We live from what happened to them."

Gantz arrived in Poland on Sunday, and declared that the State of Israel will ensure that the horrors of Auschwitz never happen again. Gantz, whose mother is a Holocaust survivor, was accompanied by a delegation of IDF officers and bereaved families of soldiers.

"The Nazis' successors are numerous. They stick by their anti-semitic ways and plot to create a modern Auschwitz," Gantz told an assembly at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem earlier in the week. "The IDF stands against intentions to wipe out the State of Israel, and we have sworn that Jewish blood will never be abandoned."

This year marked the first time that an IDF chief of general staff led the march. The annual program brings tens of thousands of high school students from around the world for a week of intensive education and touring in Poland and Israel to study the history of the Holocaust and examine the roots of prejudice, intolerance and hate. To date, more than 180,000 students have participated. The journey culminates in Israel, where participants honour Israel's fallen soldiers on Yom Hazikaron and celebrate Israel's Independence on Yom Ha'atzmaut.

Timesofisrael.com

Tazria-Metzora
Candlelighting: 7:39
Havdalah: 8:43
Greater Toronto Area

Israeli institutions repulse cyber attacks – please see page 35

CANADA

JNF To Fete Brott

HAMILTON, Ont. — This year's Hamilton JNF Negev Dinner will honour conductor Boris Brott and his wife, Ardyth. Boris Brott, 69, is founder and artistic director of the National Academy Orchestra of Canada, the country's only professional training orchestra, and the Brott Music Festival, Canada's largest orchestral festival. Both are based in Hamilton. Ardyth Brott has been the festival's executive director for the past 25 years. The 61st annual dinner is June 2.

Gay Jews To Meet

WINNIPEG — Some 200 people are expected for a conference of gay and lesbian Jews July 5-7, when Winnipeg becomes the first Canadian city to host such an event. The 21st World Conference of GLBT Jews is presented by the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, which has 50 member groups in North America, Europe and Argentina. Local sponsors include Anakhnu Jewish GLBT Group, the Rady Jewish Community Centre, Congregation Shaarey Zedek and Temple Shalom.

Rabbi Honoured

TORONTO — City Shul founder and *CJN* columnist Rabbi Elyse Goldstein was named one of "America's Most Inspiring Rabbis" by the *Forward* newspaper last month. The 36 rabbis on the list come from all the major denominations and were nominated by readers in response to a call from the New York-based publication. Rabbi Goldstein, 58, was ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1983. In 1991, she founded Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning in Toronto.

WORLD

Miliband Resigns

LONDON — Britain's Jewish former foreign secretary resigned from the board of a soccer club after the team appointed a coach who gave a Nazi-style salute at a game in Rome. Italian Paolo Di Canio, who was appointed head coach of the Sunderland team March 31, is a self-described fascist and admirer of fascist leader Benito Mussolini. David Miliband resigned March 31 as the vice-chair of the English soccer club. "I wish Sunderland AFC all success in the future," Miliband said. "However, in the light of the new manager's past political statements, I think it right to step down." Miliband left politics last month to head the New York-based International Rescue Committee, an aid organization. His brother, Ed, is head of Britain's Labour party and in line to be the next prime minister. The Miliband brothers are the sons of Polish Jewish immigrants.

Accident Kills Canadian-born Hillel Rabbi

PRINCETON, N.J. — Rabbi James Diamond, the Winnipeg-born, retired director of Princeton University's Center for Jewish Life, died in a traffic accident after leaving a breakfast study group.

Rabbi James Diamond

Rabbi Diamond, 73, who retired from the centre 10 years ago, was killed March 28 when a speeding car crashed into a parked car he was entering on the passenger side. The driver of the parked car, Rabbi Robert Freedman, who also attended the study group, was hospitalized. He is expected to recover from his injuries.

Rabbi Diamond was director of the Center for Jewish Life from 1995 to 2003. He was also executive director of Hillel at Washington University in St. Louis from 1972 to 1995, and at Indiana University from 1968 to 1972.

He taught courses in modern Hebrew literature and Judaic studies at Washington and Princeton universities, as well as in the Princeton community.

Rabbi Diamond, who was born and raised in Winnipeg, was ordained in 1963 by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He was awarded a doctorate in comparative literature from Indiana University and was the author of many books.

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Faith leaders unite to oppose Toronto casino

Rabbis join fellow clergy

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

The Toronto Board of Rabbis, along with other groups of GTA faith leaders, has spoken out against the proposed Toronto casino.

Their statement, signed by more than 265 faith leaders, was released at an April 4 press conference at City Hall. It expressed opposition to the expansion of casinos proposed by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, and support for NoCasinoToronto.com's anti-casino campaign.

The statement, which can be viewed online at nocasinotoronto.com (and on page 32), called on governments to "protect the most vulnerable in our society from casinos that exploit human weaknesses and addictions," and urged others to voice their opposition to expanded gambling.

"We are convinced that casinos contribute to family breakdown, depression, addiction, bankruptcies and crime," the document stated.

At the press conference, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis, said that he and his colleagues were speaking "out of deep personal experience of individuals in our community who have been affected by excessive gambling."

Continued on page 32

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, left, and Rev. Christopher White were among the speakers at an interfaith clergy press conference to oppose casino expansion in the GTA. (*Frances Kraft photo*)

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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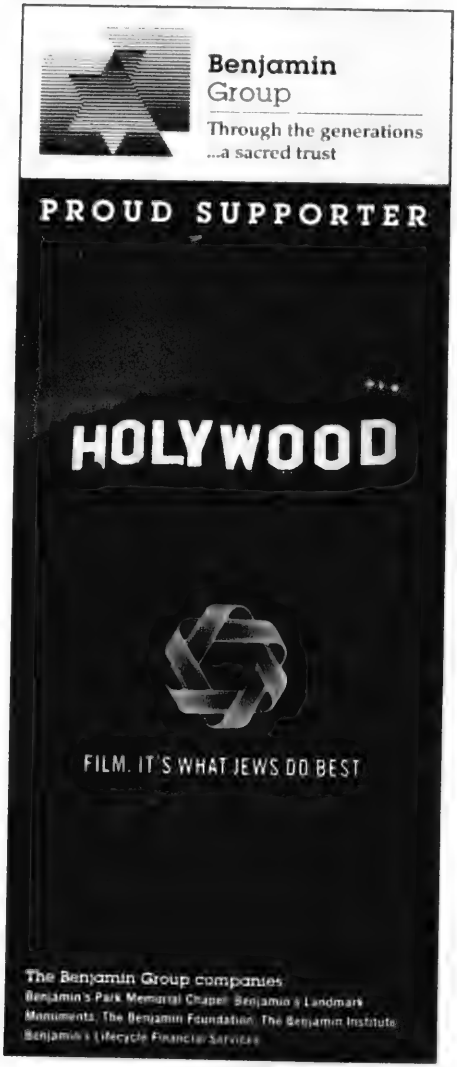
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Something of great moment

From the editor's desk...

Children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren have been born to the men and women who were young adults in 1948.

We, their children, look at the black-and-white photos they stashed in shoe boxes or in brown paper shopping bags, or pasted neatly in photo albums and try to imagine who our parents were when they were young, much younger even than we are today as we look at, inspect, examine and stare at the fading snapshots that are the little, precious pieces of our family's history.

Those young adults, in the full vigour of their strength and drive to establish a home and a family, would have likely had to pay around $8,000 for an "average" sized house in Canada. Their non-luxury car would have cost some $1,500 and they would have probably had a household income - if only one of the spouses was working which, of course, was the norm rather than the exception in 1948 – close to $2,500.

Many, if not most, of the young Jewish Canadian men would have likely served in World War II, which ended only three years earlier. Canadian Jews enlisted in higher relative numbers than any other self-identifying ethnic group in the country to fight the Nazis. After World War II, many of those very same young men and women went to British-ruled Mandatory Palestine to fight for, help bring about and protect a sovereign Jewish state.

For the vast majority of Jews on Earth in 1948, the establishment of a Jewish state was the very breath they breathed in personal relevance and communal commitment.

No cause was more urgent.

No cause was more important.

No cause more clearly, more poignantly, more emphatically spoke to the rest of the world on behalf of those young adults – our parents – of what it meant to be a Jew and a humane, caring, justice-seeking human being in 1948. They had neither the time nor the inclination to try to "understand the meaning" of events in Europe from 1933 to 1945.

They did what they could, wherever they were, to ensure the tiny, nascent Jewish state would live.

War had effectively been launched against the Jews of Palestine after Nov. 29, 1947, when the United Nations voted to partition Mandatory Palestine into two states: one for the Jews and one for the Arabs. The weight of international opinion was that the Jewish community in Palestine would not survive the impending onslaught of the combined regional Arab armies. Indeed the State Department of the United States was actively trying to undo the partition vote. The situation seemed bleak, if not hopeless for the courageous handful of Jews in Palestine.

In his autobiography, the inimitably eloquent Abba Eban, the head of Israel's delegation to the UN in 1948, deftly captured the mood of the times.

"The first stages of the war seemed to bode ill for Israel's cause. The danger came from the north, where Syrian Lebanese, Iraqi and Jordanian armies planned to move on Haifa and capture its port and refineries. Meanwhile, the Egyptians attacked along the coast while the remnants of the Arab Liberation Army harassed Jerusalem and assaulted Jewish settlements in the rest of the country. And the ring was growing tighter around the new city of Jerusalem."

The gritty defenders of the Jewish state repulsed the attackers from the north and from the south. But they could not save the Jewish quarter of the Old City. The Jordanian army captured the Old City, expelled the Jews, destroyed the synagogues and desecrated the countless markers and vestiges of Jewish life in Jerusalem. For the first time in more than a millennium, the Jewish presence in the ancient city of Jerusalem ceased to exist. That presence, however, would be once again restored 17 years later in 1967.

It is vital that we recall to mind these events of "merely" 65 years ago.

It is more vital still, to recall them to the minds of our children and they, in turn, to their children.

We must ensure that those events of 65 years ago and the very long line of events, of which they were part and which provide historical and theological context, repose deeply and forever in the collective memory of our people.

Dry Bones

On the fifth day of Iyar 1948 (May 14/15), the Jewish People proclaimed their right to our own state. It was a variation of the theme enshrined by the psalmist who wrote, "We shall not die, but live."

"The hour of choice had come and it had been seized," Eban wrote. "No matter what ensued, something of great moment had been enacted of which future Jewish generations would never cease to speak and dream."

For all time.

–MBD

SeeJN

VOICES UNITE: Cantor Benjamin Maissner conducts all 10 choirs participating in a Community Choral Concert at Beth Radom Congregation March 28. Some 500 people attended the event, which raised more than $3,100 for Jewish Family & Child.

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Thursday, April 18	5 - 10 pm	Israeli Sports and Kef (fun) for all ages
Friday, April 19	9 - 2 pm	Israeli Market - "Shuk"

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	1:00 - 3:00	Israeli Movie - Footnote
	3:30 - 4:00	Children's Israeli Drum Circle (Ages 2-3)
	4:00 - 4:30	Children's Israeli Drum Circle (Ages 3-4)
	4:30 - 5:00	Children's Israeli Drum Circle (Ages 4-5)
	5:00 - 5:30	Children's Israeli Drum Circle (Ages 5-6)
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Solemn ceremony recalls victims of Shoah

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

An estimated 1,500 people gathered April 7 for Toronto's community Holocaust commemoration, said to be the largest of its kind outside of Israel.

The solemn program, which also commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, took place for the first time at the new Schwartz-Reisman Centre on the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, Ont. The morning event was co-sponsored by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem and the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Yom Hashoah

Keynote speaker Amek Adler, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Dachau, said that, contrary to popular perception, Jews did fight back. "We fought every day and every night, every minute and every hour to be alive and to survive."

He said it is hard to describe the shock of seeing the ghetto for the first time at age 11 in 1939, when he arrived with his parents, grandparents and older brother. His father and brother later perished in Dachau.

"The situation was impossible," an emotional Adler said of the ghetto, recalling dead bodies lying in the street, people selling personal belongings in order to buy necessities on the black market and living on food rations of 180 calories per person per day. The Polish population, in contrast, received 2,300 calories per day, he said.

He remembers being beaten until he blacked out for refusing to take his hat off for a Nazi. Another time, a member of the Hitler Jugend (Youth) hit a friend of Adler's with no provocation. Adler jumped on the attacker, hit his head against the asphalt, and would probably have killed him had onlookers not stopped him, he said.

"Three hundred thousand men, women and children were taken from Warsaw and shipped to Treblinka, where life expectancy was one to one-and-a-half hours," he said. To prevent a repeat of the Holocaust, he stressed, "we must keep Israel strong."

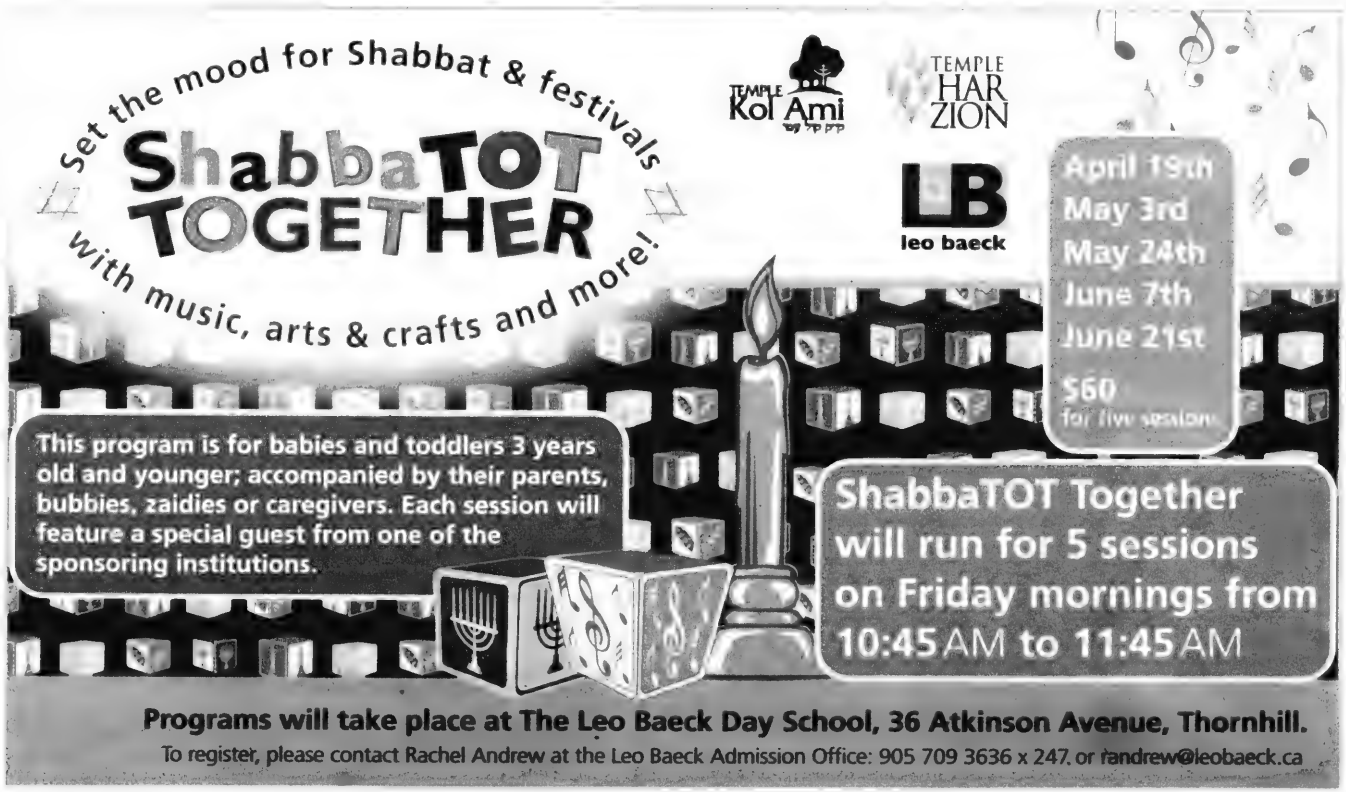
DJ Schneeweiss, consul general of Israel to Toronto and Western Canada, said one of the fundamental reasons for Israel's existence is to ensure a calamity such as the Shoah never occurs again.

Israel owes survivors an immeasurable debt, Schneeweiss said. The Israeli government has just announced a 50-million shekel increase in assistance to survivors, he added.

He said it's a source of great strength for Israel "to always see Canada by our side, indeed often taking the lead," in the global fight against antisemitism and anti-Israel initiatives. He thanked Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government for its support.

Lighting a candle in honour of the partisans and freedom fighters are Holocaust survivors and partisans Peter Silverman and Faye Schulman, as their familes look on. Helping them is volunteer Bram Goldenberg, left. (*Michael Rajzman photo*)

Other participants included Louis Greenbaum, co-chair of the 2013 Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah steering committee; cantors Avraham Sultan and Tibor Kovari; violinist Ori Solomon; rabbis Chaim Strauchler and Micah Streiffer; March of the Living alumna Rebecca Aziza, General Wingate Branch 256 Royal Canadian Legion and Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Toronto Post. Representatives of NCSY (National Conference of Synagogue Youth), the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Hillel of Greater Toronto, Bnei Akiva Schools and March of the Living did readings as six commemorative candles were lit by army veterans, Shoah survivors and the granddaughter of the late Julia Ciurko, a recipient of Yad Vashem's designation as Righteous Among the Nations.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Community unity urged

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

A show of solidarity with Israel from Diaspora communities is particularly resonant in the Jewish state when it occurs on Yom Hazikaron.

That's the message DJ Schneeweiss, Israel's consul general to Toronto and Western Canada, wants to convey to the community.

As such, he's asking Toronto area Jews and ex-pat Israelis to come together again this year to commemorate Yom Hazikaron.

Building on the successes of past events, Schneeweiss told *The CJN* in a recent interview that he believes both communities will turn out en masse again this year to honour Israelis who have served their country and paid dearly, sometimes with their lives, for its protection and survival.

Yom Hazikaron

DJ Schneeweiss

This year's consulate-sponsored Yom Hazikaron event, a memorial ceremony for the fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism, will take place at Congregation Beth Tzedec at 7 p.m. on Sunday April 14. Doors will open at 6:15 p.m. to allow for security screening.

According to 2012 Israel statistics, since the state's founding in 1948, some 22,993 Israeli soldiers and victims of terrorism have died, and there are 10,524 bereaved families, including 2,396 orphans and 4,992 widows.

The estimated numbers of wounded Israelis is 75,000, and nearly 100,000 Israelis are considered disabled army veterans.

When Diaspora Jewish communities acknowledge and partake in the sombre occasion, Schneeweiss said, it has a profound effect on Israelis.

It shows empathy for the hardships and sacrifices Israelis make daily for the future of the country, he said.

Diaspora communities have both "a tangible and intangible impact on Israel," he said.

"The occasion marks a sense of belonging together and [the consulate's] role is to help enrich the Israel component here."

Jewish communities could not thrive as they do without a strong and secure Israel, he said. And while celebrating happier holidays such as Yom Ha'atzmaut also helps to "enrich and empower" Israel in the international community, days such as Yom Hazikaron are "less accessible" Schneeweiss said.

"That's why it's so important to try to build a bridge towards greater involvement in this part of Israel," he said.

"It's not just about heroism... it's about the sacrifices the families also make. Israelis are always 'on the line.' And there's a permanent preparedness that's quintessentially Israeli," he said.

And when Canadian and other pro-Israel communities pay respects to Israelis on Yom Hazikaron, the message resounds in the Middle East.

"It resonates throughout Israeli media, its blogosphere... [for Israelis] to know that there are people who understand them" allows Israelis to feel a sense of "shared fate."

The Israeli sense of being understood in the Diaspora is especially amplified when it comes to the Canadian community, Schneeweiss said.

"The confluence of values between Canada and Israel... is something which is unique," he said. "The story of Israel is something that is part of the unity, strength and thriving nature here. I'm not sure I could say the same thing if I was sitting in an Israeli consulate in America. We need communities like Canada to set an example and stand up for Israel."

Yom Hazikaron, more than other times, is a prime occasion to be moved and uplifted by the "great national project of this era: Israel," he said.

ANIMAL FUN

Students from Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Education Centre on Neptune Drive recently helped residents at Terrace Gardens enjoy a hands-on animal workshop featuring everything from rabbits to ferrets and macaws to reptiles. This was a project of the school's Mitzvah Corps, a group of students who volunteer to help others and benefit the community. Pictured are Grade 4 students Adira Greenwald, left, and Tamar Barth helping resident Ruth Fruitman get to know a spotted tortoise named Hamburger.

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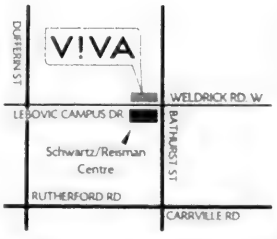

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A remarkable country

Sixty-five years ago, at a restaurant in New York in late April, Alexandre Parodi, the first ambassador of France to the United Nations, asked Chaim Weizmann: "How can a few hundred thousand of you stand up against millions?"

The veteran French diplomat was referring to the situation in Mandatory Palestine. The Jews there were expected in a matter of days to proclaim a sovereign state of their own. That proclamation, in turn, was expected to unleash an onslaught of surrounding Arab armies determined to render the new Jewish state stillborn.

It was to this imminently unfolding reality that Parodi, aghast at the renewed possibility of the wholesale slaughter of Jews, aimed his question.

Echoing the words of our ancient sages, the 74-year-old scientist/statesman, who would be appointed Israel's first president, answered Parodi quickly: "Numbers were not decisive."

Israel suffered enormous casualties in its war of survival against the attacking Arab armies. Fully one per cent of its 600,000 people were killed in the fighting. But Weizmann proved to be correct.

The vastly larger enemy armies were repulsed.

In his typically magisterial manner, British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks explained the ethereal significance of the birth of the State of Israel.

"There have been moments [of modern Jewish history] – especially in relation to the State of Israel – that can only be compared with the wonders of the Bible. Perhaps we are too close to be able to see their miraculous character. One day, though, historians will look back at the second half of the 20th century and wonder at how a people that in the Holocaust had come face to face with the angel of death responded by reviving a land, recovering its sovereignty, rebuilding Jerusalem, rescuing threatened Jews through the world, and proving itself as courageous in pursuit of peace as in defending itself in war."

The dream of the Jewish state at peace with its neighbours has not yet been realized. Nor is the state without difficult, complicated, societal flaws. But next week, on the fifth day of Iyar, let us take a moment to reflect upon the miraculous character of the state's birth. Let us joyfully and gratefully celebrate the 65th anniversary of this remarkable, tiny state.

We cannot help but believe that the miracles of modern Jewish history and especially in relation to the State of Israel are ongoing, even if we do not always see them.

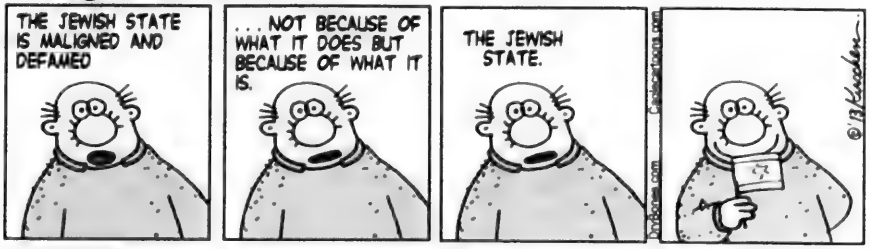
Thus, let us commit and recommit, to help make those miracles more evident to ourselves and to an increasingly hostile world, or in the words of its Declaration of Independence, "to rally round" and "stand by" the State of Israel in its ongoing efforts to achieve peace and to create a more perfect society.

The Jewish people's "age-old dream" is not yet fully realized. But we have not lost our hope.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Dozens of Toronto high school students, aged 14-19, demonstrated at Queen's Park demanding that Soviet officials grant exit visas to hunger striking Refusenik Yuli Kosharovsky and his family.

Dry Bones REALITY BITES



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'Sticks' needed to preserve Francophone heritage

Columnist Gil Troy's comparison of the Péquiste approach in preserving Quebec's national identity with Israel's approach is unbalanced ("What the PQ's Bill 14 teaches us about Israel," March 21). Many laudable parallels exist between Quebec and Israeli societies, but there are differences, which in Quebec have necessitated safeguards to the French language and Quebec culture, promulgated by Bill 101 and, arguably, Bill 14.

Israeli culture and the Hebrew language are not under assault in the Middle East, but Israel's existential survival as a Jewish state is. That context precipitates discussions on the legitimacy of the occupation and other perceived "excesses" of Israeli policies toward Palestinians, and indeed Israel's very right to exist.

Francophone Québécois have never faced the threat of physical extinction. But Quebec is surrounded by an English-speaking sea, so it's not difficult to understand the cultural fate threatening the province. If we continue to regard our Francophone Québécois heritage as worth preserving, we have to deploy sticks as well as carrots.

Jewish distrust of xenophobic nationalist movements is understandable, considering how often Jews were not only excluded but also victimized by them. In 1976, guided by communal traumas of the past, many Jews left Quebec. Today, our challenge as Jews ought to be not only to embrace the language, the vitality and the richness of an inclusive Quebec, but also to demonstrate that these distinctive qualities of Quebec culture bond us by common values and aspirations to those of the State of Israel.

Joe Ronn
Outremont, Que.

• • •

Péquistes and Palestinians

Columnist Gill Troy, in looking at Bill 14, should be comparing Quebec with the Palestinians, rather than with Israel ("What the PQ's Bill 14 teaches us about Israel," March 21). The Palestinians look to destroy anything Jewish. Witness what they did when Israel evacuated Gaza and left certain structures intact. They were destroyed because they were built by Jews. So the Péquistes have and will continue to destroy anything that has Anglo origins.

Joe Kislowicz
Toronto

Maimonides doesn't reject all supernaturalism

Rabbi David Hartman's essay has some interesting points, but I don't know why he jumped on what increasingly has become the bandwagon, and, at least by implication, attributing opinions to Maimonides that he was clearly opposed to ("Passover: a fine-tuning of the human soul," March 21).

Maimonides does not reject all supernaturalism. He is quite clear that God performed miracles, including those in the Passover story. He subscribes to the idea that both nature and supernatural miracles are God's actions. He, furthermore, doesn't reject messianism or the resurrection of the dead. Both, in fact, are included in his basic 13 articles of faith. Possibly most telling, Maimonides spells out quite clearly what should be related to fulfil the commandment of telling the Passover tale. It is that we were slaves in Egypt, oppressed by Pharaoh, that God had mercy, performed miracles, and took us out – precisely the view that Rabbi Hartman was disappointed with. The Passover story is filled with all kinds of meanings, including important messages of human freedom and responsibility, but let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater and claim that that's all there is. And, with all due respect, let's not be intellectually dishonest to make a point, and try to promote the idea that simply because Maimonides was a radical he would promote any radical opinion.

Shalom Weinberg
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Iranian warships dock in Sri Lanka

I hope you are aware of the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka in 1983, and again in 2009, when more than 150,000 Tamils were massacred. Banned weapons like cluster bombs and chemical weapons were used to wipe out thousands of lives, including infants, children, women, elderly, wounded, etc. These internationally banned weapons were delivered to Sri Lanka from India, China and Pakistan. Sri Lanka is a friendly nation of Iran, Libya and Syria. We Tamils request your help to protect the Tamils in Sri Lanka. It was reported on March 22 that two Iranian warships, on which Iranian troops were on board, arrived at the Port of Colombo in Sri Lanka.

Kumarathasan Rasingam
The Tamil Canadian Elders for Human Rights
Toronto

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cjninfo@gmail.com

Israel's Declaration of Independence

Israel celebrates the 65th anniversary of its founding next week.

In commemoration of the anniversary, we reproduce the declaration read by David Ben-Gurion, chair of the Jewish People's Council, at the Tel Aviv Museum on May 14, 1948, the day that Britain's mandatory rule over Palestine ended. The council approved the proclamation declaring the establishment of the State of Israel.

The new state was recognized that night by the United States, and three days later, by the U.S.S.R. Ottawa conferred de facto recognition of Israel seven months later in December 1948 and de jure recognition in May 1949 once the Jewish state was admitted to the United Nations.

Eretz Yisrael – the Land of Israel, Palestine was the birthplace of the Jewish People. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades, they returned in their masses. Pioneers, *ma'pilim* [Hebrew for immigrants coming to Eretz Yisrael in defiance of restrictive legislation] and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodor Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish People to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of Nov. 7, 1917, and reaffirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations, which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish People and Eretz Yisrael and to the right of the Jewish People to rebuild its national home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish People – the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe – was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz Yisrael the Jewish state which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish People the status of a fully privileged member of the comity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi Holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz Yisrael, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In World War II, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of freedom- and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On Nov. 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael. The General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish People to establish their state is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish People to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

Accordingly, we, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish community of Eretz Yisrael and of the Zionist movement, are here assembled on the day of termination of the British Mandate over Eretz Yisrael and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael, to be known as the State of Israel.

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th of Iyar, 5708 (May 15, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the state in accordance with the constitution which shall be adopted by the elected constituent assembly not later than the Oct. 1, 1948, the People's Council shall act as a provisional council of state, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the provisional government of the Jewish state, to be called 'Israel.'

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the ingathering of the exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the holy places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to co-operate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of Nov. 29, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz Yisrael.

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish People in the building-up of its state and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.

WE APPEAL – in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months – to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the state on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of co-operation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish People settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish People throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz Yisrael in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream – the redemption of Israel.

Placing our trust in the 'Rock of Israel,' we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the Provisional Council of State, on the soil of the homeland, in the city of Tel Aviv, on the Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (May 14, 1948).

David Ben-Gurion
Daniel Auster
Mordekhai Bentov
Yitzchak Ben Zvi
Eliyahu Berligne
Fritz Bernstein
Rabbi Wolf Gold
Meir Grabovsky
Yitzchak Gruenbaum
Dr. Abraham Granovsky
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David Zvi Pinkas
Aharon Zisling
Moshe Kolodny
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Felix Rosenblueth
David Remez
Berl Repetur
Mordekhai Shattner
Ben Zion Sternberg
Bekhor Shitreet
Moshe Shapira
Moshe Shertok

Published in the *Official Gazette*, No. 1, of the 5th of Iyar, 5708 (May 14, 1948).

In whose home should charity begin?

Charity begins at home – so goes the saying. But what is charity, and where is home? Must the two always be in alliance?

These aren't theoretical questions. In an economy marked by shrinking resources, many people think about the ethics of prioritizing: how to divide a finite pie, rather than how to pour from a perpetual font. As a culture with a strong philanthropic tradition, we associate the English word "charity" with the Hebrew word tzedakah. However, the words have different roots. Tzedakah is linked with the word tzedek, or justice. The linguistic connection suggests to us that the giving of tzedakah is not an optional add-on, done out of the goodness of our hearts, but something mandatory and restorative.

The word "charity" comes to us from the Latin *caritas*, connoting dearness, affection and love. This suggests that we give because we feel compassion and esteem for the other. The two ideas, of course, are not incompatible. Empathy or affection may, indeed, be the impetus to do right by others. But they have somewhat different implications, especially when brought to bear on the idea that charity ought to begin at home.

The saying has been invoked to mean different things, ranging from a call to social justice to a justification for selfishness. It's sometimes used cynically to justify husbanding one's resources only for oneself or one's immediate family, and ignoring the needs of others. Others place the phrase in a different context, relying on the Latin roots of "charity" as love: one's affections are most properly directed to one's family, and should not stray afield. In popular psychology, people use the saying to suggest that until you love yourself, you cannot love others.

A saying with secular currency, the idea that charity begins at home also resonates with Judaism and with other religious traditions. The Talmud (Bava Metzia) enjoins that we prioritize our giving, taking care first of the poor in our families, then in the town in which we live, then in our country, and always of the Jewish community. Care thus radiates out in concentric circles, with the giver as the centre point.

In these different contexts, "home" may be understood spatially (your town, your country), communally (the Jewish people), emotionally (your family), and psychologically (yourself). In fact, these continue to be the ordering principles that most people either consciously or intuitively conform to when giving. But, increasingly, in a world where gaps of distance may be condensed by technology, with the far brought near, "home" takes on expanded meaning, and it becomes less simple to determine the chain of charitable commitments.

I know many Jewish families who actively engage in questions about giving. For example, what percentage of giving should be reserved for Jewish causes, and what percentage directed outside the Jewish

Sara R. Horowitz

in Toronto

community? Should causes in Israel have greater claim than poverty right there in our Canadian cities and towns? After all, in our urban home, we see poverty, homelessness, joblessness, abuse and violence around us. But Israel, too, we feel to be a home.

And how should we incorporate the repeated injunctions in our tradition to use our historical experiences of slavery and persecution as a basis of ethics toward the other – those whose "home" may not be ours? For many, the 20th-century Jewish survival of genocide impels us to engage with other genocides, sometimes in places we have no personal connection to.

We shouldn't conceptualize the giving of tzedakah only as whipping out a chequebook. Giving of ourselves – our time, our human labour, our mentorship – also belongs under that rubric. As individuals and in organized groups, people volunteer at local kitchens and shelters, travel to places such as Rwanda and other locales ravaged by genocide, or rebuild homes in areas decimated by storms. In effect, where you put your own body creates a kind of "home" – an unfamiliar place that becomes familiar, a group of strangers who become like family.

Perhaps we could think of the saying "Charity begins at home" as connoting not where we direct funds, but where the impulse to give must originate – in one's self, one's family and one's community.

The Pope, the Jews and Judaism

"Any time a new pope is named, the Jewish community regards him with skepticism" wrote staff writer Marc Tracy in the *New Republic* recently. In summing up the achievements of the two previous heads of the Catholic Church, Tracy noted that both had affirmed that antisemitism is incompatible with Christianity and that the State of Israel has legitimacy.

Jews hope that the next incumbent will continue in the same vein. There were concerns about the cardinal from Honduras who was one of the frontrunners for the job. Canadian journalist Christine Williams wrote about him that "this outspoken antisemite reportedly blamed the Jews for deflecting attention away from 'Israeli injustices against the Palestinians' by arranging for the media to give undue attention to the Catholic sex abuse scandal."

Rabbi Dow Marmur

in Toronto

Therefore, the election of Pope Francis was greeted with relief and enthusiasm throughout the Jewish world. Already the day after the announcement, a photograph was circulated showing the new Pope celebrating Chanukah in Buenos Aires, where he had been archbishop.

It was also reported that he visited another synagogue on Rosh Hashanah and that he hosted a memorial event on the anniversary of Kristallnacht. And he had shown solidarity with the Jewish community after the 1994 bombing of the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires. In his forward to a book by prominent Argentine rabbi Sergio Bergman, he described the author as "one of my teachers."

The news media cited Jewish interfaith activists praising the new Pope. Thus Rabbi David Rosen of the American Jewish Committee described him as a "warm and sweet and modest man." Abe Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League and Rabbi Marvin Hier of the Simon Wiesenthal Center expressed their enthusiasm in superlatives. The headline of a large article in Israel's leading daily *Ha'aretz* read: "Francis is good for the Jews."

As soon as he was appointed, the new Pope invited the Chief Rabbi of Rome to his inaugural mass at the Vatican and wrote: "I sincerely hope to be able to contribute to the progress that relations between Jews and Catholics have enjoyed since the Second Vatican Council." Israeli President Shimon Peres hastened to invite the new Pope to Israel, stating that Vatican-Jewish relations are "now at their best in the last 2,000 years."

The suggestion that Pope Francis may not have done enough to protect the more than 30,000 victims of Argentina's Dirty War between 1976 and 1983, when he was a prominent church leader in his country, were vehemently denied by a Vatican spokesperson. In the Pope's defence, he stated that "there have been many declarations of how much he did for many people to protect them from military dictatorship."

But as much as Pope Francis may have reached out to *Jews*, it's nevertheless legitimate to ask about the attitude of the Catholic Church he now heads to *Judaism*.

Though the charge of Jewish deicide has been dropped, and the traditional teaching that Christianity has superseded Judaism and thus rendered it irrelevant, even harmful, is no longer openly promulgated, the limits of the relationship between the Catholic – i.e., universal and comprehensive – religion and the faith of Israel can probably never be viewed by the former as symmetrical.

One of the most prominent theologians of interfaith dialogue, the late Krister Stendahl, a former dean of Harvard Divinity School and Lutheran Bishop of Stockholm, wrote in a celebrated essay on religious pluralism that "universalism is the ultimate arrogance in the realm of religion" because it's "by definition and unavoidably spiritual colonialism, spiritual imperialism."

In Rev. Stendhal's view, true interfaith understanding must affirm that "in the eyes of God, we are all minorities." Those who claim "catholic" universal truth may choose to be tolerant of others, but that's not enough. Tolerance, he wrote, has by its very nature "an elitist lining," either because the other doesn't matter too much or out of civil *noblesse oblige*.

The likelihood of the Vatican telling its 1.3 billion adherents that they're in any sense a minority is difficult to imagine. Therefore, as much as we've reason to applaud the positive statements by the new Pope, we cannot forget that he heads a curia that – unlike the many liberal Catholic individuals and groups it has been my privilege to know and work with – may regard Judaism as inferior.

Therefore, even allowing for good intentions, potential claims of domination still make true co-operation with the Vatican problematic.

Iraq: 10 years after the war

American forces roared into Baghdad 10 years ago this month, virtually completing the three-week invasion of Iraq and toppling one of the most repressive Arab regimes in the Middle East.

In a crowning touch heavily laden with symbolic implications, U.S. troops helped rapturous Iraqis tear down a towering and glowering statue of Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein, in the heart of the city. Few Iraqis outside ruling Baathist party circles were unhappy that his regime had finally been overthrown.

A brutal autocrat who ruthlessly crushed his opponents and plunged Iraq into the long night of totalitarianism, he was a greatly disruptive force in the region, lending political and financial support to radical Palestinian factions bent on destroying Israel, meddling in the affairs of his Arab neighbours and sending armies to invade Iran and Kuwait in 1980 and 1990 respectively.

Saddam's eight-year war with Iran, which essentially ended in a draw, weakened Iraq. But Iraq's naked aggression in Kuwait was even more disastrous. The 1991 Gulf War, which broke out in reaction to Iraq's imperial designs on Kuwait, brought Iraq to its knees. As the United States assembled a coalition to push Iraq out of Kuwait, the United Nations imposed severe economic sanctions on Iraq and sent inspectors there to ensure that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were disabled or destroyed.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

As Iraqis crowded around the statue in wonderment and amazement, perhaps reflecting on the disasters Saddam had inflicted on Iraq, Iraqi mobs ran amok in an orgy of looting, creating an indelible impression of unbridled anarchy. Watching these developments unfolding, the U.S. secretary of defence, Donald Rumsfeld, made a flippant observation that may haunt him for the rest of his days. As he said, "Stuff happens and it's untidy, and freedom's untidy, and free people are free to make mistakes and commit crimes and do bad things."

Little did he know that the United States had embarked on a risky military adventure – Operation Iraqi Freedom – that would cost it dearly in blood and treasure, divert resources from the war already raging in Afghanistan and diminish its international standing and prestige.

The victorious and largely unopposed American march into Baghdad on April 9, 2003, generated self-serving illusions in Washington that the war would soon end on a triumphant note and enable American soldiers to return back home.

With a spate of suicide bombings killing U.S. troops, and with an insurrection building, clear-eyed foreign correspondents covering the fighting drew a more sober conclusion. In a story published on the front page of the *New York Times* on April 12, Dexter Filkins presciently wrote, "But the fact is the war is not over."

Almost a decade would elapse before the Americans withdrew from Iraq. During the interval, 4,484 Americans lost their lives and 32,200 were wounded in a mission that would cost an estimated $3 to $4 trillion, a gargantuan sum that could have been used to battle poverty in urban ghettos, or establish a long overdue universal health-care system.

Donald Rumsfeld

George W. Bush, the U.S. president who launched the invasion, initially justified it on the basis of two rationales. Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons were a regional threat, while Iraq's relationship with Al Qaeda represented a clear and present danger.

When these claims turned out to be bereft of substance, Bush and his secretary of state, Colin Powell, adopted a different approach, claiming that the ouster of Saddam would usher in a new era of democracy in the Middle East and inspire a push for democratic reforms throughout the region.

Ten years on, with Saddam dead and buried, Iraq possesses the trappings and veneer of a parliamentary democracy. Elections have taken place and a constitution has been written.

But Iraq, riven by deep sectarian divisions pitting Shiites against Sunnis, has been thrown into chaos. The current prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite, has been accused of concentrating power in his hands and marginalizing the Sunnis, the big losers in postwar Iraq.

The insurrection, which broke out as the Americans and their allies rolled into Iraq, is mainly an expression of Sunni anger and resentment with the new political order. Although the revolt is not as toxic as it was in its early phase, it continues to simmer and claim victims.

Since 2003, 110,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed in a variety of violent incidents. As the 10th anniversary of the invasion was marked in Iraq on March 19, 17 car bombs exploded throughout the country, killing some 60 civilians and wounding 190. Al Qaeda took responsibility for the bombings, underscoring its ability to sow mayhem in a war-weary nation struggling to regain its footing after so much bloodshed.

Oil production is back to 1990 levels of three million barrels a day, but power outages are still common. Once-scarce western consumer goods, embargoed by UN sanctions, are now widely available. But youth unemployment has reached appalling heights. A grasping nouveau riche elite has arisen to grab the spoils, but for the vast majority of Iraqis, relatively little has changed and life remains exceedingly difficult.

The Kurds, having established a semi-autonomous enclave in northern Iraq, were one of the chief beneficiaries of the war. But now that they enjoy a degree of independence just short of actual statehood, they have been thrust into an adversarial contest with the central government over control of Iraq's lucrative oil wealth.

The long-oppressed Shiite majority gained much from the American invasion. Sidelined by Britain, the colonial power in Iraq from World War I until 1932, the Shiites were repressed by a succession of Sunni-dominated Iraqi governments after the British left. Under Saddam, a Sunni, too, the repression worsened, particularly after Iraq crushed a Shiite uprising in southern Iraq in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War.

The emancipation and empowerment of the Shiite community, a U.S. war objective, has produced noxious blowback. Saddam checked Iran's hegemonic ambitions, but with his removal, a worthy outcome of the war, Iran's influence in Iraq has never been stronger. Iran, a bastion of Shiite Islam, has forged cordial relations with the current Iraqi government as the volume of bilateral trade has increased significantly.

For Israel, the American invasion has turned out to be a mixed blessing.

The elimination of Saddam's regime was a strategic victory for Israel. Saddam allied himself with Israel's enemies and fired 39 Scud missiles into Israel during the Gulf War. But now that Iran has gained ascendancy in Iraq, Israel is faced with a serious strategic problem that may well grow worse in the future.

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ROMSPEN

'Missing' Israeli teen in contact with parents

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

An Israeli teenager who left a leadership exchange program visiting Toronto without permission is no longer considered missing.

The 16-year-old boy, Raphael Arega Tesfaye, has been in contact with his parents in Eilat, and they are confident he is well and in no danger, said Brian Keshen, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's vice-president of community capacity building, who supervised the exchange program.

"The family feels he's safe, with a friend. We haven't heard back directly, but he's been in contact with his family," Keshen said.

"They're following his lead."

The teenager, originally from Ethiopia, was in Toronto as a member of the Diller Teen Fellows, a Jewish leadership program that includes a visit to an overseas Jewish community where they meet and interact with other Diller Teen Fellows. The program is run under the auspices of the Jewish Agency For Israel, in partnership with the federation, along with other communities in North America and Israel.

Prior to arriving in mid-March for the 10-day visit, Arega Tesfaye had asked for permission to leave the group for a time. His request was turned down and midway through the trip, while at the Vaughan Mills shopping centre, he sneaked away. York Region police were informed, as was the Israeli Consulate.

Arega Tesfaye, who goes by the Facebook allas Rephael Bruk, subsequently contacted his parents and sister and indicated he'd meet up with the group as they prepared to return to Israel just before Passover. He did not.

In the last week, he's reached out to his parents two more times, Keshen said.

"His parents have expressed a great deal of confidence that he's with somebody that he's comfortable with and that he's safe. They know who it is," though that information has not been shared with people in Toronto.

Nevertheless, Keshen added, federation officials would like to contact Arega Tesfaye. "We remain worried as we would for someone who is truant at school, but the sense of risk has gone down. We'd like to help him as much as possible."

Federation remains in possession of Arega Tesfaye's luggage and passport, which contains a six-month visa, he said.

"We're still trying to reach out. His parents said they'd speak to him to tell him we're available to help. This is a very bright, innovative kid. I can't tell you what... he's feeling, fearing or searching for."

Arega Tesfaye's disappearance has not affected plans to send 10 youngsters from Toronto to Eilat this summer as part of the Diller program.

"The rest of the kids [from Israel] had an amazing experience and we're looking forward to our trip to Eilat this summer," Keshen said.

LITERARY REMEMBRANCE: Grade 8 students from Robbins Hebrew Academy's Beth Tzedec campus proudly display Royal Canadian Legion Literary Competition awards, which they won for their essays and poems on the subject of remembrance. Pictured, from left, are Melanie Rose, Sydney Cohn, Sophie Sklar and Leah Kanee.

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Bone marrow donor hosts his own drive

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

About two months ago, Michael Levin, 36, received a phone call that changed the life of someone he has never met.

The caller was from Gift of Life, a Florida-based Jewish bone marrow foundation, and said that Levin was a potential match for an anonymous recipient.

Levin, an investment banker who is married with three children, said he couldn't even remember being tested. "I realized, though, that eight years ago before my wife and I had children, I had given a swab when we went for genetic testing."

Based on the information Gift of Life had, he said, he was a 30 per cent match, which meant they wanted to do further testing.

"I took a blood test, and was told I would hear back in about eight to 12 weeks. [Surprisingly, I received word] in seven days that I was a very good match, and I was asked if I was prepared to go forward.

"When I said yes, they explained the risks, and then we had the task of scheduling where and when the donation would take place."

He chose New York City, he said, – if the recipient is American, the procedure has to be done in the United States – because his company has an office there, and he would be able to do some work.

Michael Levin and his wife Melissa

Gift of Life flew Michael and his wife, Melissa, to New York and accommodated them throughout the entire procedure, known as peripheral blood stem cell collection, which represents the majority of bone marrow donations, he said.

He was prepped for the donation for five days, he said, and on March 18, he spent several hours hooked up to a transfusion machine giving stem cells.

"It is important to tell my story, because I want people to know that donating bone marrow is not an intrusive process. I received shots for those first five days, which stimulated the production of stem cells, and then I was hooked up to a machine. A Gift of Life representative was with me the whole time."

He said that the only side effect from the procedure was some muscle ache, "as if I'd used muscles I hadn't used in a while."

Melissa, a Grade 1 teacher at Leo Baeck Day School, said, however, that emotionally, the procedure was overwhelming. "From the moment we got the phone call, we were overcome with emotions. We were told that the recipient was a 65-year-old woman, and we thought that Michael was hopefully saving the life of a mother and grandmother."

Levin said he would do the whole thing over again "without hesitation."

The Levins are now hosting a bone marrow drive on April 21 at Bialik Hebrew Day School in Toronto – a Thornhill location will be announced – for four-year-old Jayden Roll from Montreal, who was recently diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia.

"We would love to use this drive to bring awareness of the whole process," Levin said. "We want to stress that it can be done in a non-invasive way, and that drives are important for the recipient and for building a bank for the community. It is an important thing to do."

For information, visit cureforjayden.ca.

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Chai Kosher set to close May 3

Marvid to increase supply

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Kosher consumers in Toronto will have plenty of chicken, despite the impending closure on May 3 of Chai Kosher Poultry, one of the city's largest suppliers, industry insiders say.

Moishe Friedman, president of Marvid Poultry in Montreal, said he supplies many kosher retailers in Toronto and has the ability to increase his company's capacity to 200,000 chickens a week if necessary.

"Consumers will have as many chickens as they need. There will be no shortage or price increase," he said.

Marvid Poultry carries hechshers from both the Montreal Jewish Community Council (MK) and the U.S.-based Orthodox Union (OU).

Chai representatives refused to comment about the company's demise after news about it had spread on social media over the weekend.

But industry sources said it had received an offer to buy the land where its plant is located, in the Port Lands area south of the Gardiner Expressway and near the eastern waterfront.

Richard Rabkin, director of marketing and business development for the Kashruth Council of Canada, which supervises Chai under the council's COR hechsher, said he values the Kashruth Council's longstanding relationship with Chai and regrets its closing.

He stressed, however, that Toronto will have a plentiful supply of kosher chicken.

"We are also looking into some alternative sources. Our main objective is for [kosher consumers] to have access [to what they need]," he said.

ANNUAL MEGILLAT HASHOAH READING: From left, Barry Sonshine helps Zoli and Sarah Zimmerman light a candle in honour of the ghetto fighters and partisans at the annual reading of Megillat Hashoah, held at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue on the evening of April 7. The text was written 10 years ago, and is now read throughout Israel and in much of the world. Toronto Holocaust survivor and Beth David member Alex Eisen was the driving force behind the scroll's creation. [*Frances Kraft photo*]

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Florida police say robbery may have motivated double murder

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Police in Florida believe robbery may have been the motive behind the double murder of Toronto snowbirds Donny Pichosky and Rochelle Wise on Jan. 9.

Wise's wedding ring, valued at about $16,000, is missing. She was known to wear it all the time, Capt. Sonia Quinones of Hallandale Beach Police told *CBS Miami*.

Police Chief Dwayne Flournoy said in the same newscast that a robbery motive is the leading theory, but not the only one.

Detectives are appealing to pawn shop owners and jewelry exchange businesses to review their inventory and notify them if they have a ring like Wise's, which is approximately size 6-1/2, in a platinum finish, with five half-carat white diamonds on top in a half-moon shape.

As well, the ring may be engraved with the letters "DCC" inside the band, and it has a locking mechanism at the base to allow it to open and close to fit over a knuckle.

The police are also still trying to identify a woman who appeared outside the couple's Venetian Park condominium townhouse on a neighbour's surveillance video the day they were murdered. The video shows the woman carrying an item and walking to the rear of the house, then walking back to the front/side area of the house empty-handed.

Police are looking for Rochelle Wise's wedding band.

The footage can be seen on the police website, cohb.org.

Wise, 66, was a retired preschool administrator at Bialik Hebrew Day School and a founding director of Crestwood Valley Day Camp.

Pichosky, 71, her husband of four years, was a retired businessman who volunteered with seniors at Baycrest and had spent at least 20 years wintering in Florida.

The couple was found dead in their townhouse after failing to show up for a lunch date and not answering repeated phone calls. They died of asphyxiation, and there were at least two perpetrators, police revealed last month.

Crime Stoppers is publicizing a $51,000 (US) reward for information leading to an arrest in the case. The bulk of the reward – up to $50,000 – is being offered by anonymous donors. A reward poster specifies that Crime Stoppers does "not want your name, just your information."

Anyone with information about the homicide, the ring, or the identity of the woman in the video, is urged to call Crime Stoppers at 954-493-TIPS (8477) or 1-866-493-TIPS (8477), or Det. Lane Sauls at 954-457-1438, or to go to www.browardcrimestoppers.org.

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CIJA working in a more competitive market

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Community Advocacy

Second of a two-part series

Is the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) an improvement over the old structure of Jewish community advocacy in Canada, or not?

CIJA's advantages and disadvantages have been a continuing source of debate since the organization dismantled Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) and National Jewish Campus Life (Hillel's parent body) in 2011 while simultaneously assuming the older agencies' roles.

That change was criticized by community members who were loyal to Congress and lamented the destruction of the venerable 90-year-old organization.

However, supporters of CIJA say the new organization has done a lot of good in its two years of operation as the community's main advocacy agency and that it's too early to judge its work.

Maureen Appel Molot, distinguished research professor at Carleton University's Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, said the time was right for a shake-up of the old advocacy structure.

"No one likes change, so the quite dramatic changes… understandably generated angst in communities long accustomed to a particular way of doing things. In the one area to which I am particularly attentive – that of the campus – there have only been gains, and significant ones," she said.

Molot said CIJA has backed many "long-overdue, innovative programming" initiatives on campuses across Canada.

Some of those include launching Size Doesn't Matter, a pro-Israel, student-led public relations and marketing organization that often cheekily promotes the Jewish state across media platforms, and Buycott Israel, an anti-boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign devoted to encouraging the purchase of Israeli-made products.

Both of these programs have been so innovative that they've been adopted by American Jewish advocacy groups.

CIJA has also facilitated numerous Israel missions for Canadian academics.

"Sitting around the national community table many years ago, I was frustrated by the lack of clarity between the responsibilities of Congress and what was then the Canada-Israel Committee, and I felt the two organizations should be merged to facilitate the development of a more integrated Jewish agenda on national as well as Israel-related issues," she said.

"In my view, the creation of CIJA was a step forward for the national Jewish community as well as for its constituent federations/communities."

Jack Mintz, Palmer Chair at the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy, also noted some of the positives that CIJA brings to the community, but he believes the organization will have to fight harder than its predecessors to position itself as the community's primary representative advocacy body.

"I was involved in early discussions about why [the community] needed to do a significant restructuring" of the advocacy landscape, said Mintz, a former director of the Canadian Jewish Congress Museum and Archives.

"While I was with Congress, there was a fundamental flaw in advocacy, in that it dealt with all the domestic advocacy issues while the CIC was responsible for Israel advocacy. It seemed fundamentally wrong that these two [areas] were separable issues to be dealt with," Mintz said.

Maureen Appel Molot

"Antisemitism was also related to anti-Zionism" and to continue with a separation of duties between CJC and CIC made little sense, he said.

Mintz said he was a "strong proponent" of moving to a "more rational advocacy approach… one body to deal with those types of issues."

CIJA, he said, now brings all advocacy efforts under one roof "which I think is appropriate."

However, Mintz said he isn't sure how much CIJA's new advocacy efforts have penetrated the community's consciousness.

"The fact that I don't see very much being put forward with respect to social justice or policy issues says something about CIJA," he said. "In fact, the one concern I had with the new structure was dropping the name Canadian Jewish Congress, which had a brand out there. I thought it would be a problem, because CIJA was not known and wouldn't have the same cachet and would take time to built up a significant brand."

While he said he has read news reports about CIJA's advocacy related to Israel and antisemitism, Mintz said he hasn't seen as much ink about its "broader-based advocacy" on social policy.

Jack Mintz

Mintz said he doesn't see what CIJA is doing right now that makes it as "significant [a] player" in the social policy field as Congress was.

The Jewish community may have a less positive view of CIJA than it had of Congress, because CIJA appoints its own leaders while Congress' leaders were elected at national plenary conferences, he said.

Asked whether he felt CIJA's self-appointment of its leaders is problematic, Mintz said that Congress' plenary voting structure was democratic in theory, but in practice, there hasn't been much difference between the two methods.

The plenary format gave Congress the veneer of democracy, but "in the end, a lot of its officers were chosen by rubber stamp anyway. It wasn't as democratic as one thought," Mintz said.

Engaging with the broader Jewish community should be a priority for CIJA, or it risks losing a branding war with other community advocacy groups, he added.

"There has been a decline in the brand [of community advocacy] relative to earlier years, which CIJA will have to think hard about in order to really demonstrate they are a significant player in advocating and being the spokesman for the Jewish community. Otherwise, other organizations are going to come in and fill the gap."

Continued on page 17

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Yom Hashoah 5773

From the Prime Minister

On Yom Hashoah, Canadians stand together to remember the countless innocent people, including the nearly six million Jewish men, women and children who suffered and died at the hands of the Nazis during the Holocaust.

As we mark the liberation of the first Nazi concentration camp in Buchenwald, Germany, let us also pay tribute to all those brave souls who fought with the Jewish resistance during this dark period, and let us renew our own commitment to continue their fight against all forms of intolerance, discrimination and antisemitism.

On March 5, Canada became the chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). As chair, Canada is committed to an ambitious campaign to raise Holocaust awareness and fight antisemitism at home and abroad. Canada will host a major IHRA conference in October in Toronto.

The atrocities of the Holocaust betrayed the fundamental value of human dignity. We must never allow such unthinkable crimes to be forgotten or repeated.

Stephen Harper
Prime Minister

•••

From the Premier of Ontario

On behalf of the government of Ontario, I am deeply honoured to join our province's Jewish community in observing Yom HaShoah.

It is only by remembering the heinous crimes of the Holocaust that we can strengthen our resolve to never let such a tragedy happen again. And it is by paying tribute to the Holocaust's victims and heroes – and by telling their individual stories – that we are reminded anew of the need to continue building a society based on mutual respect, acceptance and understanding.

For Ontarians of different faiths and backgrounds, Yom Hashoah is an opportunity to learn more about the immensity and meaning of the Holocaust – a time to reflect on the millions of innocent lives it claimed, the inspirational testimonies of its survivors and the obligation it has placed on all humanity to never remain silent in the face of injustice, intolerance and bigotry.

As Jewish Canadians mark Yom Hashoah, I encourage all Ontarians to rededicate themselves to the principles of a just and fair society.

Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

• • •

For more messages from political leaders, please go to cjnews.com

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO PERISHED: Baycrest clients, families, staff and volunteers observed Yom Hashoah April 7 at a service in the atrium of the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged, commemorating the Holocaust with prayers, readings and music. Survivors and their families lit six candles to remember the six million Jews who died. Rosa Weisberg (left), a patient at Baycrest hospital, and her husband, Sam, both survivors, lit a candle in memory of friends and loved ones. The Yom Hashoah ceremony is hosted by Baycrest's Holocaust resource program.

CJC 'collapse' called a bad decision

Continued from page 16

The CJN contacted the community's two other main advocacy organizations – B'nai Brith Canada and Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center Canada (FSWC) – to get their opinions about the new advocacy landscape.

B'nai Brith did not respond to requests for comment by *The CJN*'s deadline.

Avi Benlolo, CEO and president of the FSWC, said his organization would be open to working with CIJA, as it had with Congress in the past, if the new body ever approaches it.

Avi Benlolo

"Our door is always open for discussion, provided it aligns with our strategic interest and is mutually respectful," Benlolo said.

The FSWC, he said, considers itself more of a "universal human rights organization" and is not strictly a Jewish community organ.

"We are not a replacement for CJC or any other Jewish entity," he said.

According to Benlolo, his organization counts some 30,000 members in Canada.

Benlolo said he believes it was a bad decision to "collapse" the CJC.

"It was effective and had a good name in the community. While we were not always in agreement, our relationship was very respectful and constructive. We valued each other's presence, and that helped facilitate advocacy efforts for the community. The void left by CJC has indeed created much more pressure for organizations like ours."

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TEL AVIV — Willy Wonka may have the secret recipe for the Everlasting Gobstopper, but it's an Israeli candy company that is taking the confectionery and health-food world by storm with its new fortified sweets.

Carmit Candy Industries recently unveiled its original line of fortified confectionery products at the Natural Products Expo West industry event in Anaheim, Calif. The innovative lollipops, wafers and toffees are formulated to help shed pounds, boost the immune system and promote bone health.

"Healthier food, and the importance that diet has on health is a major consumer trend for many years," said CEO Steve Grun.

"Food manufacturers have been answering this trend with many new products, ranging from reduced fat/ sugar/ sodium products to products fortified with vitamins/ minerals/ fibre. We are taking this a step further by combining really tasty candy products with the most up-to-date nutrition ingredients to create products that taste great and deliver a specific health benefit."

From early on, Carmit did away with trans fat in its products. Grun told Israel21c that it was out of necessity in following Jewish dietary laws that the company became an unexpected leader in dairy-free, dietetic and organic confectionery.

"Carmit's gluten-free confectionery is a spinoff of products we developed for the kosher-for-Passover market, where the use of wheat flour is expressly prohibited. Our non-dairy products are a spinoff from the kosher need for pareve," Grun said.

The Israeli candy manufacturer hopes to lead the way with its fortified candy line as well. "This is a natural progression for us," he said. "The fortified confectionery market is a strategic direction for us, and we hope to further establish Carmit as a leading private-label manufacturer for value-added and healthy confectionery products."

The new products include a weight-management wafer bar with glucomannan and potato extract; chocolate coins with calcium, vitamin D and vitamin K; and sugar-free toffee chews with echinacea, vitamin C and zinc.

Grun explained that the added-value ingredients are selected for their scientific support, regulatory approval and technical parameters. Playing an equally important role are the candies and chocolates made in Carmit's two factories in Israel for the mainstream palate.

"Our customers are looking for new and innovative products – especially supplements that can be delivered in a tasty food format," said Adrian Sagman, Carmit's vice-president of export marketing and sales."

For more than 35 years, South African-Israeli Lenny Sackstein and his team have been creating colourful confectionery for the domestic and international markets.

In 1973, Sackstein opened a small duty-free shop at Ben-Gurion International Airport under the name Taste of Israel, selling dried fruits alongside sweets. Taste of Israel eventually bought the Carmit toffee brand-name from Ma'ale Hahamisha and expanded its products. In 1993, the family business went public and began to trade on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

Carmit Lollipops

Carmit is famous for its tri-coloured twisty marshmallows, chocolate coins with popping candies, colourful gummy drops, bright-coloured lollipops, gluten-free all-natural confectionery, yogurt-covered gluten-free pretzels and fruit-flavoured toffees. The company's best-loved treats in Israel are marketed under the brand Lenny's Magical Candies, which feature a colourful character sprinkling magic and candies everywhere he goes.

"It's the Israeli Willy Wonka," said Grun, except that the Israeli version is always happy and eager to put a smile on children's faces.

Carmit introduced the first marshmallow to Israel 25 years ago. In addition to the standard white-and-pink oval type, its specialty is shaped ones .

The company is also one of the biggest chocolate coin manufacturers in the world. "We have great partners all over the world selling our product. We're a very well-established private-label manufacturer," said Grun.

If you've ever eaten a chocolate coin in the United States, Europe, Australia or Canada, for example, the likelihood that it was made in Israel is extremely high.

Carmit's products are sold to well-known manufacturers, distributors and retail outlets in numerous international markets. Sales reach some $35 million a year. The Carmit name usually doesn't appear on the product, but there's no hiding where it was made.

"Our brand is sold all over the world, and on all of our products it says, 'Made in Israel' or 'product of Israel.' That's something we can be proud of," said Grun.

He said fortified candies will be the next big development in the industry, but that's not to say candy is healthful.

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Reform rabbi reaching out to Israeli families

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Meir Azari – the former executive director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism and one of the first Israelis to be ordained a Reform rabbi – will be in Toronto this weekend as part of an outreach effort by the Reform movement to Israelis living here.

On April 12, he will speak at an "Israel-style" Friday night service co-sponsored by Neshamah Congregation of York Region, ARZA Canada, Kachol-Lavan and the Schwartz-Reisman Centre. The service will take place at the centre at 6:45 p.m.

Rabbi Meir Azari

The following day, Rabbi Azari will speak at Shabbat morning services at Temple Sinai, then that night at the conclusion of the play *The Whipping Man*, a Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company production at the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

Rabbi Azari is the executive director of the Daniel Centers for Progressive Judaism, a Tel Aviv-based entity that encompasses three congregations and some two dozen schools. He has been with the organization since 1991, when it began as a synagogue, Beit Daniel. He is also director of Mishkenot Ruth Daniel, a guest house and education and community centre in Jaffa under the same umbrella.

During his visit here, he plans to let the community know that Reform Judaism is growing in Israel despite challenges such as restrictions on rabbis officiating at weddings and funerals, and repeated arrests of women who wear tallitot while praying at the Kotel. In Tel Aviv alone, there are 210 bnei mitzvah a year in the Reform community, he said in an interview from New York, where he is finishing a two-month sabbatical.

As well, he said, he is trying to help congregations like Neshamah reach out to Israelis who live here.

The effort is an extension of what he is doing in New York – a pilot outreach program at the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in Manhattan intended in part to promote bridges between local Israeli families and the American Jewish community.

About one million Israelis live outside of Israel, and most don't understand the North American concept of a synagogue-based community, the rabbi said.

"You don't need congregations in Israel, because you know that Passover is Passover," he said. By living in Israel, "you live the memorial day and independence day."

Rabbi Azari said he is trying to give Israelis here a "channel" into synagogues. He believes this can be accomplished in part by bringing more Hebrew into the synagogue – for example, in adult education programs – and by increasing awareness among congregational staff and lay leaders, as well as among Israelis.

"I think that in every major city across North America, we have to have a congregation that offers a Hebrew home for Israelis. It's not enough to have the film festival or Yom Ha'atzmaut."

Beit Daniel, he said, has "managed to tell the Israeli community that synagogue is a nice environment, not something to be afraid of."

Many Israelis see Judaism as black and white, he explained, and see themselves as secular because the alternative is "too black."

The State of Israel and the Jewish Agency, of which Rabbi Azari is a board member, have introduced changes recently in the way Israeli emigrants are viewed, he said, explaining that they are now seen in a much more positive light.

"This is a large community. You cannot ignore this community – our children, families, friends, relatives whose life brought them to North America [because] someone fell in love, or found a better job.

"Why not keep in touch, learn from them, help them maintain a Jewish life?"

The Hebrew language alone will not maintain Judaism through a second and third generation, he said.

The rabbi, who was born in 1959 into a Sephardi family in Haifa, came to Reform Judaism by chance. His parents sent him to a school run by the Reform movement in Israel, simply because they were looking for a good school, he said.

His current sabbatical will be over this month, but he plans to continue his work in New York over the next three years.

From Auschwitz to Birkenau

Dan Kanter, left, musical director and guitar player for Justin Bieber, made an emotional visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau during Bieber's current 2013 European Believe Tour stop in Poland on March 25. The trip was organized by the March of the Living, an international educational institution dedicated to teaching the lessons of the Holocaust and to combating prejudice, intolerance and hate.

To read story, go to cjnews.com

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Recreating an 18th-century Polish synagogue

Evelyn Tauben

Last summer I travelled for the first time to Poland, where my grandparents were born, to help recreate murals from an 18th-century wooden synagogue in the town of Gwozdziec, now in Ukraine.

This synagogue replication is one part of a multi-phase decades-long exploration into Polish wooden synagogues by the Massachusetts-based organization, Handshouse Studio.

The newly built roof structure and painted domed ceiling of the Gwozdziec synagogue were recently unveiled in the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Located on the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto and in the prewar Jewish neighbourhood of Warsaw, the museum opened a new building this month on April 19 to mark the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

For years, I followed Handshouse's project with great interest. With the announcement that hands-on workshops would be offered in Poland, I eagerly applied, seeing a chance to play a small role in the museum effort and to finally travel to Poland with a creative purpose.

The trip became an expression of a deep and complicated desire to connect with my Polish roots. I shaped an experience that was about being generative and collaborative – a curator curating my own experience. But life rarely conspires to be packaged so neatly and I was challenged in unforeseen ways.

In July, I joined a group of artists who were primarily from the United States, along with a handful of young Poles, for one of 12 Handshouse workshops hosted over two summers. Each two-week stint was based out of a different historic synagogue.

We worked in the southeastern town of Szczebrzeszyn, replicating the vibrant south dome murals of the Gwozdziec synagogue ceiling. The ceiling features two mythological creatures wrestling – a griffin and a dragon – surrounded by a network of vines and stylized flowers. A lower band includes an enigmatic combination of a leopard, turkey and deer. With awe, I observed the lead team, which has spent years dedicated to this project. Only one member has Jewish heritage. Among them, I felt both bolstered and weighed down by my background. Their passion was for making historical objects anew, practising their motto of learning through doing, but my desire was to enter into history and to appreciate more vividly a past that is personal.

The author, Evelyn Tauben, working on the restoration. *[Yari Wolinsky photo]*

Szczebrzeszyn is 113 miles from Lutsk, where my grandfather was from. As a teenager, instead of fulfilling his dream of attending art school, he was fleeing to the Soviet Union with his father and uncle. After the war, he opened an engraving shop in Los Angeles and supported his family by the work of his fine hands. I inherited his eye, if not his raw talent, and channelled the family business of colour, line and form into a career as a curator and producer. Instead of going to Lutsk, I imagined bringing my zaide with me.

As the Handshouse team doled out tasks, it was suggested that I help with the Hebrew text. But I desperately wanted to paint a flower. My Hebrew name is Vered or "rose," after my zaide's sister, Blumeh – "flower" in Yiddish. When the men in the family fled, Blumeh followed but was sent back to her mother and little brother to wait out the war. Instead the war came for them. Blumeh was 15. Now she exists only through threadbare memories and through me. Among the blossoms on the ceiling would be my quiet tribute – a blumeh for Blumeh.

A peculiar flower was assigned to me – a bulbous green pod with curled tips, resting on wide red petals. Through practise on test boards, I became connected with its curving shape, refining the technique of layering colours and blending them using rabbit-skin glue. When the time came to work on the actual panels, my hands trembled and I recalled my initial poetic notion of invoking my zaide's assured artistry to guide me. But in actuality, it was not easy painting with ghosts at my back.

The Handshouse synagogue replication, helmed by Rick and Laura Brown, is fuelled by curiosity and conviction resembling faith. Ritual abounded in this shul-turned-studio – not the recitation of Shema or standing for the Amidah but gathering daily for opening words of inspiration and spending hours carefully, rhythmically tracing out shapes, laying down background colours, mixing powder pigments into paint, and mimicking the markings of Isaac and Israel – the original mural painters.

Continued on page 21

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Found a new understanding of my grandfather

Continued from page 20

Talmudic debates were replaced by a sort of "colourscape chevrutah," as painting leaders argued over the quality of a brushstroke or the saturation of the overall palette while huddled around archival black-and-white photos and the few remaining pre-1914 colour sketches. These artists share much in common with the devout: patience, dedication, fidelity to tradition, and commitment to legacy. While they were devoted to the solemnity of the process, I was yearning for a deeper connection to a place that I wanted to claim as my own.

With all energies devoted to figuratively looking up at the decorated ceiling, we often forgot to "look down" to the space that cannot be recreated – where the congregation gathered, where their voices lifted to meet the fanciful forms gracing that ceiling. I wanted to be with *those* people, to grasp why they built this elaborate house of worship, not just how. However, solely meditating on the massive devastation brought upon the Jews, or on the fact that no wooden synagogues still stand in Poland, obscures the reality that new synagogues are regularly built around the world and new Jewish communities continue to rise up, even in Poland.

The project's name is "Making History." I wondered what that meant. In remaking a historical object, what is drawn out of the recesses of the past? What is left behind? Expertise in painting a flower that once adorned a shul does not translate into appreciating what a shul actually is. As a descendant of makers of the everyday stuff of life, from my seamstress great-grandmother and my mother, a designer, I tried to enter fully into the process of making, but a feeling of incompleteness tugged at me. One day, a well-known teaching from Pirkei Avot came to mind, providing new perspective: "It is not your responsibility to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it."

The Browns enthusiastically began the task, launching a huge team effort and insisting on hosting educational workshops across Poland. (The less complicated, more reliable route would have been to carry out the project with the core group in their Massachusetts studios.) But it is not up to them to take on all the complex pieces that are hard-wired into this narrative. And it is not up to me. Neither am I free to desist from the challenging, vital task of bringing people into meaningful engagement with history and Jewish creative expression.

Producing Jewish arts events in recent years, I understood this in a broad sense, often encountering a self-conscious attitude that our culture could not be of interest to others. But now I feel it more acutely after immersion in a project of great significance to modern Jewry that was not spearheaded by Jews. Given the reservoirs of hurt still gathered around all things Jewish and Polish, it is not surprising that it took two sculptors from the East Coast of the United States to highlight what an artistic treasure had been built by Jewish communities in Poland before the war. Yet there was an essential quality – a *Yiddishe neshama* – missing from the process, which I felt acutely.

Between the push-pull of doing and discovering, at any given moment with the Handshouse team, I felt a mixture of pride and frustration, admiration and isolation. Perhaps what I was looking for – a textured experience of a Jewish past and present in the place where my entire family came from – could not be found in this art project.

But I did find Blumeh. After carrying her name with me since birth, I finally spent time with her while painting a funny little flower. And I found a new understanding of my grandfather – of his loss, his resilience, his courage and of his pressing impulse to create art. Clearly, there is no perfect "return to Poland" itinerary. But among our group there was an imperfect striving to tell and know one another's stories. In doing so, we were making history.

Evelyn Tauben is an independent curator, producer and writer with a focus on new Jewish culture. A version of this article appeared in the Jewish Daily Forward on Oct. 5, 2012.

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Remembering Israel's fallen – Yom Hazikaron

At 11 o'clock on the morning of Monday, April 15, Israel will come to a standstill. Sirens will wail and Israelis – along with Jews around the world – will pause to remember the thousands of soldiers and civilians who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Today, a look at Yom Hazikaron, remembrance day for Israel's fallen.

Start by looking at their faces. Israel's Ministry of Defence has created a moving site, and even if you can't read Hebrew, it is heartbreaking to flip through the Yizkor pages and pause to glance at photographs of the young men and women who gave their lives for their country. If you do understand Hebrew, read a few biographies to learn about the lives cut short. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron1]**

By 2012, 22,993 soldiers and other security personnel had fallen. Since the second intifadah, many have extended Yom Hazikaron to remember security guards who gave their lives guarding public buildings, restaurants and cafes. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron2]** The Orthodox Union site traces the number of casualties and summarizes the major battles from pre-State times. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron3]**

Yom Hazikaron also honours the memory of civilians whose lives have been tragically cut short. Once again, the site created to remember them is in Hebrew, but the pictures that appear speak volumes. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron4]** The quotation at the top of the page is from Jeremiah 31:19: "For whenever I speak of him, I still remember him."

Unless you've experienced it, it's difficult to describe what it is like when the country stops for two minutes. But you can get a feel for it from the various videos found on YouTube – including when all motion stops on Israel's busiest highway. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron5]**

At memorial services, Yizkor will be chanted, Kaddish will be uttered and poetry will be recited. A Hebrew poetry page has collected the works of some of the country's premier poets including Natan Alterman, Naomi Shemer and Chana Senesh. It includes King David's lament from the Book of Samuel II upon hearing of the deaths of Jonathan and Saul, "How the mighty have fallen." **[http://bit.ly/zikaron7]** You can read selected poems in English at the American Zionist Movement page. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron8]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

It is almost impossible to understand the grief of a small country that has given up so many of its young. That's why a memoir about the loss of one soldier has such an impact. Esther Wachsman's son, Nachshon, was held ransom by Hamas in October 1994. The IDF launched a military rescue that failed, and Nachshon and the commander of the rescue mission were both killed. **[http://bit.ly/zikaron9]**

"The entire nation mourned with us," Esther Wachsman writes. "Thousands came to comfort us, though no one can comfort a bereaved parent. Bus and taxi drivers who brought people from all over the country who wished to express their condolences left their vehicles and joined their passengers in our home. That unity, solidarity, caring, compassion and love with which we were showered gave us strength and filled our hearts with love for our people. After the shivah, we all returned to our routines... for that is what the Jewish People have always done – rebuilt after destruction, began new lives from the ashes and blood of the old."

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Together we can survive

I recently had a chance to watch on YouTube a little excerpt of the 12th Siyum Hashas that was held on Aug. 1, 2012, at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey in front of close to 100,000 people!

The Siyum Hashas is a completion of the whole cycle of Talmud in seven years and five months, learning one page per day.

The novel idea of learning a daf of Talmud a day was initiated by Rabbi Meir Shapiro on Aug. 16, 1923, at the first Agudath Israel convention, which took place in Vilna.

Watching a little part of the siyum gave me goose bumps. There was a festive atmosphere. People from different streams of Judaism were singing and dancing, almost 100,000 people praying the afternoon and evening service together left me awed, and the speeches made by the speakers I heard were exquisite. There was a feeling of unison in the air!

One of the speakers was a former Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, who is a Holocaust child survivor. He reminded the crowd that the siyum is dedicated in memory of people who perished during the Holocaust. He spoke from his heart, and every word was a gem. One part of the speech touched me to the core of my heart. Rabbi Lau said that every day, in the morning prayer, we recite the song of the day, is a chapter of psalms related to that day. The siyum took place on Wednesday, and the first verse of the Wednesday song reads "*Kel nakamot HaShem, Kel nekamot hofia,*" "God of vengeance HaShem, God of vengeance had appeared." Rabbi Lau said that the greatest vengeance is to have close to 100,000 Jews gathering to complete the shas!

Sephardi Window

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

His words reminded me of a similar message he gave when we hosted him in Vancouver, where he said that by being proud Jews and keeping our tradition alive, we show all our enemies that no one will ever be able to annihilate the Jewish People.

My wife and I recently had the merit to go to a shivah house visit for Ben Axelrod z'l. Ben and his wife, Rita, were Holocaust survivors who rebuilt their lives in Canada. On any occasion when I met them, they were a source of inspiration. They did not have to say a word – just being next to them rejuvenated me.

During our visit, Rita shared with us stories about her dear Ben, how much he meant to her, how difficult it was to start their lives in a new country and how they were successful in starting all over again.

As we have just commemorated Yom Hashoah, mourning the loss of people who perished during the Holocaust, and as we approach Yom Hazikaron, remembering the Israeli soldiers and the people who died during terrorist attacks, let us remember that, as a nation, we are invincible. As the Passover Haggadah says, "In every generation, there are those who rise against us to destroy us, but God rescues us from them."

May God give all of us the strength and conviction to continue surviving.

Separating affordability and sustainability

Day school is the gold standard of Jewish education. Across multiple metrics, day school graduates have broader and deeper Jewish knowledge bases and stronger Jewish identities. Day school graduates disproportionately constitute young Jewish leaders, shaping communities today and the face of Judaism into the future.

Notwithstanding their success, I am concerned for the future of day schools.

Class Act

Daniel Held

Often conflated, there are two interconnected crises: sustainability and affordability.

Let's begin with sustainability.

Day school financial sustainability necessitates a long-term plan to ensure that revenue – from all streams – covers costs.

Across North America, there are approximately 300 day schools ranging from Reform to Centrist Orthodox (including Orthodox schools farther to the right doubles the number). These schools have a combined annual budget of approximately $1.5 billion. On average – and there is a significant range – 80 per cent of this budget is covered by tuition.

A long-term sustainability plan must develop new revenue streams while controlling costs. Developing revenue streams includes creating endowments, increasing annual fundraising and increasing revenue from ancillary services such as rentals.

To examine one area, only half of Jewish day schools have endowments, with a combined total of slightly over $250 million. In comparison, the top 10 American independent schools each has more than $200 million in its endowment. Through matching grants and concentrated fundraising, in recent years the Federations of Los Angeles and Metrowest have significantly increased day school endowments, lowering the schools' annual financial burden.

Initiatives to decrease costs include "right sizing" to operate at capacity, collective purchasing, combining back-office operations and introducing blended learning through technology. While some efficiencies can be found, 70 per cent of the average school budget is allocated to human resources. But without significantly reducing the school's core – the teaching staff – little can be achieved.

While sustainability is about the long-term viability of the school, affordability is about the individual parent's perception of cost and value. A school can be affordable at $500 tuition but not sustainable. Conversely, it can be sustainable at $40,000 tuition but unaffordable.

On a relative basis, day school is more expensive than it was five years ago, with tuition rising an average of three to six per cent per year for the last decade – an increase far in excess of wages. Compounded by the economic downturn, in the last eight years, day school subsidy requests have doubled across North America.

Schools and communities are combating the issue of affordability in a variety of ways: capping tuition at a percentage of gross annual income, developing subsidies for middle-income families, and building community funds for Jewish education to shift the burden away from parents.

Notwithstanding these multiple efforts, providing children with a day school education will always come at an opportunity cost. Parallel to financial interventions, schools must work to increase the perceived value of their services. Studies show that day school enrolment is more strongly correlated to parents' perceived value than to tuition, making the parents' perception of the school, community, and education key determinants in the affordability puzzle.

There is no silver bullet. The financial cost of educating children in day schools is high. The communal and social cost of not sustaining the schools, however, is even higher.

Legal information service for abused women

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Act to End Violence Against Women has recently opened a free legal information service for Jewish women over age 18 and living in the GTA who have experienced abuse.

Penny Krowitz, executive director of Act to End Violence Against Women, said the service helps women navigate the legal system in Ontario by providing legal support workers, community education, pro bono summary advice, referrals to lawyers and community resources.

The legal support workers have been trained to understand family law in Ontario, she said. "They do not offer legal advice, however, and the intent is not to replace a lawyer or advice from a lawyer.

"The workers help women understand the family law process, explore their rights and responsibilities and identify their legal issues, and provide moral and emotional support."

Krowitz said that women experience many barriers when trying to access the legal system. "They need to find a lawyer who is sensitive to abuse and understands its many nuances, and [they need] to have the funds to pay a lawyer.

"Many abused women are immobilized, and often stay in the relationship because they are frightened and are afraid to explore their options. That's where our service comes in."

The stories of abused women are always complex, she said. "Our workers – some speak Hebrew and Russian – help a woman unpack her story and identify her priorities. Children are often used as pawns in the legal game, and I can't even begin to imagine all the stories out there.

"[The workers] will also accompany a woman to court or to the lawyer, and they develop a list of resources available to her. There is nothing in the Jewish community that provides a holistic information service."

A number of lawyers have agreed to give pro bono summary advice, and have spoken to the workers about such issues as custody, access and stress, she said.

Krowitz said that when setting up the clinic, they sent out a questionnaire to a number of family lawyers in the Greater Toronto Area to determine whether they were willing to participate in the clinic, and to screen them for their knowledge of domestic violence.

The service has a reciprocal agreement with The Barbra Schlifer Clinic, which offers legal help, counselling and language interpretation to women who have experienced violence. "They also started off as a volunteer service."

Women's shelters are pleased that the service has started up, Krowitz said, because it is challenging to get information out to the women who need it.

The "complex and detailed" project took about a year and a half to get off the ground, she said.

The service, by appointment only, is housed in the Thornhill offices of Act to End Violence Against Women. It is funded with grants from sources including the Carole & Howard Tanenbaum Charitable Family Foundation and the Law Foundation of Ontario. For more information, call 905-695-5374 or go to info@acttoendvaw.org.

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Meat for the 'kosher carnivore'

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

June Hersh's mantra is: "Eat well – do good." She is the author of *Recipes Remembered, a Celebration of Survival*, written to benefit the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York.

Her second cookbook, *The Kosher Carnivore* (St. Martin's Press), contains 120 all-new, innovative recipes for cooks of all levels and is a primer for anyone wanting to learn more about the extensive choices of meat and poultry available at their supermarket or butcher. Hersh explains how to prepare every kosher cut of meat and includes helpful tips throughout the book, including advice on which cuts are interchangeable in recipes.

You'll find creative recipes for meat and poultry dishes that can be served as appetizers, salads and main dishes. She also includes a selection of dairy-free soups, side dishes, marinades and sauces to pair with the main course.

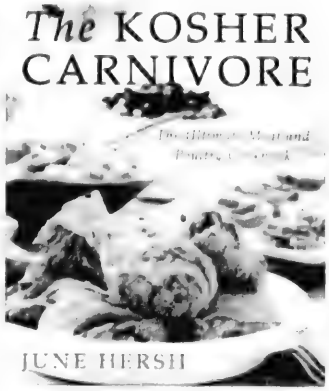
Hersh writes about various cooking methods, including braising, pot roasting, stewing, broiling and grilling. She provides an overview on marinades, rubs, glazes, spices and herbs. Here are some of her helpful tips for the kosher carnivore:

• When marinating poultry, if the skin is not an important element in the dish, remove it, as it presents a barrier to the marinade.

• Avoid metal containers. They will react with the acid and could impart a tinny taste to your finished dish. Resealable plastic bags are a better option as you can massage the liquid into the meat and easily turn the meat while taking up little space in your fridge. And cleanup is a snap.

• Once a marinade has been exposed to raw meat, it needs to be treated very carefully. If you thoroughly boil it, you can use it to baste the meat. However, instead of tempting fate, reserve a little marinade at the start and use that as a basting sauce at the end.

The Kosher Carnivore is an excellent culinary resource for anyone wanting to know more about meat and poultry and would make a wonderful gift for a new bride. The wontons and stir-fry are ideal for weekend dinner guests and the pasta is perfect for a weekday meal. Enjoy!



CRISPY ORANGE BEEF AND BROCCOLI

This is not your average stir-fry; this one is ready for a Saturday night debut. It has the right balance between spicy and sweet, with both notes partnering perfectly with the beef and broccoli. Successful stir-frying is all about preparation: if you have all your ingredients ready to roll, you will have no problem with this fast cooking method. Serves 4 (2 if you are super-hungry). Start to finish: under 45 minutes.

1 lb. beef, cut against the grain into strips 1 in. wide and 2 to 3 inches long
1 large dried poblano chili
Sauce:
2 tbsp. Madeira or dry sherry
2 tbsp. hoisin sauce
2 tbsp. honey
1 tbsp. chili-garlic sauce
2 tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
zest and juice from 1 small orange (about 1 tbsp. grated zest, 1/4 cup juice)
1 tbsp. brown sugar
Stir-fry:
1 small head broccoli, florets only, blanched
3 tbsp. cornstarch
1/4 cup peanut or vegetable oil
1 large garlic clove, minced (about 1-1/2 tsp.)
1 tbsp. grated fresh ginger
1 scallion, white and green parts, sliced, for garnish
cooked rice for serving

Spread the beef out on a plate lined with a paper towel and refrigerate uncovered for at least 30 minutes or up to 1 hour. Drying the meat will give it a crisper finish when it's fried.

To reconstitute the poblano, cover it in a small bowl with very hot water. When soft, remove the stem and seeds and slice the pepper into thin strips; set aside.

To prepare the sauce: whisk together the Madeira, hoisin, honey, chili-garlic sauce, soy sauce, orange juice, orange zest and brown sugar. Set aside.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and blanch the broccoli for 3 to 4 minutes. Drain and place in a bowl filled with ice water to stop the cooking. Set aside.

To stir-fry: Heat half the oil in a large skillet or wok. Remove the meat from the fridge and toss with the cornstarch in a resealable plastic bag. Shake off excess cornstarch and carefully drop the meat into the oil. Cook over medium-high heat until crispy and browned, 5 to 7 minutes. You might need to do this in two batches so as not to overcrowd the pan. Transfer the finished meat to a plate and set aside.

In the same pan, add the remaining oil, only if the pan is dry, and stir-fry the broccoli, garlic and ginger over medium-high heat for 2 minutes. Add the reserved sauce, poblano chili and beef. Cook for several minutes until the sauce has thickened and the meat is glossy and coated with sauce.

Garnish with the sliced scallions and serve spooned over rice.

Behind the counter: Hanger steak, cut into strips (have your butcher remove the sinewy vein) is very flavourful and tender in this dish. You don't want to use tougher cuts that require braising, as this is a quick stir-fry. Make sure your butcher cuts the beef from a portion meant for stir-fry, not pepper steak. Don't even think about using rib meat for this preparation – it would be like wearing a ball gown to a ball game. Alternate cuts: thin cut minute steak or thin cuts from the top blade, the silver tip or the neck portion at the top of the chuck.

For more recipes, go to cjnews.com

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Group fights Israel apathy at Touro College in NY

Elianna Mintz
Israel Campus Beat

What would you do if your campus had no anti-Israel activity? What if it had little or no pro-Israel activity either? Would that be enough of a reason to do nothing regarding Israel during your college years?

That's the question facing students at Touro College for Women in New York City. The Orthodox women who comprise the student body have strong religious ties to Israel but are generally apathetic – they support Israel but do little to educate themselves about it.

"Because we operate in a religious school, we often have to fight more against apathy and lethargy from the students rather than the outright antagonism that is likely present in more diverse colleges," said Touro senior Adina Schechtman, who is head of the Lander College for Women Israel Advocacy Project (LCWIAP).

Students can discuss state in both religious and secular terms

To fight this apathy, a small group of Touro students joined together to change the lacklustre attitude toward Israel, and formed the advocacy project, an offshoot of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of New York.

The Israel advocacy project runs regular programs, hosts speakers and puts out a bimonthly newsletter aimed at keeping faculty and students abreast of relevant current events and advocacy opportunities.

"Many Touro students took a year off to study in Israel (prior to starting their studies at the school), but aren't particularly informed about the state or passionate about the country or its often tenuous political environment," Schechtman said.

Speakers brought to Touro by the advocacy project include representatives of Faces of Israel, a program that explores different aspects of Israel; and Shlomi Kaufman, Israel's deputy consul general in New York. Events have included a screening of the movie *Israel Inside* and a gala party for the college to celebrate Yom Ha'azmaut.

"Our programs are generally aimed at creating a positive perception and good associations with the country that is so often associated with war and terror," Schechtman said.

"Our primary activities are directed toward educating the students about Israel and the variety of opinions and discussions (both historical and current) revolving around the state," said Raphaela Abramson, former LCWIAP president and current member.

In addition to the events it organizes on the Touro campus, the advocacy project is interested in expanding and reaching out to Israel clubs on other local campuses to offer assistance.

"The amount of antisemitism disguised as criticism of the state on most college campuses, not to mention the basic lack of awareness regarding the state, demands Israel advocacy, regardless of which college or ethnicity one belongs to," Abramson, a senior, told Israel Campus Beat.

"Touro girls can present a viewpoint not often heard on secular campuses," she said. "They can discuss the state in both religious and secular terms, and often have first-hand knowledge of the state."

Because more than 75 per cent of Touro's student body have been to Israel, including many who spent an academic year studying there, Abramson said they can speak about their personal Israel experiences, enhancing the conversations on other campuses.

"Many students know Jewish students and can discuss Israel within a secular context, but actually discussing the state with a religious Jew and hearing her perspective, both in religious and secular contexts, is a rare opportunity," Abramson concluded.

Israel Campus Beat is a student-written online publication that covers campus Israel trends and events.

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To our wonderful parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. Wishing Rene & Ron Dalter a happy, healthy 60th wedding anniversary.

Happy 90th birthday Zaidy Essie. We look forward to spending many more with you! Love from your children and grandchildren.

Ruthie & David Waltman and Louis & Mary Scheinman are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Jesse and Jessica!

Mazel tov Leny & Harry Bromet on their 65th anniversary, and Aba's 85th birthday April 18. Love from Rina (Paul), Irith (Mitch), four grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren.

Happy 90th birthday Bella Pasternak. Love, your family Bluma, Michael, Phil, Donna, Benjy, Maria, Lorne, Zane, Milo, Lucas and Matthew.

Happy 95th birthday David Segal, the greatest father, grandfather and great-grandfather. We wish you health and happiness. Love, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

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What's New

By LILA SARICK

Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News
for the :-) generation

Deadline reminder: April 15 is the deadline for the issue of April 25. April 22 is the deadline for the issue of May 2. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 11

TEMPLELICIOUS

Rose Reisman demonstrates recipes, Temple Sinai, 7 p.m. $25. 416-487-3281.

TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL

Israeli consul general **DJ Schneeweiss** discusses current events in Israel, 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Friday, April 12

CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES

Sylvia Warsh teaches creative writing at Bernard Betel Centre. Call 416-225-2112.

Saturday, April 13

PRESSURES ON CAMPUS

Rabbi Richard Yellin on "Pressure Cookers on Campus: From Students to the Next Generation of Israeli Leaders," Beth Tzedec synagogue. After services and Sunday at 10 a.m., **Pnina Gaday,** Hillel director at Tel Aviv U, speaks.

JAMMIN' FOR JONNY

Temple Anshe Sholom holds a tribute concert for **Jonny Vaisberg,** 215 Cline Ave. N., Hamilton, 7 p.m. For tickets, 905-528-011, ext. 21 or email jbrown@anshesholom.ca.

MIRACLES OF HISTORY

Rabbi Leonid Feldman discusses "The Miracle of Jewish History," Congregation Darchei Noam. Services start at 10 a.m.

Sunday, April 14

JEWISH WAR VETERANS

Bill Gladstone on "The History of Jews in Toronto," at a meeting of Jewish War Veterans, Toronto Post, Lipa Green Centre, Breakfast, 9:30 a.m.; meeting, 10:15.

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

Prof. Barry Levy on "Three Forgotten Books: Proverbs, Job and Chronicles," today, April 21, Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, 8 p.m. Email mekorottorahstudy@gmail.com or call 416-877-2050.

MYSTIC DRUMZ

Mystic Drumz performs at TannebaumCHAT, 9600 Bathurst St., a benefit for Grandmothers Partnering with Africa, 2:30 p.m. For tickets, grandmotherspartneringwithafrica.com.

REPAIRING RAINBOWS

Lynda Fishman, author of *Repairing Rainbows,* speaks at Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon.

CANADIAN JEWISH EDITION

Author **Pearl Goodman** is the guest on *Canadian Jewish Edition,* Rogers Cable 10, April 14 at 8 a.m.; April 18 at 6:30 p.m

HIKING IN ISRAEL

Hesh Troper discusses hiking from Eilat to Jerusalem. Congregation Darchei Noam, 7:30 p.m

CRAFT AND GIFT SALE

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation's Sisterhood holds a craft and gift sale, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Monday, April 15

SPRING LECTURES

Mike Daley discusses "The Life and Music of **Pete Seeger,**" Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. 416-449-3880.

Continued on page 27

THE SENATOR JERAHMIEL S. AND CAROLE S. GRAFSTEIN LECTURE

DID SPINOZA BETRAY THE JEWS?

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 7:30 PM

with Dr. Ariela Di Castro-Bzhezinsky, the Grafstein Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of Toronto

No Charge

Born and raised in Rome, Italy, Dr. Di Castro-Bzhezinsky specializes in modern Jewish philosophy. Her lecture will profile an extremely controversial subject: Baruch (Baruch) Spinoza and his devastating critique of Judaism as a way of life and thought. So radical were his views that the Jewish community of Amsterdam excommunicated him. Yet, so profound was his influence in the shaping of modern Jewish thought that Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, wanted to accord Spinoza the honour of being interred in the land of Israel. Dr. Di Castro-Bzhezinsky will also address two contemporary questions: *Why do we keep Jewish law? What is the boundary between freedom of speech and incitement to anti-Semitism?*

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The Long Goodbye:
Living With Protracted Illness

Sunday, April 21, 2013
7:00 PM

Tamari Family Hall
Lipa Green Centre
4600 Bathurst Street, Toronto

Rabbi Mychal Springer of the Jewish Theological Seminary will explore spiritual approaches for families living with protracted illness with particular attention to those with loved ones afflicted by Alzheimer's and dementia

information@torontoboardofrabbis.org

Toronto Board of Rabbis appreciates the support of UJA Federation

Continued from page 26

Tuesday, April 16

OPEN HOUSE

City Shul School holds an open house, 4:15 p.m., 83 Christie St. By RSVP only, school@cityshul.com or 647-799-3557.

YOM HA'ATZMAUT FILMS

The film *I Was There in Color* at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Lunch at 11:45; program at 12:10. 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

At 8 p.m. *It Is No Dream: The Life and Times of Theodor Herzl.*

Wednesday, April 17

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Fabric artist **Tracey Lawko** speaks, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. Guests $5.

BEER TASTING

Stephen Rich discusses beer and food pairing, 7 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. $40. Tickets at Beth Emeth, Beth David, Adath Israel and Shaar Shalom synagogues. Reserve by April 15.

HADASSAH RECEPTION

Rachel Chapter of CHW holds a reception for **Mary Jo Haddad**, CEO at SickKids, 7 p.m., 10 Tichester Rd. $50. RSVP 416-630-8373.

NEW TO TWO

Songs, games and crafts for newborns to 2-year-olds, Wednesdays, Shaar Shalom Synagogue. 905-889-4975.

TECHNOLOGY FOR ADULTS

A hands-on technology workshop for adults at Beth Tzedec synagogue, 1:30 p.m.

SPINOZA AND THE JEWS

Ariela Di Castro-Bzhezinsky on "Did Spinoza Betray the Jews," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec.

Thursday, April 18

ETGAR KERET

Author and director **Etgar Keret** is celebrated all day by the Centre for Jewish Studies, U of T. www.cjs.utoronto.ca/etgarkeret or 416-978-1624.

CAREERS WORKSHOP

Mount Sinai Hospital Auxiliary sponsors a workshop on caring for people with Alzheimer's, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Edwards Gardens. $150. 416-586-4800, ext. 8282, or agarda@mtsinai.on.ca.

LONERS IN THE TANACH

Mitch Parker teaches "Loners and Outsiders in the Tanach," starting tonight, 7:15 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. Presented by Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning. RSVP 416-789-7400.

RAISING A MENSCH

Doctor of education **Audrey Huberman** discusses "The Ten Commandments of Raising a Mensch," 7 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly divorced or separated individuals. Starts April 16, 7 p.m.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts April 27, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m.; April 25, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers +65: A 6-session group for men and women over 65 who have recently lost a partner or spouse, starts April 18, 1 p.m.

Younger Widows/Widowers: A 6-session group for people under 60 who have recently lost a spouse, starts April 23, 7:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Function in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals about higher-order thinking skills and children, April 24, 7 p.m.

Adult Children Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts April 30, 7:30 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

CARD GAMES & CLUBS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

Hadar Senior Citizens Social Club is looking for new members. The club meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet A. Williams Community Centre. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club. 416-256-1892.

Circle of Care. Support group for caregivers over 55 caring for a spouse with dementia or disability, starts April 29, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call 905-738-1128, ext. 323, or 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

Association for Jewish Seniors. "Tax Tips for Seniors," with **Jamie Golombek,** April 18, Shaarei Shomayim synagogue. RSVP 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Beth Tzedec Haverim. Yehudit Shier Weisberg discusses "Israel and Palestine: Historical Perspectives on Current Issues," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Bingo, April 24, 12:30 p.m.; Casino Rama, April 17; Sunday dance, April 21, 7 p.m.; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. April 14, **Ken Weber** discusses "The Naughty Nineties," 1:30 p.m.; April 16, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses "How the Mossad brought Eichmann to Trial," 10 a.m.; April 17, Earth Day, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starts May. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Baycrest offers a falls-prevention course starting April 15 for older adults living in the community who have fallen or have a fear of falling. OHIP covered. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. **Corey Keeble** speaks about synagogue architecture in North America, April 11, 1:30 p.m.

Osnat Lippa presents "Influential Jewish Artists and Their Art," April 16, 23, 30. $36.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

One Step Ahead Mobility offers a dance class for all abilities, starting April 4. Call ext. 4235

April 16, **Anna Shternshis** reviews *The Free World*. April 22, *Little Jerusalem* is shown.

Yiddish conversation Mondays 1:30 p.m.; Folk dance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; Recorder class, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.; Duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; Shalom Singers, Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Rabbi Wayne Allen holds a pre-Shavuot Torah Roll program, May 13, 10 a.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers. April 15, "Remake/Remodel," 7 p.m.

Celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut with Israeli folkdancing, cooking, movies, April 21, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Adult and children swim classes start April 20. Call ext 530.

Benjamin Hackman teaches "The Art and Craft of Poetry," starting April 18 and "The Art and Craft of Short Fiction," starting April 21. Ext. 154.

MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein**, Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. Women's Chorus with **Gillian Steyck,** Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir, Tuesdays, 1 p.m

Baruch Sienna teaches "Introduction to Judaism," April 11- May 2, 7:30 p.m.

The exhibit *Nurture: Stories of New Midlife Mothers* is in the gallery until April 21.

Young Frankenstein is presented by the Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre, April 11-21. 416 324-1259.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. April 15, 11 a.m., flag lowering ceremony; 7:30 p.m., 65 years of Israeli Song; April 16, 7 p.m., Israeli dances and market; April 17, 6-10 p.m., Israeli artists in Toronto; April 18, 5-10 p.m., Israeli sports; April 19, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Israeli market.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

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Martin Clenman	Mar 9/13	3303 Don Mills Road
Max Pinkus	Mar 16/13	34 Nassau Street
Doris Miller	Mar 15/13	131 Chiltern Hill Road
Evelyn Berg	Mar 14/13	150 Heath Street West
Henry (Hillel) Leader	Mar 16/13	85 Skymark Drive
Marvin Hollenberg	Mar 15/13	15 Barberry Place
Rose Silver	Mar 15/13	7 Townsgate Drive
Harry Greene	Mar 16/13	333 Simcoe Street N.
Leon Lipnicki	Mar 19/13	77 Ellsworth Avenue
Jack Gortler	Mar 19/13	343 Clarke Ave. West
Lawrence Sandy	Mar 20/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Noah Kishinevsky	Mar 18/13	968 Lockwood Circle
Elaine Wagman	Mar 20/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Julius Spiegel	Mar 23/13	28 Bella Street
Eileen Riven	Mar 23/13	55 Skymark Drive
Toba Tintner	Mar 25/13	3000 Bathurst Street
Julius Spiegel	Mar 23/13	28 Bella Street
Eileen Riven	Mar 23/13	55 Skymark Drive
Toba Tintner	Mar 25/13	3000 Bathurst Street
Edith Cohen	Mar 23/13	602 Melita Crescent
Chava Greenbaum	Mar 27/13	5935 Bathurst. St.
Lillian Lauber	Mar 25/13	3560 Bathurst St.
Magda Letai	Mar 28/13	1104-240 Heath Street
Anne Silverman Matlow	Mar 26/13	#702-650 Briar Hill Ave.
Janice Susan Langer	Mar 27/13	30 Red Maple Court
Joan Lepofsky	Mar 29/13	15 St. Margarets Drive
Shirley Zarnett	Mar 30/13	2 Covington Road
Henry Wise	Mar 29/13	111 Avenue Rd.
Norma Fromer	Mar 30/13	77 Dunfield Ave. Pent.

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Stan Rose	Mar 9/13	293 White's Hill Avenue
Lea Moscovici	Mar 25/13	250 Glebemount Avenue

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Goodman, Vera	March 20/13	
Wasserman, Gordon Wilfred	March 18/13	55 Carscadden Dr
Borshtchiver, Beba	March 11/13	Private
Notkin, Klara	March 12/13	Private
Engel, Joseph Aaron	March 12/13	577 Glengrove Ave W
Smilovici, Nathan	March 13/13	3560 Bathurst St
Jacobs, Lily	March 12/13	205 Cummer Ave
Margovskaya-Levin, Braindlya	March 13/13	Private
Weiszner, Bella	March 13/13	Private
Fenster, Kalman	March 14/13	Private
Flicker, Roman	March 15/13	
Mandel, Josif	March 15/13	131 Torresdale Ave
Goldshteyn, Shulim	March 15/13	Private
Sussldnd, Richard	March 16/13	Private
Averbuch, Rina	March 17/13	3560 Bathurst St
Glozman, Matvey	March 17/13	110 Patrice Cres
Galler, Haia	March 17/13	80 Antibes Dr
Benzaquen, Esther	March 18/13	541 Finch Ave. W
Fishman, Annie	March 18/13	718 Sheppard Ave. W
Pliner, Remir	March 19/13	Private
Gurevich, Rakhil	March 20/13	Private
Benhaim, Georgette	March 20/13	3636 Bathurst St
Klinghoffer, Frieda	March 21/13	
Boruchowicz, Chana	March 21/13	3303 Don Mills Rd
Hertz, David	March 22/13	550 Cummer Ave
Tovbis, Isak	March 22/13	18 Cedarcroft Blvd
Becker, Fern	March 23/13	
Guest, Harry	March 23/13	
Lufer, Galina	March 25/13	10 Deerwood Cres
Frenkel, Etl	March 25/13	
Cohen, Sofie	March 27/13	1 Oxbow Rd
Shlafshtein, Vladimir	March 26/13	Private
Cohen, Fortune	March 27/13	152 Ramblewood Lane
Charendoff, Lillian	March 27/13	16 Drumern Cres
Koven, Frances	March 26/13	484 Steeles Ave. W
Banikin, Sheilah	March 27/13	56 Canyon Creek Ave
Silver, Josee	March 27/13	Private
Gorelik, Iouri	March 28/13	
Farache, Salomon	March 29/13	333 Clark Ave. W
Strom, Walter	March 30/13	Private
Natanson, Muriel	March 30/13	170 Red Maple Rd

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COHEN, Sofie (nee Marcovich) z"l - After a long battle with illness our beautiful wife, sister, mother and Nana left us on March 27, 2013, 16th of Nissan, 5773. Sofie Cohen, devoted daughter of Rachel a"h and Isidore z"l Marcovich, will be missed forever by her husband Albert Cohen, siblings Hanna (Berman) Efraim, Ruben z"l Marcovich, Itic (Nuti,a"l) Marcovici, Shalom (Genya) Marcovitz, children Stephen and Susie Cohen, Clyde Cohen, and Claire & Howard Glowinsky, as well as grandchildren Scott & Lisa, Ricky, Jesse, Rachel, Benjamin, Samuel and Jordana, great-grandchildren Joshua and Olivia, and many nieces and nephews. She was loved deeply by all who had the privilege to know her. Memorial donations to CZCF Canada or Tomchei Shabbos of Toronto. Special thanks to caregivers Letty and Shake for extraordinary love and kindness.

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God's emissary of salvation

Rabbi N. Daniel Korobkin
Special to The CJN

Erev Pesach, the day before Passover. Arguably, the rabbi's busiest day of the year. Yet, it was on that very Sunday before Pesach that I took a quick trip into New York to make a shivah call to my rebbe, Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter, who had just lost his father, Rabbi Herschel Schacter. The younger Rabbi Schacter has done so much in mentoring me in my developing years as a pulpit rabbi, and he was kind enough to be the scholar-in-residence for my installation Shabbat this year here in Toronto, and I felt it was the least I could do.

I had travelled to console my teacher, not knowing very much about his father. But in the course of the trip, I learned that the father was a unique rabbinic hero whose impact reverberates far and wide. My colleague, Rabbi Benjamin Samuels of Newton, Mass., shared some of Reb Herschel's legacy.

Rabbi Herschel Schacter was one of the first disciples of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, famed dean of Yeshiva University. He went on to become a pulpit rabbi in the Bronx for over 50 years. What he's most famously known for, however, is that he was the first U.S. army chaplain to liberate the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945.

As the *New York Times* recently reported, his was the voice that the inmates first heard, as he went from barrack to barrack in the hellhole, shouting, "*Shalom aleichem, Yidden, ihr zint frei!*" – "Jews, you are free!" He stayed on longer and aided with the resettlement of displaced persons.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, the former Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel and current chief rabbi of Tel Aviv, tells of Rabbi Schacter's role in liberating him at Buchenwald. In his inspiring memoir, *Out of the Depths*, Rabbi Lau writes: "I remember the looks of horror on the faces of the American soldiers when they came in and stared around them. I was afraid when I saw them. I crept behind a pile of dead bodies and hid there, watching them warily... Rabbi Herschel Schacter was the Jewish chaplain of the division. I saw him get out of a jeep and stand there, staring at the corpses. He has often told this story, how he thought he saw a pair of living eyes looking out from among the dead. It made his hair stand on end, but slowly and cautiously he made his way around the pile, and then, he clearly remembers coming face-to-face with me, an eight-year-old boy, wide-eyed with terror.

"In heavily-accented American Yiddish, he asked me, 'How old are you, *mein kind*?' There were tears in his eyes. 'What difference does it make?' I answered, warily. 'I'm older than you, anyway.'

Continued on page 29

Rabbi Herschel Schacter conducts a seder at Buchewald. ***[Wikimedia Commons photo]***

Rabbi Schacter led seder at Buchenwald

Continued from page 28

"He smiled through his tears and said, 'Why do you think you're older than me?' And I answered, 'Because you cry and laugh like a child. I haven't laughed in a long time, and I don't even cry anymore. So which one of us is older?'"

Rabbi Schacter had previously led a Pesach Sheini seder at Buchenwald on April 27, 1945. In the Torah, Pesach Sheini is the holiday of second chances, the Pesach sacrificial observance for anyone who, for reasons beyond their control, could not participate in that year's Passover. This was probably the first Pesach Sheini seder since the time of the Temple, and this seder of second chances was now being offered to the new survivors.

Shiku Smilovic, in his autobiographical memoir, *Buchenwald 56466*, tells about that day: "All Jews were invited by Rabbi Schacter to attend services and to eat matzah, since it was Pesach Sheini that day. Rabbi Schacter brought matzahs and distributed them to everyone. Rabbi Schacter started to deliver his sermon, when suddenly he was interrupted by a fellow prisoner. When he heard the rabbi say, 'We know what you have gone through,' the man screamed and said, 'No one, but no one, can dare say that he knows what we went through, unless he or she was there! Only they can say, "I know what you went through!"' He continued at the top of his voice with quotes from the Torah and other scriptures. He was no plain, ordinary everyday Jew. He spoke with authority.

"'Why did God forget about his children? And we were devastated, just because we are Jews?' he continued. 'Before we make a blessing and eat this matzah, we want a *din Torah* with the Ribono Shel Olam [to hold court with the Almighty]: Why? Why the little children? They didn't have a chance to sin yet! Why so many thousands of true dedicated *talmidei chachomim* [learned men], that were sitting and learning *yomam v'laila*, day and night? You can take your matzahs back to America. I don't want them. As far as I am concerned, the rest of you, you are free! You can do what your heart desires!'

"Rabbi Schacter did not interrupt the man and he let him finish. He moved his fists towards his heart and said, '*Chotosi uvisi pushati lefonecha*: Please, may I have your forgiveness?' The man raced up to the rabbi and embraced him for a while. The rest of us just stood there in silence, and our tears did the talking. After that scene, we all decided to have some matzah anyway. We made the blessing of *achilat matzah* in unison. I am sure that this blessing was heard in heaven, and all the angels answered, 'Amen.'"

Here's one more story that I discovered at the shivah. The Thursday before Passover, U.S. President Barack Obama was in Israel visiting Yad Vashem, where he met with the president of Israel, the prime minister and Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau.

After the president was presented with a memento of his visit, Rabbi Lau turned to him and told of how he had recently been in Seattle, where a non-Jewish World War II veteran came over to him with tears in his eyes and said, "I was part of the team that liberated you from Buchenwald. I need to ask your forgiveness, because seeing all the dead bodies, we discovered we had come too late."

Rabbi Lau turned to the president and said, "We appreciate so much how you've promised to come to our aid. All we ask is that you not be too late."

While recounting the story of his liberation, Rabbi Lau mentioned to the president how grateful he was to the United States, in that he had been liberated by the American army chaplain Rabbi Herschel Schacter. Unbeknownst to the people in that room, Rabbi Schacter had passed away the night before. The liberator's soul had just then been liberated.

In the Haggadah we read, "It is this [covenant] which has had staying power for our ancestors and for us. For it is not just one nation that rose up against us, but rather in every generation they rise up against us. And God always saves us from their clutches."

This has given strength and hope to our people in the face of suffering. No matter how dark the day may be, eventually "God saves us from their clutches." Despite the carnage and death, He will not allow our people to be utterly extinguished, and will send us his holy proxies, like Rabbi Herschel Schacter, to liberate us.

May his memory be a blessing

Rabbi Korobkin is the spiritual leader of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto congregation in Thornhill, Ont.

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Turkey-Israel breakthrough goes beyond Obama

Most media reports that dealt with Israel's apology to Turkey late last month for "operational errors" in the deaths of nine Turkish citizens during the 2010 Mavi Mamara incident described it as something that was brokered by U.S. President Barack Obama on the final day of his visit to Israel.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

While it's true that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan after Obama, who initiated the call, handed Netanyahu the phone, the real story of what lead to the Israel-Turkey breakthrough goes far beyond the U.S. presidency.

Almost two years ago, Reuters reported that Israel made overtures to Turkey and initiated low-level meetings to find a way to re-establish ties. Reuters noted that Zvi Hauser, Netanyahu's cabinet secretary, was exploring ways of breaking the impasse in the hope that a "redeeming formula" for reconciliation could be found.

Avigdor Lieberman, then Israel's foreign minister, was opposed to any apology, claiming that Israel, after all, had acted in justified self-defence after its commandos had been brutally assaulted. Lieberman also stated: "It is clear that [Erdogan] is looking not for accommodation, nor peace, nor normalization, but wants to humiliate the State of Israel, sap its international standing and harm our status in the region."

Indeed, Erdogan's hostility to Israel is deeply rooted and, it appears, deeply personal – as his recent characterization of Zionism as a crime against humanity would indicate. (Only after widespread international condemnation of his outrageous remark did Erdogan backtrack, claiming he only meant to criticize Israel's actions against the Palestinians, but he did so in such a way as to compound the original insult with further lies, as this paper's editor appropriately remarked in his March 28 column.)

In any event, it was primarily Erdogan himself who rejected Israel's overtures, insisting that Israel not only apologize but end its naval blockade of Gaza.

At the beginning of August 2011, writing for the Gatestone Institute, Efraim Cohen discussed rumours of a deal and posited the following scenario: "The broad outlines of the deal suggest that Israel would offer a limited apology for 'operational errors,' and would pay compensation to the families of those who died. In return, Turkey would recognize the legality of Israel's naval blockade of Gaza and would agree not to seek legal action against Israeli soldiers who were involved." This is precisely the deal that was reportedly struck last month, the culmination of a string of negotiations that took some time, despite the deal's contours being known long ago (and confirmed in the Turkish paper *Radikal* on Feb. 20).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan

Significantly, Erdogan had to drop his demand that Israel end its naval blockade. (The UN-commissioned Palmer Report, released in September 2011, criticized operational mistakes made by Israel aboard the Mavi Marmara while at the same time affirming the legality of the blockade.) Currently, Erdogan is bragging about the apology he "extracted" from Israel and has indicated that there will be no "full" restoration of ties until Israel ends the blockade. If Turkey actually insists on changing the terms of the agreement, Erdogan will have to face Obama, not Netanyahu.

By carefully and persistently navigating this agreement and providing Obama an opportunity to take credit for the diplomatic breakthrough – a rare achievement for Obama on the Middle East file – Netanyahu showed statesmanship. Erdogan has shown crassness and bluster.

Still, as many analysts have pointed out, it's in the interests of Turkey as well as Israel to have better relations while the broader region descends into uncertainty and (in the case of Syria) dangerous chaos.

Even during the period of frozen diplomatic relations following the Mavi Mamara imbroglio, as the March 30 *Economist* explained, Israel and Turkey managed to maintain military ties, in addition to trade worth $3 billion per year. With Israel's current development of huge gas fields in the Mediterranean, a private Turkish energy company, with $1 billion of investments in Israel, wants Israel to allow a gas pipeline to be built to Turkey. This is just one important sign that, despite Erdogan, Israeli-Turkish possibilities are promising.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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JNF dinner to feature Jason Alexander

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — After several years of showcasing Israeli musicians and singers, Winnipeg's Jewish National Fund Negev Gala has selected a North American entertainer for the 2013 event.

Jason Alexander has been on stage, in movies, on TV and behind the scenes as a writer, producer and director, but most people know him as George Costanza on the long-running hit sitcom *Seinfeld*.

"Jason has tremendous name recognition. With his presence, we hope to make more people aware of and interested in the amazing work the JNF is doing in Israel," said Karla Berbayer, president of JNF's Manitoba/Saskatchewan region.

"Tickets started flying out the door as soon as we announced he was coming."

Berbrayer said Alexander is an apt choice for this year's event, scheduled for June 4, because of his role as spokesperson for One Voice, a grassroots group of Israelis and Palestinians who favour a two-state solution for peace.

One Voice is pursuing the same goals as the Arab-Jewish Dialogue (AJD), a local group that's this year's Negev honoree.

JNF usually honours individuals, but previous honorees have included the Asper Foundation and Winnipeg Holocaust survivors.

"The Arab-Jewish Dialogue's commitment to promote trust through education benefits us all," Berbrayer said, adding that "we applaud the AJD's commitment to bringing people of diverse backgrounds together to discuss current issues."

AJD co-founder Ab Freig said it's "a great honour to be recognized by the JNF for the work that we are doing... We are delighted."

The AJD began as a friendship between Freig, an Egyptian-born Winnipeg businessman, and longtime Winnipeg Jewish community leader Harold Buchwald, who died in April 2008 at age 80.

The aim of the AJD, which was officially launched in 2010, is to foster better relations between Canadian Arabs and Jews.

"Our vision is of a Canada inspired by the relations between its Arabs and Jews," said Howard Morry, a past president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg and current AJD co-chair with Freig.

Morry said similar dialogues have taken place between Muslims and Jews, but the AJD is the first to bring together Jews and Arabs.

"We believe that the ultimate solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is a sovereign, contiguous, democratic Palestinian state living side by side with a sovereign, secure, democratic Jewish state," the AJD said in a statement. "We believe that no religion has a monopoly on the truth, and we abhor any group using religion to justify the use of violence.

"We believe that while Canadian Arabs and Jews may disagree from time to time over events in the Middle East, they can and should work together to resolve those differences peacefully."

Jason Alexander

Freig said AJD members are working on projects in Israel that bring Arab and Jewish Israelis together.

"We are supporting, for example, a school in Israel that brings together Arab and Jewish children," he said. "We are looking to work with other organizations like that that foster understanding between Arabs and Jews both in Israel and here in Canada."

He said that AJD members are "are passionate about peace and conflict resolution. We believe that most conflicts can be resolved if people dialogue and understand the narratives of the other person."

Morry said there's been interest in the group from Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

The project to be funded by this year's gala will involve Arab-Jewish co-operation in Israel, but the specific project has yet to be announced.

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For more information about the conference or registration go to www.carleton.ca/memory or email holocaustconference@carleton.ca or call Tel: 613-520-2600, ext. 1320

Clergy disagrees with the mayor

Continued from page 3

He told of a congregant – a married father of three – whose family had cut him off because of his gambling. "He left his children penniless, and he himself was on the street on Passover, because he had no place to go."

The rabbi was one of more than half a dozen speakers including representatives of the Canadian Council of Imams, the Hindu Dharma Mission of Canada, the GTA Council of Christian Churches, the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, the Jain Society of Toronto, and the Guru Ram Das Ashram, who had signed the Interfaith Statement Opposing Casino Expansion in the Toronto Area.

Rev. Christopher White, who moderated the event, said the group objected to "the negative impact the proposed casino expansion will have on our fellow citizens and the life we all share."

He said he "would respectfully disagree" with Mayor Rob Ford, who earlier that day had said the majority of Torontonians were in favour of a casino.

The interfaith statement was an outgrowth of a symposium in January called Faith in the City, to address areas of common social concern. Rev. White called the anti-casino initiative an "unprecedented and historic show of unity."

Opposition to casino expansion was unanimous among the speakers, despite some differences in perspective.

In the Hindu tradition, for example, gambling is strictly forbidden, and will lead to physical, mental and spiritual suffering in this life and the next, said Pandit Suraj Persad of the Hindu Dharma Mission of Canada.

But Torah and Jewish tradition are not opposed to "casual" gambling at certain times during the year, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said. However, he clarified, "regular and extended and ongoing" gambling is prohibited.

Bishop Philip Poole of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto noted that gambling "offers the illusion of getting something for nothing, [but] the house always wins.

"I understand that governments need to be creative in finding new sources of revenue, but casinos are not the way forward."

STATEMENT BY CLERGY

We, the undersigned faith leaders and representatives in the Greater Toronto Area, stand united in opposing the expansion of casinos proposed by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation and support the anti-casino campaign led by www.NoCasinoToronto.com.

We represent diverse faith communities with unique perspectives, principles, sacred texts, traditions and teachings that form the basis of our opposition to expanded gambling. We are unified in our position that gambling is contrary to the ethical norms of our traditions because it negatively impacts our faith communities and the wider public.

We are convinced that casinos contribute to family breakdown, depression, addiction, bankruptcies and crime, and thus are antithetical to our mission as faith traditions to strengthen individuals, families and communities.

Our faith traditions teach us that our governments should maintain order, preserve justice and promote the common good. We believe that our governments must take a stand to promote the values of education, hard work, social justice and the dignity of labour, and reject the illusion of easy money, for both individuals and public coffers.

Our governments should protect the most vulnerable in our society from casinos that exploit human weaknesses and addictions. We therefore call upon our governments to reject gambling expansion and reject this predatory industry as a solution to economic and fiscal problems.

We strongly urge our Municipal City Councils to vote against any new casinos in the Greater Toronto Area. We further urge our brothers and sisters in our faith communities to become informed about this issue and voice their opposition to expanded gambling to our elected officials.

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Gilda Rosen Oberman, row 59, plot 6
Marshall Kramer, row 59, plot 7 - Husband died in 2005
Goodman, row 57, plot 1
J. Lugech, row 59, plot 3 and 4
Grant, row 60, plot 4 and 5
Liebovitz, row 60, plot 6
Roseman, row 61, plot 9
Fela Richter, row 62, plot 9 - Husband died in 1964

Bathurst Lawn Cemetery
J. Sandford, row B, plot 3

New Mount Sinai - Palmerston South
Goodman, row 57, plot 1
Fay Bergson (Fay, Abraham), row 65, plot 10, 9 and 7

Old Mount Sinai – North
Hershenhorn, row 26, plot 3 - Husband died in 1981

Old Mount Sinai - South
Goodman, plot 24, row 1
Lerner, plot 27, row 4 - Husband died in 1982

שישאר בינינו

גידי קורן וחברים

הלילה שבו ישראל בכתה –בטוב

כמה ימים לפני חג הפסח התקיימה מסיבת הסיום של "בית ספר למוסיקה, עונה 2". זוהי התכנית שהופכת את ישראל למקום טוב יותר ועליה אדבר בהמשך. באותה מסיבת סיום שרה הילדה שהובילה כל העונה וזכתה בצדק בפרס הגדול, אגם בוחבוט מכתה ד' בבאר שבע, את שירם של ביאליק ונחמה הנדל "הכניסיני תחת כנפך". ומה אומר לכם- באותן ארבע דקות לא היתה עין יבשה במדינת ישראל. וכדי שלא יהיה ספק בליבכם- הינה הקישור כדי שתראו ותבכו מהתרגשות בעצמכם.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4FHsNlzHnI

ולי היה כבד מיוחד ששבועיים קדם לכן שרה אגם בוחבוט את שירי "כמו בלדה"(אם זר קוצים כואב).

http://www.mako.co.il/tv-music-school/season2-articles/Article-7577764ed78ec31006.htm

יש בתכנית "בית ספר למוסיקה" את כל האלמנטים שחשוב להדגיש וליישם במדינת ישראל:

ילדים מוכשרים מאוד, מורים שהם אמנים מעולים, צניעות, פשטות, בחירת שירים מעולה שמביאה דור שלם להכיר את שירי ארץ ישראל מכל התקופות. אין כאן פלצנות, יוהרה, חנטריש, גסות רוח או רווחים קלים. המסר הוא שצריך לעבוד קשה מאוד ולהיות בנאדם. ושישאר בינינו.

מה יהיה

לאט לאט מסתבר ששטחי סוריה שנכבשים על ידי המורדים הופכים ברובם למובלעות מוסלמיות קיצוניות שבהן הנשים מאבדות את כל זכויותיהן ושהחוקה האיסלאמית תשלוט בהן. ובישראל יותר ויותר אנשים שואלים את עצמם אם לא עדיף שלטון יציב של אסאד, שהוא חילוני וקשור למערב. הרי זה לא שאסאד יתחלף במהאטמה גנדי- יחליפו אותו אנשים אכזריים כמוהו והרבה יותר חשוכים. זה לא שמישהו שואל את ישראל, אבל אין ספק שלישראל אין שום אינטרס להחלפת השלטון הסורי.

אבל שישאר בינינו.

משהו מצחיק

אשה יפה בחצאית עור צרה מנסה לעלות במדרגות אוטובוס ללא הצלחה. היא מחייכת במבוכה ופותחת מעט את הריצ'ראץ' שבגבה, אבל ללא הלצחה. היא מנסה שוב אך עדיין איננה מצליחה לעלות במדרגות. פתאום אוחז בה גבר גדול שעומד בתור ממש מאחוריה ושם אותה במעלה המדרגות בתוך האוטובוס. מסתובבת האשה ואומרת לו בכעס: איך אתה מעז לגעת בי ככה, אנחנו אפילו לא מכירים זה את זו!

עונה לה האיש במבוכה: ואני חשבתי שאחרי ששלוש פעמים פתחת לי את הריצ'ראץ' של מכנסי, יש בינינו יחסים די מתקדמים.....

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikoren.com

International

Global antisemitism grew by 30 per cent in 2012

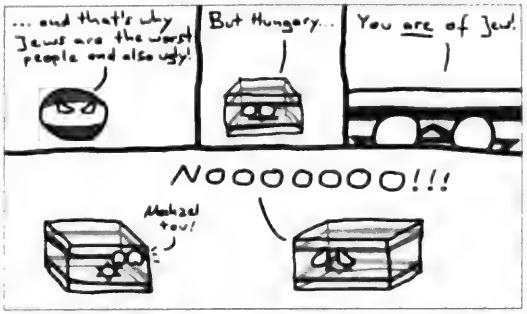
JTA

JERUSALEM — Global antisemitism increased by 30 per cent in 2012 over the previous year, an annual report found.

Following two years of decline, there was a "considerable escalation" in the number of violent acts and level of vandalism against Jews in 2012, according to the global antisemitism report for 2012 presented Sunday by the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University.

The report, which was presented on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, showed there were 686 violent acts and vandalism, up from 526 in 2011. They include 273 attacks on people, including 50 with a weapon, 166 direct threats on lives and the desecration of 190 synagogues, cemeteries and monuments.

France had the most attacks with 200, up from 114 in 2011. Next was the United States with 99; the United Kingdom, 84; Canada, 74; and Australia, 53.



An anti-Jewish poster in Hungary *(Wikimedia)*

The report said the increase was due in part to the terror attack on the Otzar Hatorah school in Toulouse in March, which killed a rabbi and three children and led to a series of copycat incidents against the Jewish community in France. Also contributing were Israel's Operation Pillar of Defence in Gaza, which led to a short-lived increase in antisemitic acts, and an escalation in the activities of the extreme right wing and the strengthening of parties with a clear antisemitic agenda, notably in Hungary and Greece, as well as in Ukraine.

During a news conference Sunday to release the report's results, Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress, identified Hungary as experiencing the most worrying racist and antisemitic trends in Europe.

"There are extremely worrying signs emanating from Hungary at the moment, where barely a week passes without an attack on minorities or outrageous comments from far-right politicians," Kantor said. "Unfortunately, red lines keep being crossed, and there needs to be an extremely strong reaction, both from the Hungarian government and the European Union to push back against these phenomena."

Kantor called for "a policy of 'zero tolerance' for racism."

"We are reaching out to the leaders in Hungary and the EU and calling for the initiation of hearings in relevant committees because this situation cannot continue," he said.

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French Jews win right to choose their own names

Rebecca Benhamou
The Times of Israel

PARIS — After decades of denying Jews the right to change their French last names to their original Jewish ones, the French Ministry of Justice recently revised its position.

Fearful of antisemitism, many French Jews decided to adopt French surnames in the late 1940s and '50s.

"Even though the French administration never forced them to adopt less foreign sounding names, they were highly encouraged to do so," says Céline Masson, a lecturer in psychoanalysis at Université Paris-Diderot and a co-founder of La Force du Nom (The Strength of the Name), a Paris-based organization that lobbies for the right to reclaim old names.

Nearly 70 years after World War II, many descendants of both Holocaust survivors and Jews from North Africa have decided to reconnect with their roots by taking back the names of their ancestors.

French law, however, stipulates that once changed, a last name is considered "immutable." It also prohibits citizens from reverting to a "foreign sounding name."

In 2010, the debate entered the national spotlight when Masson and co-founder Natalie Felzenszwalbe submitted their first name-change requests to the State Council, the relevant government agency.

"We're talking about a very small minority here," Masson told the *Times of Israel*. "So far, we've had about 30 cases or so. But in a country where 76,000 Jews were deported (during the Holocaust), it's bound to be a powerful debate."

In their applications, both advocates argued that allowing the reversion to previous names constitutes a "symbolic reparation" that France owes its Jewish citizens.

"Reparation has been achieved at every level in France: when Nazi collaborators Klaus Barbie, Paul Touvier and Maurice Papon were brought to justice in the 1980s and 1990s; when former president Jacques Chirac made his famous 1995 speech and became the first French politician to recognize France's responsibility in the July 1942 Vel d'Hiv Roundup; and of course financial reparations. What's missing is the right of name reversion," Masson said.

Even though she and Felzenszwalbe were initially told the law wouldn't be repealed, the French Ministry of Justice has revised its policy, adopting a case-by-case approach.

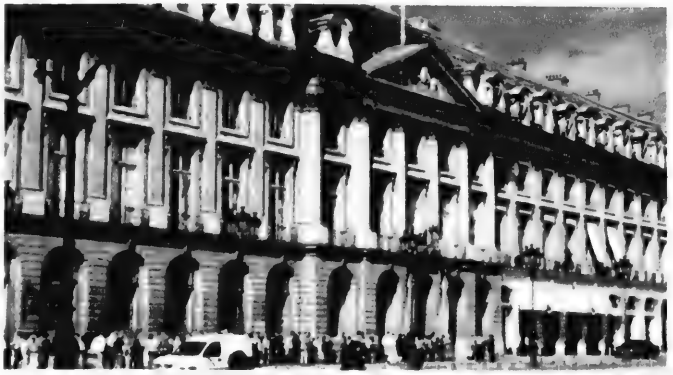
> ***Nearly 70 years after World War II, many descendants of both Holocaust survivors and Jews from North Africa have decided to reconnect with their roots***

In an op-ed titled "Stranger to One's Name," published in the daily *Libération* newspaper Feb. 28, 41-year-old David Forest – now renamed Fuks – explained how he was finally allowed to revert to his Polish-born grandfather's name in October 2012, more than 60 years after the family changed it.

"When I was asked about the origins of my name, even people with the best intentions never failed to ask what my 'real name' was," he wrote. "In fact, I often heard my parents say that our current name wasn't a 'real one.'"

"The truth lay within the name we abandoned — the only one that truly said where our family came from and who we were."

In her 2012 book, *Rendez-nous Nos Noms! Quand des Juifs Revendiquent Leur Identité Perdue* (*Give Back Our Names! When Jews Reclaim Their Lost Identities*) Masson writes that the number of name changes within the French Jewish community peaked between 1945 and 1957 — a total of 2,000 requests.



The French Ministry of Justice *(Wikipedia photo)*

Originally from Tunisia, Masson's family – the Hassans – changed its name when it immigrated to France in the '60s, like many other Sephardi families from Morocco and Algeria.

"My name has been changed, and it's not difficult to pronounce it," she wrote.

"It is cut off from its history and its original language; it has lost its flavour, its accent."

In her book, Masson also interviews Tunisian-born Magali Taillé – originally Taieb – whose family emigrated to France at the same time.

"Magali Taieb was a young Jewish girl raised in the values of Tunisian society of the 1950s. She stopped growing up in 1970. Magali Taillé was born in the same year and studied in Parisian universities. Between the two, there's a gap, a distance, a duality, an incompatibility. Until they were finally reconciled."

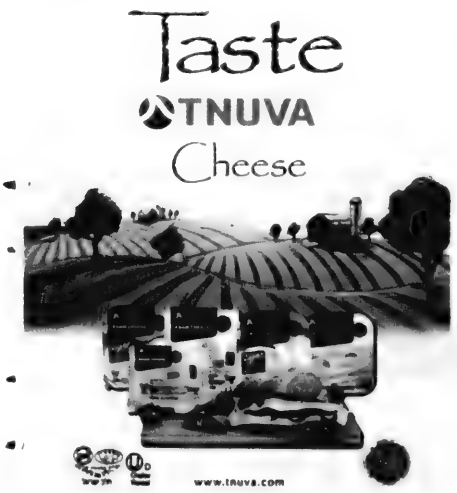
Backed by years of experience as a psychoanalyst and her personal history, Masson explains that changing one's name can represent a "trauma," especially for younger generations that now want to reconnect with their Jewish roots and family past.

In some cases, certain family members choose to revert to their old Jewish names, while others maintain the newer one.

"Sometimes family members don't agree on what their name should be and what it represents," Masson said. "I've seen cases where children feel like having a Jewish name, and the parents or the grandparents don't, or vice versa."

"This is the kind of problem we didn't think we would encounter at first," she continued. "But this is definitely something we ought to analyze more in the years to come. It is yet another interesting aspect of how complex a Jewish identity can be, even today."

Timesofisrael.com



Israel Briefs

Peres to meet Pope

Israeli President Shimon Peres is scheduled to travel to Rome to meet with Pope Francis on April 30. He will be the first high-ranking Israeli official to meet with Francis since he was elected to head the Catholic Church last month. Francis, 76, replaced Benedict XVI, who became the first pope in 600 years to step down from the post. The Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem has invited Pope Francis to visit Jerusalem. Patriarch Fouad Twal sent the new Pope an Easter greeting in which he invited him to come to Jerusalem and work toward easing the suffering of Christians in the Middle East, *Israel Radio* reported. Israel's ambassador to the Vatican, Zion Evrony, met with Pope Francis in March and formally invited him to visit Israel, formalizing an invitation issued by Peres immediately after Francis took office.

New attempt to break blockade

A pro-Palestinian group says its activists will soon stage a provocation aimed at ending the Israeli naval blockade on the Gaza Strip. The group will try to defy Israeli restrictions that prevent Gazans from fishing more than three nautical miles off shore. The Gaza's Ark Flotilla Freedom Coalition's effort will include Palestinians and foreigners. "Gaza's Ark is the evolution of the flotilla movement. We've moved away from sailing into Gaza with aid. We now focus on sailing trade out, because it's quite clear that if the Palestinians were able to trade, their dependence on aid would be diminished quite significantly," Michael Coleman, a member of Free Gaza Australia and the steering committee for Gaza's Ark, told the *Inter Press Service*. The United Nations has deemed Israel's naval blockade of Gaza to be legal.

More rockets from Gaza

Several rockets were fired from Gaza on April 4, but only one landed in an open area in southern Israel. The rest exploded within Gaza's borders. No damage or injuries were reported. It was the third consecutive day rockets were fired at Israel from the coastal strip. On April 3, two rockets fired from Gaza landed near Sderot as schoolchildren returned from the Passover break. The attacks came after Israel the previous night struck what the military called "two extensive terror sites" in northern Gaza, following the firing of three mortar shells on Israel from Gaza on April 2. Israel's ambassador to the UN, Ron Prosor, urged UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the Security Council to condemn the recent rocket attacks by Gaza-based terrorists.

Files from JTA and JNS.org

Israel wins Sunday's cyberwar

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — If anti-Israel hackers hoped, as they proclaimed, "to erase Israel from the Internet" during Sunday's "#OpIsrael" hacking attacks, they failed miserably, said Nir Goldshlager, Israel's most famous "white hat" hacker.

Instead of toppling and defacing government, bank and insurance sites, as they promised to do, the hacking groups, ostensibly associated with Anonymous, were able to attack only minor websites that were not well protected.

It was not for lack of trying, though. Although the statistics aren't in yet, Israel was clearly in the crosshairs of hackers on Sunday. Several Facebook pages, Twitter feeds and websites churned out updated lists of sites the hackers claimed to have taken down or defaced, and posts on social media sites made unsubstantiated claims such as "Anonymous causes Israel to lose $5 billion" in stock market losses (false) and "Tel Aviv loses all Internet connection" (also false).

The main tactic used by hackers to attack large government and financial sites was the denial of service (DDoS) attack, in which tens of thousands of connection requests are sent to a server at one time, in the hope of overwhelming the server's system and causing it to slow down to a crawl or to shut down altogether.

Tal Pavel, director of the MiddlEasternet site, which gathers intelligence on Internet usage and events in the Arab world, uncovered several sites where users could participate in DDoS attacks against Israeli sites by clicking on buttons. Each click generated thousands of connection requests.

In addition, Pavel reported a relatively sophisticated attack against the Bank of Israel, in which hackers compromised an Israeli site and inserted an agent that, when clicked on, launched DDoS attacks against the bank website.

The bank's site remained stable over the weekend, however, as did nearly all major Israeli sites. In some cases, sites were slow to load for a few seconds, but site administrators resolved the problems and restored normal operations within minutes. Government agencies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sent out status messages and notifications several times on Sunday, assuring Israelis that despite the claims of hackers, Israeli government sites were running normally – as a cursory check of sites at random times during the day proved.

The DDoS attacks were an annoyance, said Goldshlager, an "ethical computer hacker" and the CEO of Break Security, and indicated "the lack of sophistication and knowledge of these teams." The exploits of the hackers were limited, "and they told many lies to enhance their reputations. In the end, though, the only damage they were able to do was to small sites that were not well defended, with the hackers taking advantage of well-known security holes in older web servers to enter systems and deface web pages or steal data."

Indeed, as the day progressed, it appeared that the hackers realized that despite their bravado, they were losing the propaganda war, being defeated by the facts.

"There were just so many inaccuracies," said Goldshlager. "For example, they claimed that they hacked into the site for the Israel Police, with the site's address police.gov.li. They may have hacked it, but by getting the domain mixed up – ".li" instead of ".il" – whatever it was they thought they were hacking, it wasn't the Israel Police site."

Goldshlager, who hacks into sites in order to find vulnerabilities, was unimpressed with the hackers' "script kiddie methods" of hacking, and was even less impressed by "their ridiculous claims" Websites, citing anti-Israel hacking groups, claimed 60,000 Israeli sites were compromised by 60 million hacking attempts.

The one success the hackers had was that of breaking into poorly scripted sites belonging mostly to small business, organizations and civic groups, and defacing them or stealing data from them.

"None of those sites is essential to the economy in any way, but for site owners it is obviously very annoying to have to clean things up and recover lost information," Goldshlager said.

By late Sunday, the cyberwar appeared to be winding down. "Our operators have been reporting via this account, non-stop for last 30 hrs," said a post on the #OpIsrael Twitter page. "We are taking a break."

Just when they'll be back, said Goldshlager, was unclear – but "rest assured they will return. This wasn't the first organized hack attack against Israel, and it certainly won't be the last."

TimesofIsrael.com

'Iron Lady' dies

JTA

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who was considered a good friend of Israel despite a rocky relationship with prime minister Menachem Begin, has died. Thatcher died Monday after suffering a stroke. She was 87. The only woman to serve as prime minister of Britain, she also was the longest continuously serving prime minister in the 20th century, leading the country and her Conservative Party from 1979 to 1990. To read the full story, go to cjnews.com.

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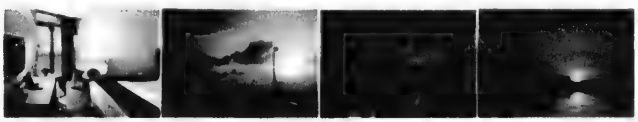

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Damascus synagogue looted, burned to ground

Yoel Goldman
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — The 2,000-year-old Jobar Synagogue in the Syrian capital of Damascus – the country's holiest Jewish site – has been looted and burned to the ground.

The Syrian army loyal to President Bashar Assad and rebel forces were blaming each other for the destruction of the historic synagogue, according to reports on Sunday.

The synagogue was said to be built on the site where the prophet Elijah concealed himself from persecution and anointed his successor, Elisha, as a prophet. It had been damaged earlier this month by mortars reportedly fired by Syrian government forces.

The rebels said the Syrian government looted the synagogue before burning it to the ground, *Israel Radio* reported Sunday.

The government said the rebels burned the synagogue and that so-called Zionist agents stole its historic religious items in an operation that had been planned for several weeks, the Arabic *Al-Manar* Television reported, citing the Arabic Syria Truth website.

The news came as Jews around the world marked the final days of Passover, the festival of freedom.

One of the oldest synagogues in the world, the shul was partially destroyed by Syrian government shelling four weeks ago, according to a video posted to YouTube. The video, uploaded by the Syrian opposition's military council, appeared to show that portions of the building and roof were blown off, with debris seen on the ground in front of the synagogue.

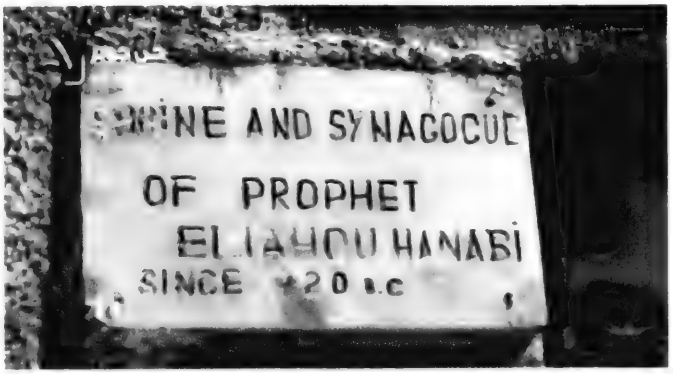
An inscription in English at the synagogue reads, "Shrine and synagogue of prophet Eliahou Hanabi since 720 BC," although the actual date of founding is disputed. One of the earliest mentions of the synagogue is in the Talmud, which states that Rabbi Rafram bar Pappa prayed there.

Another inscription, in Arabic, said it was the tomb of Al-Khizr, held in some Islamic traditions to be a prophet who travelled with Moses.

The synagogue served a large Jewish community in the medieval period, but by the mid-1800s only one Jewish family lived in the area. Still, Jews came from across the city to pray there, and there was a tradition of leaving the sick in the building in the belief that Elijah's spirit might heal them.

On April 1, people from both sides of the conflict said they were sad to see the site ruined.

"It's the heritage of the homeland regardless of religion, whether it's Jewish, Muslim or Christian," Maamoun Abdul-Karim, head of the antiquities and museums Department of the Syrian Culture Ministry, told the *Associated Press*. "It's the Syrian mosaic and the heritage of the people."



The plaque on the Jobar Synagogue

Abdul-Karim said some objects from the synagogue had been stolen last year, but that officials hadn't been able to visit the building in about four months because rebels control the area.

After establishing footholds in a number of Damascus suburbs last year, rebel fighters sought to push into Damascus through Jobar, where they now clash daily with government troops.

An anti-government activist in Jobar reached via Skype last week said the synagogue had been looted continuously during recent months and was damaged by government shelling meant to push rebels from the area.

He said he visited the facility in early March and found the main sanctuary undamaged.

"I don't know exactly what was there originally, but we know there were lots of old books and artifacts that are not there anymore," said the activist, who goes by the name Abu Hassaan al-Damishqi.

He said the site had been looted by government soldiers or thieves taking advantage of a lack of security.

"This is the history of the city, and it doesn't matter if you are a Muslim or not," he said. "This is the history of our country, so we all want to protect it."

Syria's Jewish community faced rampant discrimination after the establishment of Israel. With Jewish property rights severely limited, the synagogue was taken over and converted to a school for Palestinian refugees.

Only some 20 Jews are believed to live in Syria today, all of them in the capital.

In early 2011, Assad announced plans to rebuild about a dozen synagogues across Syria, including in Damascus – a move that was regarded in part as an effort to gain some support from American Jewry.

The nearly two-year-old civil war in Syria has caused damage to six World Heritage sites, according to *Al Arabiya*. UNESCO called for the protection of the country's cultural heritage sites last March, expressing "grave concern" at the time.

The UN estimates that 70,000 people have died in the fighting between Assad regime forces and Syrian rebels.

TimesofIsrael.com

– With files from JTA

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Amsterdam fined, taxed Holocaust survivors in hiding

JTA

THE HAGUE — Amsterdam fined hundreds of Jewish Holocaust survivors for failing to pay city taxes while they were in hiding or in concentration camps.

Het Parool, a local daily, reported on March 30 that many of the houses in question were confiscated and used by members of the NSB Dutch Nazi party while the Jewish owners were in hiding or in camps.

The city went after survivors as late as 1947, the report said. Other Dutch municipalities waived such debts, *Het Parool* reported.

The following year, the city agreed to reimburse half of what it charged to some Jews who were taxed in absentia. The city's archives contain 342 requests for reimbursement, according to *Het Parool*.

Charlotte van den Berg, a 23-year-old university student, discovered the documents about the taxation. She said she found them bundled with an elastic band in the archive section of one of the city's departments while conducting research on Jewish homeowners.

A city spokesperson told the daily that the city would investigate the matter, including how much money was collected from Holocaust survivors, together with the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

About 75 per cent of Holland's pre-World War II Jewish population of 140,000 was murdered in the Holocaust, according to the Center for Information and Documentation on Israel, a Hague-based watchdog on antisemitism that is known locally by its acronym, CIDI.

Ronny Naftaniel, CIDI's senior adviser, told *JTA* that although the discovery was "shocking," there have been reports of the city's misconduct after World War II, though "few facts were known."

"The City of Amsterdam has never, to my knowledge, taken steps to correct its actions," said Naftaniel, the former treasurer of Holland's Central Jewish Board, or CJO.

Best-selling author tackles Holocaust

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

Best-selling author Jodi Picoult takes on the Holocaust and its heavy topics of forgiveness and evil in her new novel, *The Storyteller* (Atria).

At the heart of this novel is Sage, a 25-year-old single woman who lives in Westerbrook, a small town in New Hampshire.

Jodi Picoult

As the result of a car accident, Sage has a very bad scar that runs down her face from her eyebrow to her cheek. Because of this, she is sensitive and introverted, isolating herself by working the late shift at The Daily Bread, a bakery run by a former nun. She believes she has the face of a monster.

Sage's parents are both dead. Her mother died only a few years ago, and for some reason that we don't find out until much later, Sage feels very guilty about it. After her mother's funeral, Sage begins a guilt-ridden affair with the funeral director, Adam, who is married.

Sage attends grief counselling, and it is there that she meets the recently widowed Josef Weber, a nice man in his 90s whom she recognizes as a regular morning customer at the bakery.

They soon become friends. Weber, a former teacher, is a regular churchgoer and choir singer who led the 4th of July parade as senior of the year. He is described by the townspeople as "close as you can get to being canonized while you're still alive... everyone's adoptive, cuddly grandfather."

One day Weber shocks Sage by asking her to help him die. "It's what I deserve," he says. She tells him she doesn't want to help him commit suicide, that she is not a murderer.

But, he says, he is one. He then reveals his big secret. He says he was a member of the Waffen SS, responsible for the mass killings of Jews and other civilians. He wants to seek atonement, he says, and wants one other favour from her: he wants her to forgive him for his sins.

Sage is Jewish, although she doesn't consider herself a Jew. Her parents never kept kosher or went to services. To her it seemed as though they followed an abridged version of Judaism.

Sage is shocked and confused by Weber's confession. Can you blame the Nazi who was born into an antisemitic country and given an antisemitic education if he turns out to be a monster? Yes, she believes, yes you can.

For there is one other twist in this multi-storied novel: her paternal grandmother, Minka, is an Auschwitz survivor.

Sage was 12 when she found this out. Her grandmother never talked about it. Sage has a vague memory of seeing the blurry tattoo on her arm and her grandmother explaining that it was her phone number, so that she wouldn't forget it.

As far as her grandmother is concerned, her life began when she moved to America. What happened to her during the war happened to a different person.

Minka is the storyteller of the book's title. As a girl, she started writing a supernatural story about an *upior*, a sort of Polish vampire, which is also a story about ordinary men who turn out to be monsters. Picoult is not subtle in her use of allegories and symbolism. The story Minka began ultimately saves her life.

Sage finally convinces Minka to relate her wartime experiences. Minka tells her about her time growing up near Lodz, Poland, and how they were rounded up and sent to the ghetto.

Minka's history takes up the middle of this novel, and is by far the best part. Some of it we've heard elsewhere before – the liquidation of the ghetto, the transportation to Auschwitz.

But Picoult (who is Jewish) spins it into an enthralling and original tale. In the ghetto, Minka's knowledge of German allowed her to work as a secretary in a textile factory run by a Schindler-like character named Fassbinder, who rescues mothers and children by employing them in his factory. At Auschwitz, she works at Kanada, the part of the camp where clothes and personal belongings are sorted. In order to distract her bunkmates from the pain and anguish at Auschwitz, Minka begins to tell them the story she created about the *upior*. She also decides to write the story down for posterity using the backs of photographs she pilfers from the inmates' suitcases at Kanada.

But she is caught by one of the senior SS officers who reads the story and is intrigued enough by it to find out how it ends. He makes her his secretary and forces her to write 10 pages of her story every day in a journal that he gives her. (He confiscates the photographs).

Minka knows she has nothing to lose. As long as she keeps writing her story, she knows, like Scheherazade of *1001 Nights*, the officer will keep her alive.

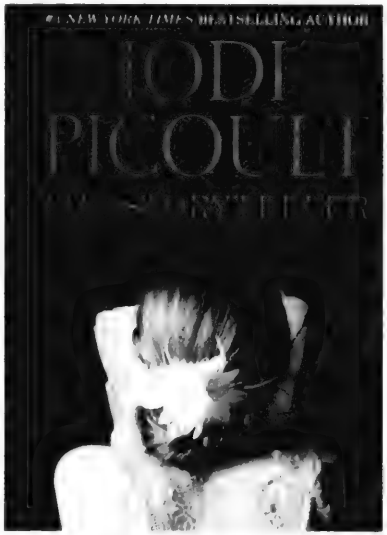
Inevitably, and somewhat obviously, Sage's grandmother's life and the life of Weber run parallel to each other.

Sage's biggest dilemma is whether to do as Weber says, forgive him and help him die, or betray him to authorities.

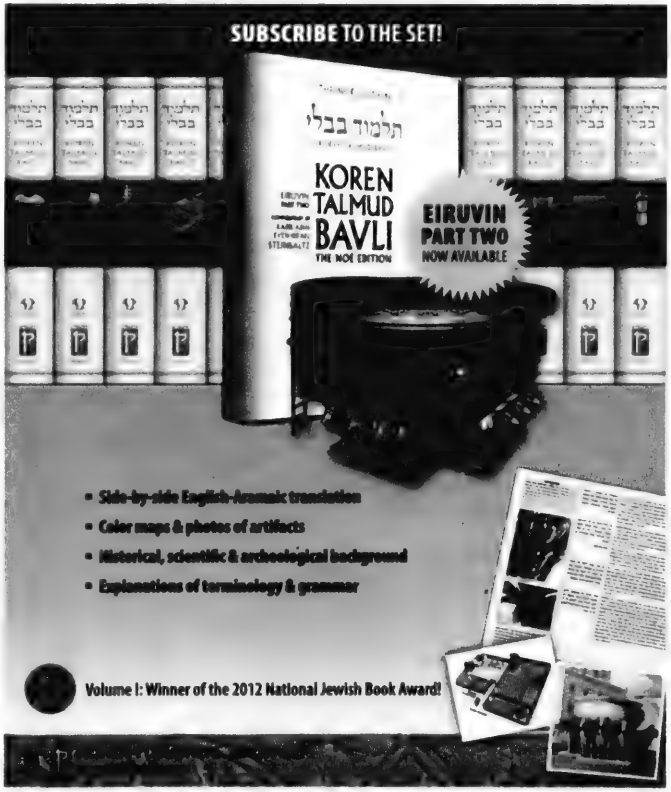
She is reminded that in Judaism, murderers cannot be forgiven, because the victim is dead and only those who've been wronged can forgive.

The duality of evil, the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde aspect, is one of the major themes of this book. "Inside each of us is a monster, inside each of us is a saint," Weber tells her.

The other big theme is forgiveness. Can we forgive people for what they did to others? Can one atone for heinous acts?



Picoult says this novel was initially inspired by Simon Wiesenthal's *The Sunflower*. Despite some over-the-top symbolism and several distracting side plots including a love triangle, this is a thrilling read, although some parts are better than others. Minka's harrowing Holocaust account alone is well worth the price of admission.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Volume I: Winner of the 2012 National Jewish Book Award!

From Dickens to Polanski at TJFF

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

This year's edition of the Toronto Jewish Film Festival runs from April 11 to 21 and features a first-class lineup of films.

A sampler:

The British novelist Charles Dickens, in *Oliver Twist*, described Fagin, one of his most loathsome characters, as "an old shrivelled Jew." But who was really Fagin? A figment of his fertile imagination? Or an actual flesh-and-blood figure? The mystery is apparently resolved in ***The First Fagin,*** which explores the topic in voluminous length, blending the historical record with dramatic re-enactments.

Fagin was modelled after Isaac (Ikey) Solomon (1785-1850), a pickpocket and a dealer in stolen goods. Like William Shakespeare's Shylock, Fagin validated antisemitic tropes and stereotypes about Jews. But in *The First Fagin*, directed by Alan Rosenthal and Helen Gaynor, Solomon is portrayed more benignly as a loving husband and father who was thrown into the maelstrom of crime by circumstances beyond his control.

Raised in London's impoverished East End, Solomon was born into crime, his father having been a criminal. Britain's rigid class system, as well as the endemic antisemitism of his times, left him with few options. Of course, he could have hewed to the straight and narrow. But having been exposed to malodorous influences, he embarked upon a crooked road.

The First Fagin unfolds in London and on the Australian island of Tasmania, a British penal colony where he, his long-suffering wife and children ultimately ended up. This informative and entertaining semi-documentary evokes a mean-spirited era when a man could be hanged for the slightest of crimes.

Royal Ontario Museum, April 12, at 3:30 p.m. and Sheppard Cinema 3 on April 18, at 5 p.m.

Roman Polanski: A Film Memoir, directed by Laurent Bouzereau, examines a tumultuous life of tragedy and triumph. Much of it unfolds in the form of an extended interview conducted by Polanski's friend, Andrew Braunsberg. File footage from events that shaped him rounds out the rest of this penetrating film.

Polanski was born in Paris, but on the eve of World War II, his Polish-Jewish parents moved back to Poland, which, as he observes, was "a big mistake." Caught up in the Nazi occupation, the Polanski family suffered greatly.

His best friend was deported, his mother was murdered in Auschwitz and his father was marched away. He recalls these traumatic moments with considerable emotion and tears. Polanski survived by going into hiding with compassionate Polish families. After the war, he was reunited with his father, who bitterly disillusioned him by taking a new wife and leaving him in the care of strangers.

The film also charts his fling with acting and his career in cinema in post-war Poland, his marriage to Sharon Tate – the victim of a brutal murder – his incarceration for having sex with a minor, and his flight to Europe after a warrant for his arrest was issued by the U.S. government.

Sheppard Cinema 5, April 15, at 4 p.m. and Innis Town Hall on April 21, at 1:30 p.m.

Re-emerging: The Jews of Nigeria, by Jeff Lieberman, takes a sympathetic look at the Igbos, some of whom observe Judaism and claim to be the descendants of one of the 10 Lost Tribes of Israel. Their narrative, however valid, is discounted by an American professor of Bible. They are a tiny minority. Fewer than 3,000 of 25 million Igbos have adopted Judaism.

In case you've forgotten, the Igbos touched off a civil war in the 1960s by declaring independence in the newly created but abortive nation of Biafra.

Lieberman interviews a succession of Igbos who converted to Judaism. "I know in me there is a Jewish soul," says an Igbo who was once a Catholic. "I'm done with Jesus." In subsequent frames, an Igbo in flowing red robes blows a shofar and a woman cooks a traditional Sabbath meal.

Sheppard Cinema 5, April 15, at 4 p.m. and Royal Ontario Museum, April 18 , at 3 p.m.

Franziska Schlotterer's fine-tuned German-language feature film, ***Closed Season,*** is a most unusual film. It opens in Israel as a young German tourist disembarks from a bus and tries engaging a kibbutznik in a serious conversation. In vain, he urges the German to go back home to Germany.

At this juncture, *Closed Season* flashes back to 1942. As Albert, a German Jew, tries to cross into neutral Switzerland from Nazi Germany, he is apprehended by Fritz, a German hunter and farmer. Fritz and his wife, Emma, cannot have children. But since Fritz needs an heir, he strikes a deal with Albert. In exchange for impregnating Emma, Albert will be allowed to remain on the farm, far from prying Nazi eyes.

At first, the sex between Albert and Emma is coldly mechanical. But as Emma learns to love it, she falls hard for Albert, compromising her relationship with Fritz and imperilling Albert. The film is relentlessly realistic in tone and the performances could not be better.

Sheppard Cinema 5, April 16, 6:15 p.m. and Bloor Cinema, April 17, 9 p.m.

My Father and the Man in Black is about a tempestuous relationship. Saul Holiff, a Canadian Jew from London, Ontario, was the manager of the legendary country singer Johnny Cash. When they met in 1958, Holiff did not know that Cash, a wild southern Baptist, popped pills and had a dysfunctional personality. Cash did not always show up at concerts, annoying Holiff, an organized and reliable person.

This absorbing film is directed by Holiff's son, Jonathan, a former Los Angeles-based talent agent.

Innis Town Hall, April 18, 9:15 p.m.

Hotel Lux, a surreal German/Russian production directed by Leander Haussmann, takes place in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union and revolves around a hilarious case of mistaken identity in which a German comedian who mocked Adolf Hitler on stage is recruited to be Joseph Stalin's personal astrologer.

Innis Town Hall, April 16, 3:15 p.m. and Sheppard Cinema 3, April 21, 3:30 p.m.

Altina is the story of Altina Schinasi (1907-1999), a sexually liberated artist of Turkish and Greek descent who defied social conventions and made a life for herself at a time when society kept bourgeois women like herself on an extremely tight leash.

The scion of a wealthy tobacco merchant who invented the cigarette-rolling machine, a device that revolutionized the industry, she was smart, independent and lusty. Peter Sanders' film captures her spirit deliciously.

Innis Town Hall, April 14, 1 p.m. and Sheppard Cinema 5, April 15, 6 p.m.

***Hotel Lux*, a surreal German/Russian production directed by Leander Haussmann, takes place in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union and revolves around a hilarious case of mistaken identity.**

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

21st TORONTO JEWISH FILM FEST SCREENS ECLECTIC LINEUP OF FILMS

The 21-year-old Toronto Jewish Film Festival offers its "most eclectic lineup" yet during its 10 days of screenings from April 11 to 21.

The offerings include two rare foreign-language archival films, a talk on the impact of Jews on Bollywood cinema (*Shalom Bollywood*), a portrait of Jewish singer-songwriter **Neil Diamond** (*Solitary Man*) and the première of a British reality TV series. As well, five films – respectively set in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Uganda and Algeria – spotlight the Jewish connection to Africa.

Another group of films are being screened to commemorate Israeli Memorial Day and Independence Day, and the festival is presenting two world premières: local filmmaker **Igal Hecht**'s *A Universal Language*, about a group of Canadian standup comedians in Israel, and French director **Gabriel Ohayon**'s *The Tenth Drop*, about the miniscule Jewish community in Corsica as it grapples with how to form a minyan with only eight men.

The schedule includes numerous free ticketed screenings, including ***Etgar Keret: In Person***, which the celebrated Israeli author is expected to attend; a double bill of films focusing on comedy icon **Jerry Lewis**, and films for families with youngsters such as *Shalom Sesame* (ages 3 and up) and *An American Tail* (5 and up), and **Roman Polanski**'s *Oliver Twist* (10 and up).

Festival venues include the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema at Bloor and Bathurst streets, Cineplex Odeon Shepard Centre at Yonge Street and Sheppard Avenue, Innis Town Hall at Sussex Avenue and St. George Street, and the Eaton Theatre at the Royal Ontario Museum. For the full schedule, visit www.tjff.com

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Names in the News: Aaron Stern plays the role of Bjarki in the Young People's Theatre production of *Blue Planet*, which opened April 8 and runs to May 2 at YPT, 165 Front St. E. The play is recommended for grades 3 to 8. Stern has appeared in numerous YPT productions and is a founding member of DreamNorth Theatre Company, which brings Shakespeare to the Canadian North. www.youngpeoplestheatre.ca

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Names in the News II: Congratulations and best wishes to Toronto-born, New York-based freelance writer and photographer **Alisha Kaplan**, who won the 2013 Yeats Society of New York Poetry Contest and received an award at a ceremony on April 1 at Barnes and Noble bookstore in Union Square. Kaplan, who received an honourable mention for the same award in 2012, is an alumna of Barnard College. She is the daughter of **Alan Kaplan** and **Rochelle Rubinstein** of Toronto.

• • •

Paris-Manhattan: The film *Paris-Manhattan* by French director **Sophie Lellouche** focuses on a thirtyish Jewish female pharmacist whose parents fix her up with a handsome French gentlemen in an attempt to rid her of her quirk, a fixation for **Woody Allen** and his films. Opens April 12 at two Cineplex Odeon theatres (Sheppard and Varsity).

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The Pajama Game: Onstage Productions presents the musical comedy *The Pajama Game*, with music and lyrics by **Richard Adler** and **Jerry Ross**, and featuring such popular songs as *Steam Heat*, *Hernando's Hideaway* and *Hey There*. George Ignatieff Theatre, Trinity College, April 25 to 28. $26, $24, $22. 416-556-9552, www.onstageproductions.org

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Arts in Brief

• *Spadina Gothic*, a photo essay by **Ron Charach**, appears in the most recent issue of the journal *Descant*, which is themed "the hidden city." Charach and other contributors read at the launch party. The Handlebar, 159 Augusta Ave. Wednesday, April 10, 7 to 10 p.m.

• Pianist **Fern Lindzon** performs her original scores for two classic silent films, *Sherlock Jr.* by **Buster Keaton** and *A Trip to the Moon* by **Georges Melies**. Presented as part of the series Classic Shorts for Young People, with Live Music. TIFF Bell Lightbox, April 12 and 13. Ideal for young people as well as adults. (Lindzon is also playing Tuesdays in April at the Rex Jazz Bar.) www.fernlindzon.com

• Film critic **Adam Nayman** continues his series on the films of the Coen brothers with a session titled "Remake/Remodel: *The Ladykillers* and *True Grit*." Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Monday, April 15, 7 to 9 p.m. $12 per class, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Internationally acclaimed violinist **Gil Shaham** performs works by **Mozart** and **Smetana** with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Roy Thomson Hall, Wednesday, April 17, 8 p.m. and Thursday, April 18, 2 p.m.

• Author **Benjamin Hackman** leads two new writing workshops for creative writers and poets at the Miles Nadal JCC, Bloor and Spadina. The Art and Craft of Poetry runs Thurdays, April 18 to June 27, 7 to 9 p.m. The Art and Craft of Short Fiction runs Sundays, April 21 to June 23, 6:45 to 8:45 p.m. Each course is $235. 416-924-6211, ext. 154, or sharonis@mnjcc.org

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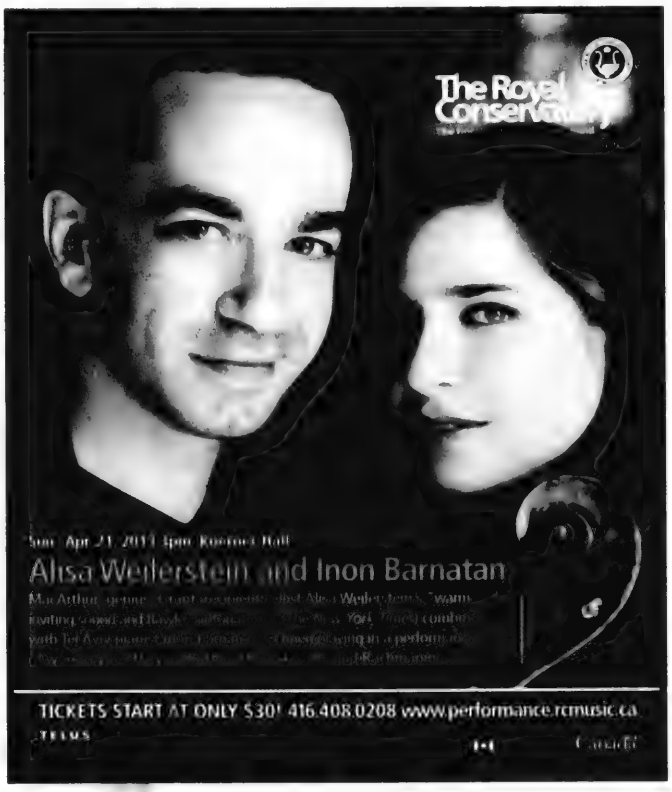
At the Galleries

• **Claire Weissman Wilks**, who was born in Toronto in 1933, has a current show at the de luca Gallery, 217 Avenue Rd. in the Yorkville district. *From the Beginning* remains on view until April 28.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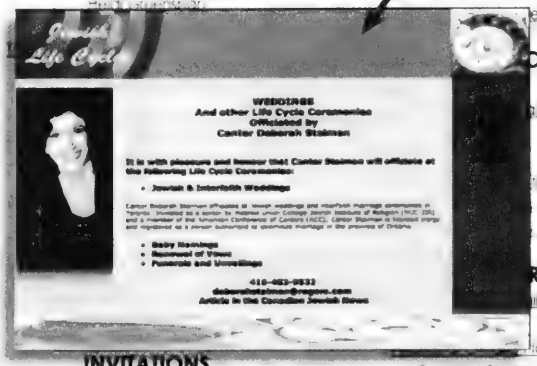

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Hamilton klezmer band celebrates 10th anniversary

Abigail Cukier
Special to The CJN

The members of Touch of Klez come from different backgrounds and appreciate various types of music, but what brings them together is klezmer.

"We are all from different walks of life, but this is what meshes us together," said violinist Charlotte Price.

The band was formed 10 years ago when founder and original bassist Michael Glogauer announced the idea from the bimah during Rosh Hashanah services at Beth Jacob Synagogue in Hamilton. Glogauer has since moved to Toronto, and the original drummer, Murray Adelman, died in 2011.

Current band members include, together with Price, Alan Livingston on guitar; David Ludwin on bass clarinet; Michael Morritti on bass guitar; Ron Richter on keyboard; Dave Jones on drums; Rick Black on soprano sax, and musical director Jordan Abraham on accordion.

The band has played throughout the Golden Horseshoe, including at weddings and bar mitzvahs, as well as at a dental convention and a world bike race.

Touch of Klez has recorded one CD and will launch its second at its 10th anniversary show on April 28 at 2 p.m. at Beth Jacob. Actor and singer Michele Tredger will join the band that day.

Price is a classically trained violinist but stopped playing at age 19. When her children were young, she picked up the violin again and joined the Oakville Symphony Orchestra. She was a violin teacher for 23 years before retiring in 2000.

At age 69 and as the only woman in Touch of Klez, Price calls herself the matriarch of the band. Abraham, 42, who is the youngest band member, was in a children's choir that Price directed.

Most of the band's members had never played klezmer before they joined the band, and their tastes ran from rock to classical music.

Abraham told the *Hamilton Jewish News* that he sees a similar spirit between rock and klezmer.

"If you think of what was happening in music at that time, in Europe, it was Strauss waltzes, very subdued, very controlled. What klezmer was doing was like punk. The rhythms were heavy. It was pretty angry music."

But Price said being part of the band has given her "much joy and happiness."

"It is toe-tapping, as well as kind of mournful," she said. "It is our Jewish history on display. We get through adversity with our music. And if you watch people listening to the music, you see them get involved emotionally and physically."

For tickets ($20 and $15 for seniors and student) to Touch of Klez's anniversary concert, call 905-522-1351 or send an email to office@bethjacobsynagogue.ca. Refreshments will be served.

Touch of Klez will launch its second CD at its 10th anniversary show on April 28 at Beth Jacob Synagogue in Hamilton. ***(Wendy Schneider photo)***

Biblical faces reconstructed for documentary

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

It's one thing to read about biblical times, but it would be something quite different to glimpse the actual faces of people who lived thousands of years ago.

Thanks to a combination of advanced technology and expertise, approximate reconstructions of biblical faces are now possible, based on ancient skulls excavated from relevant sites.

In a new, four-part documentary series titled *Biblical Forensics: Real Faces of the Bible*, television viewers across Canada can examine those faces and gain a deeper appreciation of the humanity of the individuals they represent and the lives they likely led.

Until recently, it's been difficult to do forensic work on human remains excavated in Israel, because of religious sensibilities. But thanks to CAT scans and cutting-edge 3D technologies, which minimize the need to handle those skulls, anthropologists, doctors and police facial reconstruction experts can now avoid upsetting religious communities. As a result, the documentary is able to capture the reconstruction of the faces of a Philistine woman who lived at the time of Delilah, an infant found in a sacrificial setting inside a millennia old Canaanite jar, a warrior who lived in pre-Canaanite times and a Galilean man who lived at the time of Jesus.

Simcha Jacobovici, executive producer and a specialist in investigative archeology, says the idea for the documentary emerged from a conversation he had with Prof. Israel Hershkovitz, head of the Dan Laboratory for the Search and Study of Modern Humans at Tel Aviv University. As chief anthropologist and co-director of the Misliya Cave project, Hershkovitz had access to the skulls and was an enthusiastic participant in the filming.

In each episode, two different methods are used to apply flesh to bone, one digital and one clay. "The forensic experts are using parallel methodologies, which means we have a built-in system of checks and balances, and it's interesting to see how close or far apart they end up," Jacobovici says. "I think we end up with very accurate reconstructions."

It was important to Jacobovici that the documentaries focus not just on the facial reconstructions, but also on the lives of the individuals they represent. "We wanted the forensic reconstruction to be a doorway into their lives," he explains. In the first episode, *Delilah Revealed*, which premièred April 8 on Vision TV, the forensic team works on the skull of a 3,000-year-old Philistine woman that dates to the Iron Age, the time of Samson and his lover, Delilah.

Victoria Lywood with some of the reconstructed faces.

"As we come face to face with Delilah, we also learn that her people, the Philistines, were Aegean, from the area of modern day Greece. So we get a glimpse into the Aegean presence in the Bible. What were they like? What did they believe? How did they dress and what kind of jewelry did she wear? It's not merely about recreating people, but bringing the past to life," he says. "Imagine, this is the first time the face of a Philistine woman was reconstructed. She lived at the same time and in the same place as Delilah, which means this is the closest we will ever come to meet Delilah."

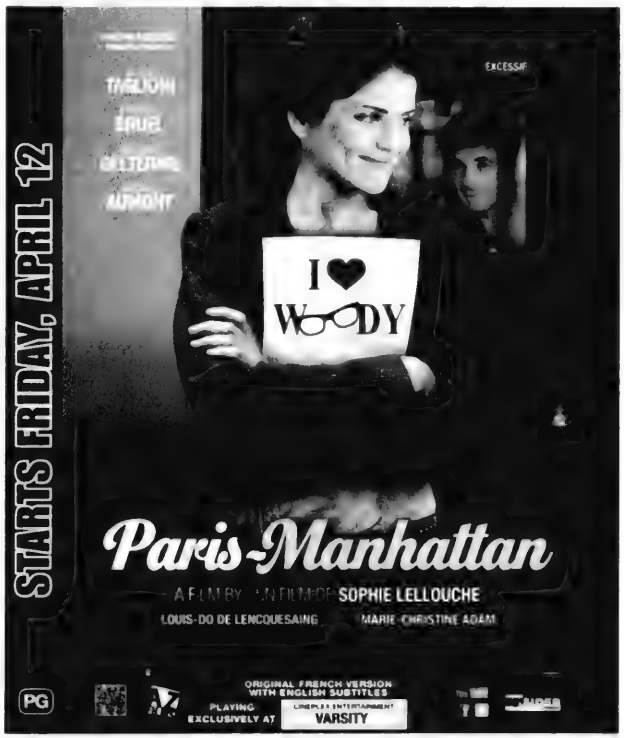
In the episode titled *The Man Who Saw Jesus*, a Galilean man's visage is reconstructed. "If Jesus was as popular a healer as Christian tradition says he was, then surely this man knew him," Jacobovici says. "I don't think television gets any better than this!"

Montreal forensic artist Victoria Lywood was actively involved in the reconstructions and says the documentary *Biblical Forensics* is a stunning opportunity to gaze upon the faces of our ancestors. "I was struck by the face of the warrior, who is by far the oldest at 6,000 years," she said. "It's amazing to see these individuals, who look very much like us, and a wonder to think they had a sense of humour, similar ailments, family problems, loves and beliefs very much like us – only different due to the distance in time and technology!"

Each hour-long episode captures thousands of hours of time logged in anthropological, archeological and forensic research, she adds. "On this project, the 'sacrificial child' was completed within a week, but the larger sculptures took several months due to the amount of painstaking detail, size and new techniques used – several months, from start to finish." The images that result are approximations of specific individuals who'd be recognized by a close friend or family member, says Lywood. "The facial reconstruction is never a portrait," she cautions.

The episodes were shot on location in Israel, Tunisia, Montreal and Boston. David Berman, an actor on *CSI*, is the host of the documentaries and was a natural choice for this "biblical *CSI*," Jacobovici says. "Berman actually studied Jewish history in university and he's fascinated with archeology," he says. A variety of Canadian actors played parts in the reconstruction of the biblical stories, including David Dantes as Samson and Daiva Zalnieriunas as Delilah.

The next three episodes of *Biblical Forensics* will be shown on April 15, 22 and 29 on Vision TV. Check your local listings for screening times.



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History made as Israel begins exploiting natural gas

The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Natural gas from the offshore Tamar field reached Ashdod last week after it was pumped to Israeli shores for the first time, four years after its discovery.

The Tamar deposit, discovered in 2009 some 90 kilometres (56 miles) west of Haifa, holds an estimated 8.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Natural gas from the field was pumped to a newly erected facility on the coast of Ashdod, connected to the gas field via pipelines laid out on the ocean floor, 150 kilometres (93 miles) long and 41 centimetres (16 inches) wide.

From the Ashdod processing plant, the gas will start to flow into the Israeli market.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed the event as "historic" and an "important day for the Israeli economy."

Israel took another step toward energy independence as the first batch of natural gas began flowing from offshore rigs through underwater pipes to an Ashdod intake centre. *[Israel Sun photo]*

This newly harnessed resource promises to be a major boon to the country's public and private energy needs. The gas from Tamar is expected to help meet Israel's energy needs for the next 20 years, Channel 2 television said, and will save the economy some NIS 13 billion (about $3.5 billion US) per year. Its ahead-of-schedule use will also save Israeli citizens some cash – lowering a planned rise in electricity costs to six per cent, less than originally planned.

The Tamar deposit, along with the more substantial Leviathan deposit, which was discovered in 2010, are expected to provide Israel with enough natural gas for decades and transform the country, famously lacking natural resources, into an energy exporter.

Leviathan, which boasts an estimated 16 to 18 trillion cubic feet of gas, is expected to go online in 2016, the approximate time when exports are expected to begin.

The discoveries are just a portion of the huge reserves in the Levant Basin, which the United States Geological Survey estimated in 2010 holds some 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas.

TimesofIsrael.com

European export market beckons

Compiled by CJN staff

The gas has started to flow from the offshore Tamar field, providing Israeli consumers with a domestic source of the vital resource, but the European market could be the ultimate destination for much of the fossil fuel.

Exports could begin in two to three years, but that timeline may be held hostage by geopolitical considerations. Israel had been hoping that a pipeline that would traverse Cyprus and Turkey would bring the valuable commodity to market, but tense relations with Turkey – an important ally only a few years ago – plus the ongoing Turkish/Cypriot conflict are considerable barriers to achieving that dream.

The introduction of an Islamist government in Ankara cooled relations with the Jewish state. Those ties were worsened in 2010 when Israeli commandos killed nine Turkish extremists on the Mavi Marmara, which was attempting to run the blockade of Gaza.

Israel's deputy foreign minister Ze'ev Elkin has gone on the record stating one of the country's top goals is reviving relations with Turkey. Three weeks ago, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu apologized for the deaths on board the Mavi Marmara. No doubt, more than natural gas exports were behind the move; Israel and Turkey share concerns over events in Syria, Iranian nuclear ambitions and mutual co-operation with NATO.

Turkey is demanding Israel compensate the families of the nine Turks killed on the Mavi Marmara.

Some analysts suggest that the apology and possibly compensation are part of a move to lay the groundwork for improved Israeli/Turkish relations and co-operation on a pipeline to Europe. With instability in Algeria and the rest of North Africa, Europe is facing a gas supply crisis and could be a natural market for Israeli supplies.

However, as the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs noted in a recent analysis, Israel has had experience relying on Egypt for its natural gas, only to see supplies from that country slashed drastically after the collapse of the Mubarak government.

The Israel/Turkey route is problematic in its own right. In December 2010, after Israel and Cyprus agreed to delimit their exclusive Economic Zones, Turkey's foreign minister threatened Cypriot efforts to extract gas from the Mediterranean basin. Turkey has been a self-proclaimed protector of the Turkish minority in Cyprus, invading and occupying part of the island in 1974. According to an analysis in *Foreign Policy* magazine, Turkey does not recognize Cyprus' right to negotiate an energy co-operation agreement with Israel until a settlement is reached with Cyprus' Turkish minority.

Asia might emerge as an alternative market, resulting in construction of a cross-Israel pipeline to the Red Sea port of Eilat.

However, the route to Asia through the Red Sea is also fraught with difficulties. Iranian naval forces patrol the area and Israel might have to beef up its own maritime patrols to ensure its ships can cross safely.

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These diamonds will sparkle on the field

Harvey Rosen
Special to The CJN

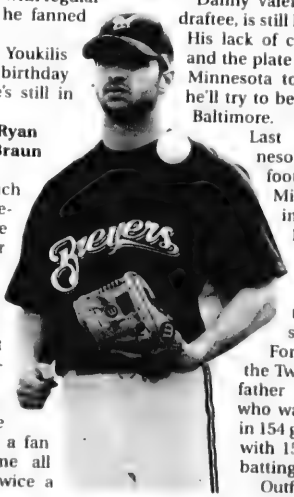
WINNIPEG — Perhaps it took the perfect storm to add a Jewish flavour that might finally allow the Blue Jays to fly high after a 20-year absence from post-season play. First, you call up the Miami Marlins, take the elastic off your ample bankroll and talk business.

Owned by Jeffrey Loria, 73, the Marlins finished last in the National League east division with a record of 69-93 last season, putting him in a salary-dumping mood. The Jays' owners were more than enthusiastic to try and prove what Loria couldn't – that you can buy a winner.

The Manhattan-raised Loria is a well-known art dealer and a member of the board of directors of the Benjamin N Cardozo School of Law of Yeshiva University in New York. He was in the market to sell a pair of pitchers, Mark Buehrle and Josh Johnson, and an all-star shortstop Jose Reyes.

Then, with spring training nicely underway, the Jays decided on Feb. 23 to add Phillies' right-handed pitcher Michael Schwimer, 27. At six-foot-eight and 246 pounds, he might at least intimidate a few hopefuls who get too comfortable at the plate.

In his rookie season, the Virginia-born athlete, who attended Hebrew school for a couple of years and had a bar mitzvah, came out of the bullpen 47 times and fashioned a 2-1 record with a 4.46 ERA, and he throws strikes with regularity. In 34.1 innings, he fanned 36.



Ryan Braun

Elsewhere, Kevin Youkilis celebrated his 34th birthday on March 15, yet he's still in demand because he's an old school kind of player who gives his all – so much so that the Yankees decided to sign the free agent to a one-year deal for $12 million (all figures US) to replace third sacker Alex Rodriguez, who is expected to be out for a least half the season.

Youkilis, an eighth-round draftee of the Red Sox in 2001, was a fan favourite, a three-time all star in Boston and twice a World Series champion who plays both third and first. The six-foot-one and 220-pounder was traded away last June to the White Sox and signed with the Yankees in mid-December.

Last season, his combined totals between Boston and Chicago were 122 games played, 438 at bats, a .235 average and 60 RBIs. But those numbers don't convey his true value. Long known as "The Greek god of Walks," he has an on-base percentage of .336, which accounts for his 72 runs scored.

Danny Valencia

The intense and gritty Youkilis is well-respected by opposition players and managers. His career numbers are more than respectable, too: the Cincinnati-born player boasts a .286 average, 133 homers, and 563 RBIs lifetime.

Another Jewish player who is always in demand is left-handed relief pitcher Craig Breslow – a real wandering Jew. This past winter, the 32-year-old hurler inked a two-year pact with the Red Sox for $6.25 million. Last season between Arizona and Boston, he had a 3-0 record and a sparkling 2.70 ERA.

The strikeout artist, who fanned 61 in 63 innings, has also spent bullpen time in Minnesota, Oakland, Cleveland, and San Diego. Not bad for a 26th-round draft pick, by Milwaukee in 2002.

Danny Valencia, 28, a former Twins draftee, is still hanging on in the majors. His lack of consistency at third base and the plate has seen him move from Minnesota to Boston, and this year, he'll try to become a regular Oriole in Baltimore.

Last season, between Minnesota and Boston, the six-foot-two and 220-pound Miami-born infielder got into 44 games and had 154 at bats, which resulted in a .188 average.

With a shortage of decent third-sackers in the majors this year, he's still viewed as a prospect.

For example, in 2011 with the Twins, the son of a Cuban father and a Jewish mother, who was raised Jewish, played in 154 games, driving in 72 runs with 15 home runs and a .246 batting average.

Outfielder Ryan Braun's numbers speak for themselves. Last season, the son of an Israeli-born Jewish father and Catholic mother stroked 191 hits, which included 36 doubles and 41 homers. He had 112 RBIs and a .319 average in 154 games. He can run, too, having 30 stolen bases.

Ian Kinsler, 30, the long-time Rangers' second baseman, may be on the move. Well, not too far. There is a better than 50-50 chance this year that he might shift to first base to make room for a few standouts in Texas's minor league teams. He still puts up the numbers, however, and can create havoc on the bases. In 655 at-bats last season, the son of a Jewish dad whacked 42 doubles, five triples, and 19 homers to go with 21 stolen bases.

Versatile right-handed pitcher Scott Feldman has left the Rangers, the only major league team he has ever played with, and was signed three months ago by the Chicago Cubs.

Kevin Youkilis, when he was with the Red Sox

The Kailua, Hawaii-born 30-year-old, who started 29 games last season, fashioned the type of numbers that perhaps indicate starting pitchers are in short supply. The six-foot-six and 230-pounder won six and lost 11 and had an ERA of 5.09, which explains why Texas declined its option. So Feldman goes from the heat of Texas to Wrigley Field, where the winds often blow out and create a different kind of heat for hurlers – from frustrated fans.

Jason Marquis, who split last season between the Twins and Padres, the sixth and seventh teams the right-hander has played for is much like the aforementioned Feldman. In 2012 the Jewish innings-eater won eight and lost 11, and had a bloated 5.22 ERA.

The 34-year-old first-round selection by the Braves in 1996 is always pitching on the edge, because he is constantly putting out fires. Nonetheless, he's a much sought-after player and a battler with a career won-lost record of 112-109.

Boston Red Sox catcher Rod Lavarnay, who is Jewish on his mom's side, is reputed to be a sure-fire major leaguer. In his rookie season last year, he only came to the plate 153 times and batted .157 along with eight doubles and two homers.

In the minors, however, he sparkled. The Yale grad, who won the NCAA batting title in 2007 with a .467 average, has also made the All-Star teams in both class A and in AAA Pawtucket, where he spent part of 2012 hitting .295 in 319 at bats along with 22 doubles, eight homers and 40 runs batted in.

Diminutive reserve outfielder Sam Fuld, 31, a crowd favourite, is back with Tampa Bay. Injury prone as a result of his aggressive style of play, he batted .255 last season in 98 at bats, mostly as the team's lead-off batter. The son of a Jewish dad and Catholic mom, he also has some speed, having stolen seven bases in 2012. He can distract and annoy entire opposition infields, be a pinch runner or substitute outfielder who will run through a wall to catch a ball.

New York Mets' first baseman Ike Davis, the son of former major-league pitcher Ron Davis and a Jewish mother from Lithuania, Millie, had his best season to date last year. Coming off an injury-riddled campaign in 2011, he bounced back by hitting only .227, but at six-foot-four and 230 pounds, his specialty at cleanup in the batting order is the long ball. Davis hit 32 homers and drove in 90 runs for the moribund Mets, who won only 74 games last year.

There are many more Jewish players in the minor leagues, of course, just waiting to make it in the majors. Coming soon, as they say on the marquees.

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Heirs of N.Y. collector to get Nazi-looted art

JTA

NEW YORK – Two artworks sold under duress during the Nazi occupation of Germany will be returned to the heirs of a New York art collector.

The drawings are being returned to the estate of Michael Berolzheimer, who died in 1942 after escaping from Germany and settling in suburban Westchester County, according to a statement from the office of Benjamin Lawsky, superintendent of financial services for the state of New York.

In 2011, the Holocaust Claims Processing Office (HCPO) of the financial services' department opened a claim to recover works for the heirs of Berolzheimer, an attorney who pursued a lifetime interest in fine art and served on the acquisitions committees of several art museums. The HCPO earlier had recovered three other artworks for the heirs and is working on 26 other restitution claims for the estate.

A Dutch antiquarian bookseller who owned one of the two drawings agreed to return it after learning of its origin. He had purchased the 1834 pen-and-ink portrait of a geographer by Reinier Craeyvanger at a Sotheby's auction in 2005.

The Kunsthalle Bremen in Germany is returning a drawing attributed to the 17th-century Italian artist Giacomo Cavedone. The museum acquired the drawing in 1941.

The works once belonged to an art collection of more than 800 pieces.

Berolzheimer and his family fled from Germany in 1938 after selling his art under duress, traveling first to Switzerland before immigrating to the United States. He lived in Westchester County until he died at age 76.

Infant contracts herpes from circumcision rite

JTA

NEW YORK — The parents of a Jewish newborn who reportedly contracted neonatal herpes following a controversial circumcision rite did not sign the required consent form.

According to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the newborn is the second in three months to contract the virus due to *metzitzah b'peh*, in which the circumciser uses his mouth to draw blood directly from a baby's penis.

The baby's parents did not sign the form advising that "direct oral suction should not be performed" because of the risk of contracting herpes, a recently required New York City health board regulation, and they have refused to identify the mohel, or ritual circumciser, who apparently is carrying the virus, the *Forward* reported.

At least 11 boys contracted herpes from the practice between 2004 and 2011, according to New York City health officials. Two died from the disease and two others suffered brain damage, the officials said.

Last September, the board of health voted 9-0 to require mohels to obtain the signed consent forms. Several months earlier, the city struck an agreement with local hospitals to distribute pamphlets about the ritual's dangers to the mothers of newborns.

Using oral suction to take blood from the area of the circumcision wound is common in some of New York's haredi communities. Other observant groups often use a tube for indirect oral suction.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Visually impaired director opens second play

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Audrey Amar knows that it's up to her to create her own theatre opportunities.

When the 24-year-old Thornhill, Ont. native decided she wanted to try her hand at directing a play, she did exactly that, bringing to life *Cyrano de Bergerac*, a French play she had loved for more than a decade. She formed her own production company, Seventh Method Productions, and put herself in charge of the costumes and set design as well.

And she did it all despite being legally blind.

"In my own circle, I'm the only director I know that has a visual impairment," she said. This posed challenges that most first-time directors wouldn't have to overcome. *Cyrano*, in particular, was a very physical piece, she said. "It was difficult to try to figure out exactly what worked for me."

Audrey Amar *[Steven Kahn photo]*

She eventually settled on watching the performance through a digital camera, zooming in on actors from a distance to better direct them.

That was last year. Now, with one successful run under her belt, Amar is gearing up to open her production company's second season with off-Broadway hit *Private Jokes, Public Places*, written by Oren Safdie, son of Israeli-Canadian architect Moshe Safdie.

The cast of *Private Jokes, Public Places*, rehearsing for their run later this month. *[Jayden Hsueh photo]*

The play takes a satirical look at "academic pretension," and although the younger Safdie wrote it while studying architecture at Columbia University (from which he later dropped out), it has been altered to take place at the University of Toronto, where Amar went to school and where it will be performed – a concept that is an ongoing tradition with this play.

"It's fascinating to see these academic ivory tower stereotypes go at it," she said. "We see this play as much more than a critique of pretentious professors. It's more of a look at finding oneself and discovering your own character within these very strict guidelines of theoretical knowledge."

She said it's particularly relatable to students or post-secondary graduates. They chose the venue to better bring the play to life – it's being performed at the University of Toronto in the John H. Daniels faculty of architecture just in time for the end of the exam period.

Amar discovered the play in her third year studying at U of T, when she had to perform a monologue written by a Middle-Eastern Canadian or Asian Canadian for a course. She chose one from *Private Jokes, Public Places*.

"But just doing a monologue from this funny, exciting play didn't quench my thirst for it," she said. "It had to become a project for me."

This play is much more calm – physically – compared to her last one. This time, she found it was easiest for her to watch the actors rehearse from up close, often from about two feet away.

"I always make sure to let the actors know that I might not necessarily be able to see what they're doing sitting out in the audience," she explained. By standing close to them, she can overcome that hurdle.

Her cast has adapted to her style, and she said they joke that she's a very "visionary director."

Although she doesn't know any other directors with the same type of impairment, she sometimes refers back to lessons from her role model Jamie Graham, her high school drama teacher.

"As anyone gets older, their vision starts to waver in their reliability. Having him call an actor forward and saying 'do that again' so he could see it, worked for him," she said, adding that there's no blanket solution, but seeing him overcome his own needs showed her that anything is possible.

At that time, she was not considering becoming a director, and her teacher had even jokingly warned her against doing so. He had died while she was in the early stages of *Cyrano*, and so he never got to see her efforts come to fruition, but she did tell him when she was first thinking of trying her hand at directing.

"He sent me a vicious email saying, 'You know what kind of controlling, egotistical person you become when you direct,'" she said, referring to her high school drama classes – and assuring that she has changed her style since then. "And he said, in short, 'of course you should.'"

One of her professors at U of T told her that most theatre companies would likely be hesitant to take her on as either an actor or director because of her vision challenges, but it hasn't stopped her. She has even studied stage combat – she just has to observe a few times before joining in.

That's why she instead took another professor's advice to heart.

"Instead of waiting to be hired as a director or approached to be a director for a certain play, which granted someone might be hesitant to take someone who is visually impaired, I chose to make my own opportunities," she said.

She described the experience of directing as both exciting and thrilling.

"I had never experienced being able to see a vision become materialized," she said. "Taking something you have in your head, soul or heart and watching it come to be in front of you, is a jarringly beautiful experience."

She said she loves how many Jewish artists have been inspired by Jewish history, taking often painful stories and turning them into something beautiful, whether as a tragedy or drama, or even comedy.

"I'm glad I get to uphold that tradition in my own small way," she said.

Private Jokes, Public Places will be running from April 24 to 27 at U of T's faculty of architecture at 230 College St. For tickets, email privatejokes.tickets@gmail.com or purchase at the door.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

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Sustainable catering – food for thought

Have you ever thought of catering and sustainability?

Our family has recently been blessed with some wonderful occasions, among them, the birth of our first grandchild, the engagement of one of our daughters and the bar mitzvah of our youngest son.

When celebrating a family simchah, there's often a need for catering. Once you have picked a venue, you are pretty well committed to the caterer and what the caterer offer.

Whether at a shul hall, a stand-alone banquet hall or a condo party room, energy costs are embedded in the room-rental cost. The cost of electricity and natural gas used to prepare and heat the food is embedded in the catering fee.

Sustainable Jew

Fred Winegust

How would you like to be in a position to make the following offer to the caterer? "I am willing to pay $50 a guest. Are you willing to share with me the savings you enjoy, because I have brought you a solution that can be used in your food-preparation phase to reduce your electricity consumption in kilowatt hours, your electricity draw in kilowatts and natural gas consumption in meters cubed?"

If you were the manager of operations of a catering operation, would you accept such an offer? If you were a member of a synagogue building or house committee that provides a turnkey facility to an in-house or visiting caterer for a percentage of revenue, how would you react?

Would you use the savings to reduce the price to the simchah's hosts and attract more business by differentiating based on price? Do you keep the savings to improve your profit margin for the benefit of your synagogue members, catering hall owners and catering operation?

In industrial kitchens, ventilation on demand or demand-ventilation control is used to reduce electricity costs.

Most catering operations are industrial kitchens. They generally have an on/off fan-control system, with no ability to vary the fan speed.

Demand-ventilation control capitalizes on the fact that cooking appliances spend many hours in an idle or ready-to-cook mode that does not need the same ventilation rate as a cooking condition. Two-speed or variable-speed fans can achieve reductions in exhaust and make up airflow when appliances are not being used to capacity or have been turned off.

On-demand ventilation solutions can vary the speed of the fans based on temperature, smoke and steam or temperature alone. These systems increase fan speed when necessary and reduce fan speed when cooking decreases.

The longer a kitchen stays open and the higher the number of hoods used to ventilate the cooking area, the more benefit there is from a ventilation-on-demand solution and the shorter the pay-back period.

Enbridge has published a Boston Pizza case study that shows a 74.6 per cent annual natural gas consumption reduction was equal to 14,100 meters cubed and resulted in a $4,250 savings. A more detailed report stated that a 61 per cent reduction in electrical draw by fans was translated into about $1,500 in annual savings.

Perhaps your synagogue or caterer has an operational cost reduction opportunity to explore.

Winegust@gmail.com

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1 loaf sliced cinnamon swirl bread, cubed
2 ripe bananas, sliced
½ c mini chocolate chips
1½ c milk
4 lg eggs
2 tbls butter, melted
1½ tsp vanilla
Maple syrup for drizzling

Lightly coat an 8"×8" baking dish with cooking spray. Place a layer of bread cubes into baking dish. Top with bananas, chocolate chips; repeat twice,. ending with bread layer. In large bowl, whisk together milk, eggs, butter, vanilla. Pour mixture over bread cubes. Cover; refrigerate overnight. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350°F; prepare topping.

Oatmeal Topping:
¼ c old fashioned oats
¼ c brown sugar
¼ c butter, cubed

Combine oats & sugar in a bowl; with fingers, work in butter until it resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over bread cubes. Bake 35-45 min., or until golden brown. Serve warm, drizzled with syrup. *Serves 6.*

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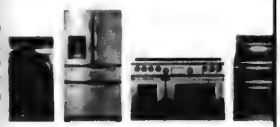

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Isaac Querub Caro, right, president of the federation of the 13 Jewish communities of Spain, who talks about upcoming legislation that will enable descendants of Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 to become naturalized Spanish citizens.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa reflects on Yair Lapid's first mistake in office and the enormous task ahead of the new treasurer.

Wallenberg Academy is the name the English Montreal School Board has chosen for its proposed new high school in Côte St. Luc.

The student government of the University of California, Riverside, last week rescinded a decision to divest from Israel. The Associated Student Government's Student Senate voted 10-2 to cancel the March 6 resolution that called on the school to withdraw funds from companies that did business with the Jewish state.

A strong Jewish and Israeli presence has returned to Montreal's annual Blue Metropolis international literary festival this month.

Yom Hazikaron

Growing up in Canada, we often ask ourselves at some point what is sacred to us and what we might die for. Of course, democracy, freedom and the Canadian way of life are generally the values thought of. This belief system, however, is mostly tested only during times of war. Nowadays the farthest thing from the minds of our Canadian children is that they will one day have to fight to preserve our way of life. We feel safe, and not surprisingly, embrace this country knowing that our progeny will likely not have to go off to war and, God forbid, be killed.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

Living in Israel is different.

When children grow up anywhere in Israel, they will say: "I will fight and die for the State of Israel, democracy, and for all Jews." The thing is that along with a young person's answer comes the knowledge that as he or she grows, there is a likelihood this value will be tested. If you are born in Eretz Yisrael, you will likely serve in the Israel Defence Forces. If you do, and a war breaks out, which happens every few years, you could find yourself on the frontlines and at the other end of the enemy's gun.

Yom Hazikaron, the day of remembrance in Israel, speaks to this point. Essentially, as the siren goes off the night before and again the following morning, and that most uncomfortable sound bellows throughout the nation, the collective thinking is directed toward those men and women who were once children and accepted the responsibility of being Israeli Jews, and because of that, paid with their lives.

On Yom Hazikaron, when citizens from all corners of the state visit the graveyards of their sons and daughters, they also recall the Israelis who walked into a nightclub in Tel Aviv or attended a Passover seder in Netanya and were met by a bomb wrapped in nails and ball bearings intended to kill as many Jews as possible. They remember the victims of terror.

On Yom Hazikaron, April 14 to 15 (Iyar 4), it is important that, as Canadian parents and children, we consider, as well as we can, those we are remembering and why it is so important to do this. We remember the 26,000 people killed in Israel through war and terror since Jews were able to live outside of the Old City in the mid-1800s.

We are all called upon to think about the sacrifice Jewish Israelis and Bedouins are called upon to make as soon as they exit their mother's womb. Similarly, we are encouraged to think about the parents who decided to start a family, to give birth to a little boy or girl knowing full well that in 18 short years, a blink of an eye, the infants will walk away from their home with a machine gun hanging from their shoulder wearing fatigues meant to be as nondescript as possible, designed to make these sons and daughters look alike – because that's what armies require.

On Yom Hazikaron, consider all of this, and then remember that the very next day, Yom Ha'azmaut, Israel Independence Day, is celebrated.

And therein lies the special consciousness of our Israeli brothers and sisters. They are prepared to fight and die for Israel and our Jewishness, and we will celebrate until dawn because they are alive today as their children understand what is required of them – to give their lives if necessary.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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This Week

National

Randy Bachman set to rock the Koffler Centre.
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Jazz trio celebrates its 20th anniversary. *Page 45*

Sports & Leisure

Eric Nystrom to coach U.S. Maccabiah team.
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Isrock Festival brings Israeli music to the masses.
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Remembering the fallen

A young boy stoops at the grave of a family member on Yom Hazikaron in Israel. Throughout the country, Israelis paid homage to the 23,085 men and women who have fallen in defence of the Jewish state and to the 2,493 victims murdered by terrorists. As evening settled upon the country, mourning for the fallen gave way to celebration of the country's 65th Yom Ha'atzmaut. *[Flash90 photo]*

Manitoba students defund anti-Israel group

JTA

The University of Manitoba Students' Union (UMSU) voted to strip funding and official club status from an anti-Israel group on campus last week.

The move came a day after the University of Regina Students' Union (URSU) repealed its support for the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement, 14 months after becoming the first university student union in Canada to endorse it.

The UMSU vote on April 11 went against legal advice and bucked the trend among other student councils at other universities across the country, which in recent months have voted to divest from Israel, most recently at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus earlier this month.

The UMSU motion, which passed by a vote of 19 to 15, prohibits Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA) from receiving funding from the student union or using student union facilities for club activities.

The resolution references the Manitoba Human Rights Code and accuses the club of "discrimination" and "harassment."

Prior to the vote, the undergraduate student union's attorney issued an opinion reading, in part, that "the actions of SAIA were well within the grounds of legally protected and acceptable political discourse." The legal opinion warned that barring the group could expose the student union to legal liability, the *National Post* reported.

SAIA has branches on most major campuses in the country and organizes the annual Israeli Apartheid Week. Supporters of SAIA have said they'll fight the decision.

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Acharei Mot-Kedoshim
Candlelighting: 7:47
Havdalah: 8:51
Greater Toronto Area

Palestinians upset with John Baird – please see page 34

CANADA

Cdns. Appointed

TORONTO — Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Abella and Liberal MP Irwin Cotler have been named to the advisory board of the Genesis Prize, a new $1-million award sponsored by the State of Israel and the Jewish Agency for Israel. It will be "given annually to an… internationally renowned professional…who is a role model in his/her community and who can inspire a younger generation of Jews worldwide," organizers said. Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel and British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks are among others on the board. The first prize will be awarded in 2014. It's funded by the Genesis Philanthropy Group, which aims to enhance Jewish identity among Russian-speaking Jews worldwide.

WORLD

Painting Found

ROME — A Marc Chagall painting stolen in 2002 was found in the home of ex-Italian soccer star Roberto Bottega. Police said April 8 that *Le Nu au Bouquet*, painted in 1920 by the renowned Jewish artist and worth $1.3 million, was found in Bottega's Turin home. He reportedly bought it in good faith from a Bologna gallery in 2003, unaware it had been stolen a year earlier from a U.S. yacht being repaired in Savona. The thieves replaced the original on the yacht with a copy and tricked the Chagall Foundation into giving the stolen artwork a new authentication. The Bologna gallery owner and two Romanians who worked on the yacht in 2002 are being investigated.

Citizenship Vote

LISBON — Portugal's parliament passed a law facilitating the naturalization of descendants of 16th-century Jews who fled because of religious persecution. The motion, submitted by the Socialist and Center Right parties, passed unanimously April 12 as an amendment to the "Law on Nationality." It lets descendants of Jews expelled in the 16th century become citizens if they "belong to a Sephardi community of Portuguese origin with ties to Portugal," said Jose Oulman Carp, president of Portugal's Jewish community, estimated at 1,000 to 1,500 people. Carp, who has lobbied for years for the amendment, called it "a huge development." The Portuguese Inquisition began in 1536 and saw mass expulsions and forced conversion to Christianity. Portugal had a Jewish population of about 400,000, many refugees from Spain, where the Inquisition started in 1492. Spanish lawmakers are said to be drafting a similar motion.

Quebec Minister Re-affirms Israel Ties

MONTREAL — Quebec International Relations Minister Jean-François Lisée reaffirmed the importance of Quebec's relations with the State of Israel at discussions held with Israel's consul general in Montreal, Joel Lion, on April 3.

Joel Lion, left, and Jean-François Lisée

They underlined the many affinities between the two societies, and focused in particular on economic relations and scientific and technological co-operation.

"The economies of Quebec and Israel are based on knowledge and innovation, as well as the vitality of their institutions, which offer excellent opportunities for trade and co-operation that Quebec would like to see strengthened," the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs said in a statement afterward.

Lisée, who is also the minister responsible for the Montreal region and La Francophonie, discussed initiatives that will make it possible in the coming years to expand collaboration between scientific and academic institutions and businesses in Quebec and Israel.

The province and Israel have already signed two agreements, in 2007 and 2008, that cover the scientific and technological, cultural, educational, health, economic and trade spheres.

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Guess who is coming to Toronto?

Randy Bachman to rock Koffler Centre

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Iconic Canadian rock star Randy Bachman will be takin' care of business, helping to inaugurate Toronto's Koffler Centre for the Arts next month.

The singer-guitarist of The Guess Who and BachmanTurner, Overdrive fame is headlining the "Koffler Rocks!" fundraising concert on May 2 at the Artscape Wychwood Barns, 601 Christie St.

Also scheduled to perform are the Sadies and Melanie Fiona, among others.

The Koffler Centre has been in a nomadic mode since 2008. Its then-permanent home was lost when the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (BJCC) was demolished, as part of a plan to rebuild and revitalize the BJCC campus. Koffler Centre maintains its head office in the Prosserman JCC's Sherman campus and offers arts courses there, too.

Over the last four years, however, the arts institution has held its major exhibitions around town in makeshift locations when needed.

This October, the Koffler Centre will relocate to a new 4,600-square-foot gallery and office space at Artscape Youngplace facility "in the historic and newly renovated Beaux-Arts building on Shaw Street just north of Queen Street West in the heart of Toronto's art and design district," according to Tony Hewer, a spokesperson for the Koffler Centre.

"We will be the anchor tenant in a multi-use arts building with other arts/ cultural/ social /community organizations, artist studios and more. We have signed a five-year lease with Artscape with the option to renew," he wrote to *The CJN* in an email.

Continued on page 17

Randy Bachman

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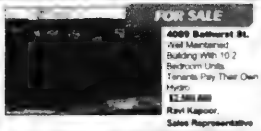
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A current snapshot

From the editor's desk...

The post-Pesach period is an ideal moment to take a snapshot of the state of the Jewish People. What better time than now – after Pesach, Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut, quintessential occasions of Jewish Peoplehood – to take note of current "Jewish People" facts?

Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics on Sunday reported that the population of the country is 8.018 million, 6.04 million or 75.3 per cent of whom, are Jewish. Some 1.6 million, or 20.7 per cent, are Arab Muslims. The remaining 318,000 or four per cent of the population are neither Jewish nor Muslim.

Sixty-five years ago, when Israel was established, Israel's population totalled 806,000. The population of the country has grown by 10 times since it was founded.

The poignancy of the number of Jews who live in Israel today was noted by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu when he spoke last week at Yad Vashem during the national commemoration of Yom Hashoah.

"Today, for the first time since the establishment of the state, more than six million Jews live in the State of Israel. You, the citizens of Israel, are the testament to our victory. From the abyss of the Holocaust, we climbed to the peak of Zion. From a deep pit, we rose to a pinnacle."

Despite the steadily rising number of Jews who live in Israel, there are still far fewer Jews in the world today than there were in 1939 when World War II began, then between 17 and 18 million.

Prof. Sergio DellaPergola of Hebrew University of Jerusalem, perhaps the Jewish world's pre-eminent demographer, has just published his assessment of the world Jewish population for 2012. It was published by the Mandell L. Berman Institute North American Jewish Data Bank, at the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life, University of Connecticut, for the *American Jewish Yearbook*.

The executive summary of the study tells the story.

"At the beginning of 2012, the world's Jewish population was estimated at 13.8 million – an increase of 88,300 (0.65 per cent) over the 2011 revised estimate.

Prof. DellaPergola compares the growth in Jewish numbers to the growth of the global population.

"The world's total population increased by 1.26 per cent in 2011. World Jewry hence increased at about half the general population growth rate.

"The world's core Jewish population was estimated at 11 million in 1945... While 13 years were needed to add one million Jews after the tragic human losses of World War II and the Shoah, 47 more years were needed to add another million.

"The world's total population increased nearly threefold from 2.315 billion in 1945 to 7.075 billion in 2012. Thus, *the relative share of Jews among the world's total population steadily diminished* from 4.75 per 1,000 in 1945 to 1.94 per 1,000 currently." (My emphasis)

But as we know, as we have always been taught throughout our history, it is not the numbers of our people, but rather the nature of our resolve, character and behaviour that are ultimately determinative of our impact on civilization's progress. An eye-popping example of this observation was published last week by the unique, excellent news service, *Israel21c*. Based in Israel, this exclusively Internet service provides stories and features of the richly diverse, colourful, remarkably enchanting puzzle that is the State of Israel.

Compiled by veteran writer Nicky Blackburn, the story itemizes "the top 65 ways Israel is saving our planet." (Please see page 36.)

As Blackburn notes, "Israel is exporting far more than just technology. It's also sharing its experience and skills in a whole range of humanitarian and environmental fields to help people everywhere live better, fuller and healthier lives.

"From environmental breakthroughs that will help reduce greenhouse emissions and technologies that can increase food production and save vital crops to humanitarian aid missions in the wake of catastrophic natural disasters, Israelis are providing significant assistance" to countries and peoples around the world.

An IDF medical team traveled to Japan to assist victims of the devastating earthquake there in 2011. The Israeli efforts were among the list of 65 ways Israelis are "saving" the planet.

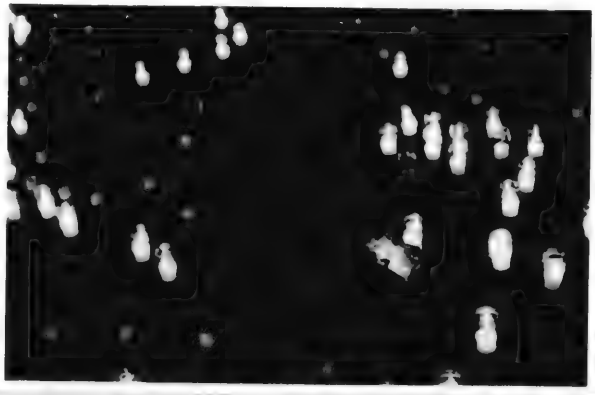
Blackburn itemizes 65 discrete projects by Israelis that make the planet a better place. The list is not comprehensive.

"There are hundreds, if not thousands, more worthy projects going on every day," she writes.

The full list appears on *Israel21c.org*. Read it. Be inspired. Take pride.

– MBD

SeeJN



ISRAEL'S FALLEN REMEMBERED

An Israel Defence Forces soldier lights a candle in memory of Israel's fallen soldiers before a memorial ceremony at the Knesset on April 14. ***[Flash 90]***

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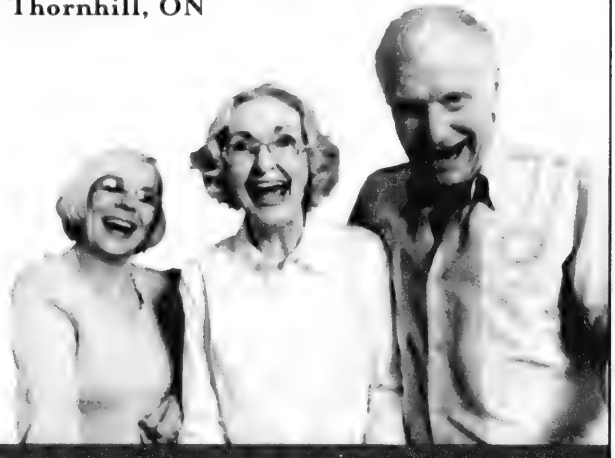

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Student union endorses BDS

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A resolution to endorse the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel passed by a bare majority at an April 5 undergraduate student union meeting at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus.

The vote came after the group Toronto Students for Justice in Palestine (TSJP) claimed to have 1,200 student signatures on a petition calling for the vote.

The endorsement brings the Scarborough Campus Student Union (SCSU) in line with the undergraduate students union at U of T's Mississauga campus, as well as the graduate student union at the school's downtown campus, which have both passed motions in favour of boycotting Israel.

As well, last month, the York Federation of Students at York University, the country's largest undergraduate student association, passed a similar resolution.

Adryan Bergstrom-Borins

The Scarborough motion – which passed with eight votes in favour, three against, three abstentions and one spoiled ballot – asks that the "SCSU commit to and demand that the University of Toronto administration also commit to identifying and divesting from companies that invest into and profit from Israel's war crimes, occupation and oppression as defined by the BDS campaign."

The 15-member SCSU represents 10,000 undergraduate students at U of T Scarborough.

"The University of Toronto Scarborough Campus [UTSC] is now proudly a part of the Palestinian-led global resistance movement to end the illegal Israeli occupation," TSJP co-president Sabrina Azraq told *The CJN*. "The UTSC community is now united in the global movement to non-violently pressure Israel to comply with international law and Palestinian human rights."

U of T spokesperson Laurie Stephens said the school's administration has received many complaints about the resolution. She said it has referred complainants to the SCSU while reminding them that while the council can endorse the BDS campaign, it can't force its members to pursue a particular course of action.

She added that the endorsement does not limit freedom of expression on campus and that the university will continue to protect the right of students to debate controversial topics.

But Adryan Bergstrom-Borins, president and founder of the Scarborough campus' Hillel, which fought against the motion, said she's concerned the vote will hinder the chance of dialogue taking place on campus.

Compared to last month's "secretive" BDS motion at U of T's Mississauga campus, this one was a lot fairer, in that TSJP spread the word about the vote, she said.

"It allowed a much greater dialogue to happen," she said, explaining that both sides were given equal time to make their case at the meeting.

However, in light of the endorsement, "whether this will continue in the same form of dialogue, probably not."

In the past, Hillel members have been invited to TSJP events, Bergstrom-Borins said. However, one event featured anti-Zionist activist Miko Peled, in which Bergstrom-Borins said he described Jewish history as a myth, and blamed "Israeli and Jewish values" for the ongoing conflict. When questioned, she said he responded that he does not talk to Zionists.

"I brought that up in my speech [at the council meeting]," she said. "I think BDS is definitely going to bring and legitimize that kind of dialogue that's really one-sided and not really open."

Azraq disagreed with the idea the vote will limit dialogue on campus.

"Joining in boycotting companies that profit off Israel's occupation will not hinder dialogue," she told *The CJN*. "In contrary, the BDS movement has brought forward great discussions and debates to our campus. We have always encouraged discussion on campus and will continue to do so. It is safe to say that we are all united in a desire for peace in the region."

SCSU president Abdalla Al-Baalawy, president also said he hopes debate won't end.

"I hope the debate that occurred on that day of the vote continues on our campus as we all strive for a more peaceful world and an end to all injustices being done by anyone or group on this earth," he told *The CJN*.

When Bergstrom-Borins heard about the vote about a month before it was originally scheduled to take place, she worked with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) to send letters to council members arguing against a boycott motion.

The vote had been postponed several times, but finally took place April 5. Although the meeting was on a Friday, Bergstrom-Borins said, the vote was scheduled for early in the agenda so it would occur before Shabbat and allow observant Jewish students to attend.

She said the council meeting room was filled to capacity for the vote, mostly with supporters of the motion, and that the vote even attracted a crowd outside the room. Although pro-Israel students were given equal time to speak, she described the atmosphere as somewhat hostile and "disturbing."

Continued on page 49

Jewish HERITAGE MONTH

Baycrest is celebrating Jewish Heritage Month

May is Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario. Join Baycrest in honouring the traditions and values of our community.

Baycrest's Legacy: A Look Back at Cecil Street
Photography and object-based exhibit
Featuring photos and artifacts from the Ontario Jewish Archives and Baycrest's private collection, documenting people, places and events that have shaped our transformation from Cecil Street to the present day.

Journey Through Memory
Mixed media exhibit and oral history project
Exploring the roles and benefits of storytelling and object-based reminiscence, using artifacts from Baycrest's own collection.

Duets: Portraits of Aging and the Art of Care
Photography exhibit
Examining the complex relationship between clients and caregivers.

Jews: A Canadian Story in Pictures
Photography exhibit
Showing slices of Jewish life in Canada throughout our nation's history.

Cover Thy Head: Headdresses and Identities
Docent-led museum tours
Displaying headdresses representing religious leadership, special life milestones, professional and social groups, and diversity in Canada.

Holocaust Butterfly Project
Art installation
Showcasing butterfly art created by Baycrest residents, volunteers, students and staff. Each butterfly commemorates the 1.5 million children who perished in the Holocaust.

For information about a personal tour of these exhibits at Baycrest, contact Ian Leventhal at 416-785-2500 x 3896.

Baycrest.org/culture-arts-innovation.php

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John Baird's courage

Subtlety, nuance, balance and honesty have never been strong suits of the Palestinian leadership. Their predisposition for exaggerated polemics was much on display last week when their propaganda machine went into punishing overdrive.

Their various spokespeople let loose a torrent of disparagement and condemnation of Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird for his deigning to meet with Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni at her office in eastern Jerusalem last week.

The PLO lodged an official complaint with our government, calling Baird's meeting "tantamount to complicity in ongoing Israeli violations of the international laws of war."

"Your recent meeting with Israeli officials in east Jerusalem may be deemed as aiding, abetting, or otherwise assisting illegal Israeli policies," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat charged.

Invoking the usual lexicon of loaded, sinister, anti-Israel buzz words, senior PLO official Nabil Shaath characterized Baird's visit as "a slap in the face to the Palestinian people, particularly Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, who suffer from Israeli policies of *colonial settlement expansion, ID revocations, home demolitions and evictions*" (our emphasis).

To his credit, Baird was not cowed.

Canadian foreign ministry spokesperson Rick Roth told *Agence France-Press* that the meeting at Livni's office "doesn't change our longstanding position that all final status issues must be negotiated between the two parties. As guests, we were pleased to meet our hosts where it was most convenient for them."

The essential point about the location of the Baird-Livni meeting was the one that the Canadian government made. The final status of the geography of east Jerusalem must be negotiated by the Israelis and the Palestinians. That the Palestinians do not agree with Israel's characterization of eastern Jerusalem is widely known and simply confirms the importance of the overall need to reach a peace agreement.

The true substantive questions regarding eastern Jerusalem however are: why should an anomalous 19-year period – between 1948, when the Jordanian army expelled the Jews from their homes in eastern Jerusalem, and 1967, when the Jews returned – confer special rights upon the Palestinians to its exclusive legal entitlement? Why should the forcible division of Jerusalem by the Jordanian army in 1948 be enshrined as the permanent international legal status of the city, especially when, even as late as June 4, 1967, the Palestinians made no claim to sovereign control of eastern Jerusalem?

Baird got it right when he explained what the true purpose of the diplomatic exercise should be: "We're focused on trying to have an impact on the difficult and serious challenges, that being security for Israelis, an end to the conflict, and the legitimate aspirations for a state from those on the Palestinian side."

We commend his stand and his courage.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The head of Histadrut Canada was upset by a statement from Shirley Carr, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, that the Palestine Liberation Organization had the right to attend any peace conference on the future of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

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Yom Hazikaron 5773

We honour the memory of too many members of Tzahal who at too early an age gave their lives in defence of the State of Israel. We also honour the memories of the victims of terror. We should also remember the 11 Canadian Machal volunteers who gave their lives in the 1948 War of Independence. Former Israeli prime minister David Ben-Gurion said that the "greatest contribution the Jewish Diaspora ever made to Israel was in providing the Machal volunteers." They were:

• **George (Buzz) Beurling** of Verdun, Que. Canada's top World War II fighter pilot. Killed near Rome, May 20, 1948, in a crash of an airplane being readied for its ferry flight to Israel. Buried in Haifa Military Cemetery, non-Jewish section.

• **Harvey Cohen** and **Ed Lugech**, first cousins, of Toronto. Served in Palmach Yiftach Brigade. Participated in the battles of Nebi Yusha and Malkiyeh. Missing and believed waylaid by Arab irregulars near Sarafand late June 1948. (Update per Maurice Moshe Sadeh: they were lost in the battle of Malkiyeh, on the Lebanese border, May 15,1948).

• **Reuben Schiff** of Toronto. Served on the Aliya-Bet ship Paducah. Killed July 11, 1948, near Abu j'Ab, while looking for his shipmate and Palmach comrade **Lou Ball**. Buried at Nachlat Itzhak.

• **Sidney Rubinoff** of Toronto. Served with the Palmach in battles of Nebi Yusha, Malkiyeh, Operation Danny, and capture of Lydda and Ramleh. Wounded at Latrun July 17, 1948, and died en route to hospital. Buried at Nachlat Itzhak.

• **Sidney Leisure** of Toronto. Served in the 7th Brigade, 72nd Battalion. Killed Sept. 7, 1948, during Operation Hiram in battle for Tamra Hill in the Galilee. Buried at Nahariya.

• **Leonard Fitchett** of Vancouver. Ex-RCAF pilot. Served in 103 Squadron. Downed in his Beaufighter by anti-aircraft fire on Oct. 20, 1948, while attacking Egyptian-held Iraq el Sueidan police fortress. Buried in Haifa Military Cemetery, non-Jewish section.

• **Wilfred Canter** (pilot) of Toronto; **Willy Fisher** (navigator) of Winnipeg; **Fred Stevenson** (co-pilot) of Vancouver. The three RCAF veterans served in 103 Squadron. During a night supply run to Sdom, on Oct. 24, 1948, their C-47 exploded in the air after an engine caught fire. Canter and Fisher are buried at Rehovot. Stevenson is buried in Haifa Military Cemetery, non-Jewish section.

• **Ralph Moster** (pilot) of Vancouver. Killed Dec. 7, 1948, with three others when their Grumman Widgeon crashed into the Sea of Galilee during a training flight. Buried at Nachlat Itzhak.

This list was compiled by the late Eddy Kaplansky, Machal pilot and historian.

Wilf Mandel
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

Endowment fund for Jewish education

In reference to Rabbi Jay Kelman's column, "Four questions about Jewish eduction" (April 4), about funding for Jewish schools, or the lack thereof, it brings to the forefront an issue relevant to everyone in the community and the need for a solution.

I've thought about this and wondered if there isn't a very simple solution to this issue. Namely: the creation of an endowment fund in the same way that universities such as Yale and Harvard have huge funds that provide financing for capital projects, research and scholarships. Their endowment funds are managed by full-time teams that create wealth from the initial principal, investing in all types of market vehicles. The funds have ballooned so large that the schools couldn't even spend the money they have, even if they wanted to. Compared to the state of Jewish education, couldn't two or three or 10 major Jewish philanthropists team up together to create a professionally managed fund so that the Jewish-education funding crisis could be virtually eliminated? Would this solution not be (a) the most financially viable for donor and school? This, because school and donor receive and share the created wealth from the fund. The fund's principal (in an ideal situation, by confirming Yale and Harvard's example) is not touched and ever increases its base through wise and professionally managed investing. And (b), is it not an enormous fulfilment of ensuring our communities, future health and commitment to our Jewish values?

Why can't this be done and why aren't our efforts directed towards this type of campaign, which has proven immensely successful in other areas of our world?

Jonathan Spiegelman
Toronto

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Court order releases women arrested at the Wall

Natan Sharansky proposes permanent compromise

Ron Friedman and Gavriel Fiske
The Times of Israel

The Jerusalem Magistrate's Court ordered the release of five women arrested for illegal worship at the Western Wall on April 11.

The women, including Women of the Wall director Leslie Sachs, were arrested for praying while wearing prayer shawls during the group's monthly Rosh Chodesh prayers at Judaism's holiest site.

"There were no grounds for their arrest," the judge ruled. "Any disruption that took place was not instigated by the defendants."

According to the Women of the Wall, Judge Sharon Lary-Bavly said during the proceedings that "to arrest these women... is likened to blaming a rape victim for the clothing that she wears."

Police said about 120 women, including Meretz MKs Michal Rozin and Tamar Zandberg, arrived for the prayer service.

"This reminds me of the darkest days of our history when Jews were dispossessed of religious artifacts and not allowed to worship," said Sachs after she was arrested.

"This is completely irrational. The world didn't collapse when women weren't arrested last month. Police should have behaved similarly this time," said Rozin. "It is unfathomable that in 2013, Israel is the only place in the world where Jewish women are arrested for praying."

Western Wall Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, for his part, condemned the prayer gathering as a deliberate provocation at a time when authorities are working on a finding an acceptable solution to the issue.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is said to be considering a proposal by the head of the Jewish Agency, Natan Sharansky, to establish an egalitarian prayer plaza along part of the Western Wall.

"That they came this morning, despite the settlement efforts that Sharansky is trying to promote, is the clearest testimony that their goal is to cause dispute and hurt feelings by increasing polarization and turning the Western Wall into a battlefield for zealots," Rabinowitz said, according to *Ma'ariv*. "Instead of looking at this holy place as holy ground, they are turning it into a place of contention, and their behaviour fuels hatred and dispute."

A man who tried to burn pamphlets distributed by the women and a haredi woman who yelled abuse at the worshipers were also detained, *Israel Radio* reported.

Police said they would arrest other women who they videotaped transgressing the ban on women reading from the Torah or donning prayer shawls at the holy site.

"The events at the Western Wall today are one more reminder of the urgent need to reach a permanent solution and make the Western Wall once again a symbol of unity among the Jewish People, and not one of discord and strife," the Jewish Agency said in a statement.

Sharansky's proposal has reportedly been approved in principle by the government, haredi authorities, the Women of the Wall and leaders of the Reform and Conservative movements in the United States. However, Sachs said the "extremely ambitious" proposal could take years to implement – "if ever."

Sachs told *Israel Radio* that her organization was campaigning among Knesset members to reverse the legal amendment under which women are barred from certain practices at the Western Wall.

Police guard a woman wearing a prayer shawl at the Western Wall. She is part of the group the Women of the Wall, which prayed at the Kotel last Rosh Chodesh, on April 11. *[Flash90 photo].*

Sharansky is said to want to designate the area currently known as Robinson's Arch for egalitarian services, to rename it as part of the Western Wall, to change it from a paid-entry tourism area to an open prayer site and to directly connect it to the main Western Wall plaza. The *Times of Israel* has learned that the plan would see development of the Robinson's Arch area to be equal in size to the present Western Wall prayer plaza and that both sections would share a single entrance.

Sharansky told *Ynet News* on April 10 that the plan had been presented "to the government ministers, to the leaders of the Jewish movements in the United States, to the Western Wall rabbi, and each of them have their own reservations, but they all understand that the situation in which the Western Wall is a place of conflict and dispute must end and that it must be rebuilt as a uniting place. In this move we are providing a possibility to recreate agreement and a wide common denominator around the Western Wall."

Rabbi Rabinowitz said that while the new prayer area "does not match" his worldview, he supports the idea of "one site of prayer" and said that the haredi community "can live with this solution." The Western Wall "has to unite the Jewish People," he told *Israel Radio*. "It belongs to all the Jewish People... I'm seeking solutions that everyone can live with."

If the proposal "is accepted by everyone," if it proves feasible from archeological, security and all other perspectives, and if it essentially moves the disputed prayer arrangements away from the area that is today designated as the Western Wall, Rabinowitz said, that would be acceptable to him. "If not," he added, "then what have we achieved?"

On April 10, the Women of the Wall offered support for the plan. Sharansky's proposal was "a wonderful message for Israelis, for Jews from abroad, for everyone," the group's leader Anat Hoffman said, praising him for thinking outside of the box and looking for a real solution.

Hoffman, whose group has led the struggle to open the Western Wall to nontraditional prayer, spoke to the *Forward* hours after Sharansky presented to American Jewish leaders part of his proposal to resolve the dispute.

The idea is "very ambitious," Hoffman said, and represents a compromise, even if it wasn't what the group had been hoping for. "You don't always have to be right, you have to be smart – and compromise is a sign of maturity and understanding what's at stake here," Hoffman said.

But Sachs sounded markedly less upbeat, worrying that the Sharansky solution would not be practicable in the short term while also noting that the group hadn't seen Sharansky's final specific suggestions, "although we were consulted" as the proposal was being prepared.

In a statement, the Jewish Agency said Sharansky hoped the proposal would "decrease the heightened tensions at the Western Wall."

Sharansky said in the statement: "One Western Wall for one Jewish People."

Hoffman expressed concern over what could happen before the idea is implemented, alluding to statements by Jerusalem's police commissioner Yossi Pariente, who warned women against saying *Kaddish*. A women reciting *Kaddish* could be arrested, the officer explained.

Rabbi Rabinowitz said that women would not be arrested for saying *Kaddish* — after MK Alisa Lavie (Yesh Atid) intervened — but then Pariente stated once again that the Jerusalem police would enforce the law.

It was not a question of agreements between the sides involved, but of a court order that needed to be upheld, he said.

Sharansky's suggested enlarged prayer section would be equal in size to the current men and women's sections, the *Forward* reported.

As part of a previous compromise, Robinson's Arch is open at certain times for egalitarian prayer, but it is inside an archeological site and a fee is charged for entrance. The new proposed area would be open at all times without a fee and be essentially an extension of the main prayer section at the Wall.

Israel Radio reported April 10 that the plan would involve changing the official name of the Robinson's Arch area, named after early 19th-century American biblical scholar Edward Robinson.

Sharansky stressed that the plan, which would involve renovation work in a politically and religiously sensitive site, would, in order to "not spark a conflict" with the Muslim world, not "touch one stone" of the Mughrabi Bridge, which connects to the Temple Mount plaza and is adjacent to both the current Jewish prayer area at the Wall and to Robinson's Arch.

The question of women's and nontraditional prayer at the Western Wall is a divisive issue in the relationship between Israel and Jews in the Diaspora, especially in the United States, where most Jews follow Reform or Conservative egalitarian practice. That's currently forbidden at the Western Wall.

Western Wall regulations dictate that women cannot wear tallits in the same manner as men, as it contravenes the "local custom" determined by the Wall's chief rabbi. In 2003, the High Court of Justice upheld a government ban on women wearing tfillin or tallits.

TimesofIsrael.com

Haters can't see good in Israel, but we should

On Sunday, March 17, CBC Radio broadcast an interview I did on *The Sunday Edition* with Michael Enright discussing my new book, *Moynihan's Moment: America's Fight Against Zionism as Racism*.

The interview, entitled "Daniel Patrick Moynihan's Defence of Zionism," was classic Enright, who is a national treasure. He was well prepared. He asked intelligent questions. He set a warm, thoughtful tone. The conversation flowed, and the time flew. Afterward, one of the Montreal studio hosts told me the interview triggered many discussions among CBC reporters and technicians, who appreciated my distinction between criticizing Israel, which is a legitimate, democratic act, and demonizing Zionism, which is usually a totalitarian and destructive act. But, inevitably, because we mentioned the Z-word, Zionism, in a positive context, the brickbats flew.

Gil Troy

in Montreal

Two weeks later, Enright wrote on his website: "My conversation with Prof. Troy touched a nerve with many of our listeners, and we received a lot of mail about it." He then excerpted six letters, all hostile. "While Zionism might not be racism it is exclusionary and elitist... One might say 'ethnicist,'" wrote a Vancouverite, claiming that had we been discussing apartheid-era South Africa, "Dr. Troy might well have been an apologist for that whites-only regime."

"I'm a Jew and I am ashamed by Israel's war crimes and inhumanity," wrote another Vancouverite. Nationalism is a form of racism in this day and age." And someone from Toronto, self-describing as "Israeli-born" – but not Israeli! – called me an "apologist," saying : "Jewish nationalism – if that is Zionism – is untenable as it has proven that it cannot accommodate the first principles of a 'liberal democracy': protect the rights of, and give voice to, the minorities that live amongst you."

Reading these comments, I'm struck once again by Israel's critics' hatred and lack of nuance. They cannot accept any conversation that doesn't demonize Israel. They never attack Palestinian nationalism, but cannot abide Jewish nationalism. They ignore Israel's complex security situation as well the many strides Israeli Arabs have made, while Jews in Arab states were oppressed and expelled. Their disdain is essentialist – overwhelming, all-encompassing and unabating. Whether or not they're Jewish or Israeli is irrelevant – Jews and Israelis can be just as wrong as Canadians.

But what also struck me was the CBC sample's one-sidedness. My guess is that by now some readers have decided that this was typical media bias, trying to correct for the fact that the CBC, for once, broadcast something positive about Israel. I actually assumed something else: that this sample reflected the letters that came in, which is symptomatic of a broader Jewish community problem. As a community, we all too often are expert at complaining, but far less adept at thanking. My guess is that Enright received few positive letters or emails, and that he, being an extraordinarily fair-minded radio host, revealed that in his choice.

I can take care of myself, but I shouldn't have to. We should learn to applaud straight shooters such as Michael Enright as frequently and as heartily as we denounce the haters. *Hakarat Hatov*, recognition of the good, is a core Jewish concept. It emphasizes the importance of emphasizing the positive. It's also a key media tactic. Thanking heroes and appreciating good people who simply do their jobs well builds goodwill.

More broadly, it reflects the kind of worldview we should embrace. Yes, I'm well aware of the haters out there, the York University fools who want to boycott Israel, the liars who smear the Jewish state, the demonizers who repudiate only one form of nationalism – Zionism.

But I refuse to spend my whole life fighting them. I want to delight in Zionism's success. I want to toast Israel's achievements. I want to rejoice in our good fortune to be living in the era of the third Jewish commonwealth.

As we celebrate the state of Israel's 65th birthday, knowing that Zionism, Judaism and the Jewish national link to the homeland are so much older, let's commit ourselves to learning about the good not just the bad, to accentuating the positive as much as possible, and to starting to show gratitude even more frequently than we complain.

It will not only improve our standing in the big wide world out there, it will make us all happier with ourselves.

Next year, keep it simple!

The seders are over and the matzah crumbs have been swept away. This is the first year I don't have a lingering feeling of bondage.

On our flight to Vancouver to spend Pesach in a yurt on Gabriola Island with friends and our son at UBC, we ran into a large group of Jews on their way to Whistler, where a ski-and-seder week package looked incredibly alluring. We remembered the year we also considered escaping to a Caribbean island offering a sand-floor synagogue seder.

The week before Pesach we saw countless YouTube items and Facebook posts lamenting how much people "hate" Passover. When did Pesach become so overwhelming that hotels kosher their kitchens and cruises offer seders so that we can run away from home?

Taping shut the closets, turning on the house alarm and going far, far away is one alternative to the cleaning, koshering and expense and – dare I say it – *obsession* over Pesach food. Pesach bagels, brownie mixes, and the worst excuse for breakfast cereal I have ever seen or tasted feel like some kind of slavery.

But simplifying Pesach is another way to deal with the holiday.

I know that some of these suggestions will not work for some Jews. Still, I respectfully suggest five tips for an easier Passover next year. Take what you can and throw the rest away with your left-over matzah.

• Skip all processed food. Your food bill will be cheaper and you will feel less overwhelmed in the store aisles. Do you really need duck sauce for one week? Kosher for Passover noodles that you keep promising you'll never buy again because you end up throwing out most of the gloopy mess? Learn to make easy blender mayonnaise with eggs and oil. Throw some cherry tomatoes, olive oil and salt into the broiler and you've got tomato sauce. Toast some chopped nuts and matzah farfel in melted butter and honey and you've got granola.

• Learn which foods need to be marked with a label and which don't. Don't get sucked into the kosher for Pesach product vortex. This year, I saw kosher for Passover pre-mixed salt water for your seder. A clever marketer turned Passover anxiety into profit.

• Consider kitniyot – those pesky legumes that Ashkenazi Jews "do not eat." I was once a triumphalist kosherer-than-thou ethnocentric Askenazi Jew about this, believe me. I wouldn't even eat green beans –which are a vegetable and *not* a bean – because of their name. But the year we lived in Israel changed my mind and habits thoroughly. If it's good enough for the Sephardi chief rabbi, it's good enough for me. We met many observant Ashkenazi Jews in Jerusalem who do eat kitniyot because it is now the overriding "custom of Israel." The Conservative movement has ruled that Ashkenazi Jews may eat kitniyot. There is even a "Kitniyot Liberation Front" website populated by Orthodox Jews giving serious challenge to an eastern European tradition that has outlived its original concern: the accidental mixing of wheat kernels into rice. We can now buy hermetically sealed and separated packages, so what's it about? Are we concerned because it can be made into a bread-like product or mistaken for wheat, or rise if it gets a bit of water thrown on it? But not for Sephardi Jews? Tortillas look a lot like matzah, less bread-like than those packaged spongy roll-up cakes. And when my cornmeal gets a bit of water, it doesn't rise, it becomes polenta.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

in Toronto

• Go outside every single day and walk. It's a spring holiday but how can we feel it if we are constantly indoors? Your stomach will thank you. And your ability to bless the flowers and sun and sky once again will be activated against the post-seder sluggishness that arises from eating too much heavy food.

• Invite your guests over for a pre-seder group cooking session. If your kashrut and theirs are the same, swallow your pride and do a potluck. Are we using resentful hours in the kitchen alone to assure our egos that ours are absolutely the best matzah balls in the universe and someone else's cannot possibly be as good?

We are in the countdown days leading up to Shavuot. Personally, I'm counting down toward next Passover for a holiday I can learn to *simply* love, by keeping it *simple*.

Ulysses S. Grant's infamous order

On the eve of his death in 1885, Ulysses S. Grant, a U.S. Civil War hero and a former American president, wrote *The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant*. The two-volume work, written with stylistic verve, was comprehensive yet self-serving, excluding a telling episode that could have sullied his reputation as a great American figure.

Left out of Grant's memoir was an official command he issued on Dec. 17, 1862, when he was a general on the Union side of the civil war in the United States.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Put plainly, General Orders No. 11 was the most antisemitic edict ever issued by a U.S. government official. Described as "that obnoxious order" by his wife, Julia, it was promptly rescinded by the president, Abraham Lincoln.

Grant signed General Orders No. 11 at his headquarters in Holly Springs, Miss., as Lincoln prepared to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, which would free African-American slaves. The notorious order expelled "Jews as a class" from the department of Tennessee, which consisted of Mississippi and parts of Tennessee and Kentucky.

Jonathan D. Sarna examines this order in exhaustive fashion in *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (Nextbook). A professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University, he claims it set the stage for the empowerment of Jews in the United States.

With wartime shortages and imbalances between supply and demand posing a problem for the North's economy, Grant signed it in an attempt to eliminate black marketeers and restrict commerce with the Confederacy.

It read: "The Jews, as a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department with twenty-four hours from the receipt of this order."

By Sarna's reckoning, it affected fewer than 100 Jews in the vicinity of Grant's army in northern Mississippi, representing a miniscule proportion of the 25,000 Jews living in the Confederate states in the 1860s. Many more Jews were unaffected by it because communications between Grant's headquarters and the military command were poor.

One of the first Jews to contest it was Cesar Kaskel, a Prussian immigrant who resided in Paducah, Ky. Within hours of its release, he and his brother, as well as their friends, sent Lincoln a telegram of protest, which, Sarna speculates, he probably never saw.

Kaskel also mailed a strongly worded letter to newspaper editors. The Associated Press picked up the story and, in modern parlance, it went viral.

As the *New York Times* commented, "All swindlers are not Jews. All Jews are not swindlers."

On Jan. 3, 1863, Kaskel was granted an audience with Lincoln arranged by a Republican congressman, John Addison Gurley, who represented a district in Cincinnati.

The exchange between Kaskel and Lincoln was biblical and condescending in tone.

Lincoln: "And so the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?"

Kaskel: "Yes, and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection."

Lincoln: "And this protection they shall have at once."

Sarna is unsure whether this fabled and paternalistic conversation even took place. Nevertheless, Lincoln immediately ordered his top general, Henry Halleck, to countermand Grant's order, which seems to have generated a frisson of antisemitism in the Union army.

Halleck followed through and the order was summarily cancelled. Unofficially, Halleck's assistant adjutant general, John Kelton, told Grant it had been too sweeping in nature.

Sixteen days later, Halleck wrote Grant a letter marred by an anti-Jewish slur: "The president has no objection to your expelling traitors and Jew peddlers… but as it in terms proscribed an entire religious class, some of whom are fighting in our ranks, the president deemed it necessary to revoke it."

According to Sarna, General Orders No. 11 was not Grant's first foray into antisemitism.

In July and November of 1862, eager to strike a blow against speculators in his district, he ordered subordinates to pay "special attention" to Jewish traders and keep out "the Israelites."

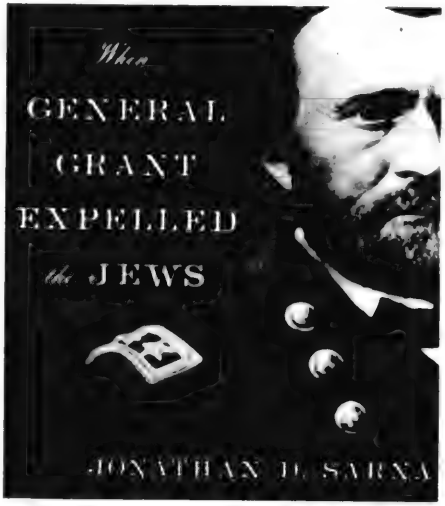
But when a subordinate ordered "all cotton speculators, Jews and other vagrants" to leave Holly Springs within 24 hours, Grant rescinded this draconian order.

Why, then, only a month later, did Grant issue General Orders No. 11? Sarna offers a plausible explanation.

After the Civil War, Grant, who had accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, was transformed into a national hero and appointed general of the armies of the United States.

Shortly after the Republican party nominated him as its presidential candidate, General Orders No. 11 came to haunt him, as a highly critical and anonymously-written pamphlet, *General Grant and the Jews*, circulated.

In a damage-control manoeuvre designed to save his candidacy, Grant's aide, Adam Badeau, claimed that the order had been directed against "evil… persons whose religion was in no way material to the issue."



And in a letter to a Jewish war veteran and B'nai Brith leader, Grant distanced himself from the order and forswore prejudice.

When Grant took his oath of office on March 4, 1869, he was, at 46, the youngest man ever to become the U.S. president.

In an effort to atone for his "sin," he initiated a policy of rapprochement with the Jewish community, appointing a succession of Jews to civil service positions.

"As a result, Jewish participation in government expanded during Grant's presidency," writes Sarna. "Jews held more government offices than ever before under Grant."

Grant, in this ecumenical spirit, became the first president to attend a synagogue dedication (in Washington, D.C.), and spoke up on behalf of oppressed Jews in Russia, even though Russia had stood by the Union side during the Civil War and had sold Alaska to the United States on favourable terms in 1867.

News of Grant's death was mourned by many Jews. By then, having disavowed General Orders No. 11, Grant had rehabilitated himself.

Striking a positive note, Sarna observes that his reversal transformed Grant "from enemy to friend, from Haman to Mordecai, from a general who expelled 'Jews as a class' to a president who embraced Jews as individuals."

The entire affair, he concludes, "reminds us that even stellar figures in history can learn from their mistakes."

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ROMSPEN

Hebrew U Friends to honour Morgan Freeman

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

He's driven Miss Daisy, helped outfit Batman, played "Red," the man who knew how to locate certain items from time to time in the fictional Shawshank state penitentiary, and was everybody's favourite film version of God incarnate in Bruce Almighty.

Now, Academy Award-winning actor Morgan Freeman is coming to Toronto to be honoured for his work and philanthropy by the Canadian Friends of Hebrew University (CFHU) on May 6 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. He will be presented with the charity's Key of Knowledge Award for his dedication to combating racism and "promoting knowledge and education worldwide," according to CFHU.

Morgan Freeman

And yes, the 75-year-old actor is also scheduled to speak with his inimitable dulcet tones to those in attendance at the organization's Celebration of Excellence soirée.

Rami Kleinmann, CFHU's president and CEO, told *The CJN* that his charity became interested in honouring Freeman while researching candidates for its award this year because the septuagenarian actor is a huge proponent of higher learning and study of science to benefit all humanity.

As such, CFHU wanted to bring in a guest honoree who was from "outside" the Jewish community, yet who could appreciate the work being done by scientists and researchers in Israel.

"We heard about all the philanthropic work [Freeman] does in the areas of science and advancement of knowledge, and decided to approach him," he said.

In his private life, Freeman is involved with multiple charities across a spectrum of causes including Plan!t Now, a disaster relief fund; Earth Biofuels, a non-profit that promotes the use of clean-burning fuels in America, and the Campaign for Female Education.

While early attempts to woo the film star were gently rebuffed, the CFHU eventually hit a soft spot for the actor.

One CFHU staffer had a relationship with renowned movie producer and director Jake Eberts – a prior honoree and also a friend of Freeman's from their work together on *Driving Miss Daisy*.

The same staff member also is a friend of documentary film director and producer Paul Saltzman, with whom Freeman worked on *Prom Night in Mississippi* in 2009.

This information, plus the fact that the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was co-founded by Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud, and has produced medicines such as the cancer-fighting Doxil pill and Alzheimer's medication, Exelon, to name just two innovations of benefit to humanity – convinced Freeman to accept the honour, Kleinmann said.

In a statement, Freeman said he's looking forward to attending the gala.

"There is a saying: 'He who opens a school door, closes a prison.' Some of the greatest problems in our world today, from racism, to the environment, health, malnutrition and disease, are caused due to a lack of education and knowledge.

"This is why I have dedicated so much of my time to promoting education around the world, and it is why I am proud to receive the Key of Knowledge Award from Canadian Friends of The Hebrew University – an organization that celebrates learning and academic excellence."

Proceeds from the event will go toward funding the Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada (IMRIC), which conducts research into cancer and Alzheimer's disease and related brain disorders through joint research between Hebrew U and Canadian partner institutions such as McGill University, the Rick Hansen Foundation and the University of Toronto.

The Morgan Freeman Scholarship Fund will also be established by Hebrew U to help international students studying in its public health and community medicine program.

Graduates of the program go on to become "leaders and educators in their home countries on areas such as HIV, malaria and tuberculosis prevention and control, prevention and treatment of heart disease, malnutrition, and mother and child health," according to CFHU.

One such graduate, Dr. Josephine Oji ambo, is now Kenya's ambassador to the United Nations. She will also be honoured at the event. Other honourees for the evening include Saltzman; Fiona Eberts, international philanthropist and widow of Jake Eberts; Amir Amedi, a Hebrew U brain scientist working on restoring sight to the blind via technology, and Menahem Ben-Sasson, Hebrew U's president. Emceeing the evening will be Jian Ghomeshi, host of CBC's Q talk-radio program, musician and writer.

For more information about the event, visit www.cfhu.org or call 416-485-8000, ext. 112.

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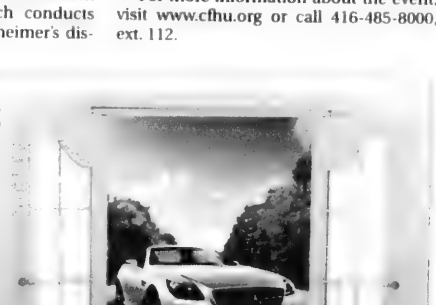

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Toronto, Israel hospitals start exchange program

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital is the latest Canadian institution to forge ties with Israel in the form of a new exchange program for medical professionals specializing in intensive care medicine.

The Zvi Eizenman Canada-Israel Exchange Program between Meir Medical Center and Mount Sinai began last weekend with the arrival of Dr. Mirit Lahav, a graduate of Tel Aviv University's Sackler School of Medicine and an anesthesiologist at Israel's Meir Medical Center.

Meir hospital is affiliated with the Sackler School.

During her one-month stay in Toronto, Lahav will join the daily intensive care unit (ICU) rounds at Mount Sinai and will attend the department's business meetings, safety and quality meetings, and research meetings, according to Moshe Eizenman, a researcher and scientist with the University Health Network, and one of the sponsors of the exchange program named in honour of his late father, who passed away in Meir's ICU.

Lahav could not be reached for comment in time for deadline.

The heads of the Meir hospital ICU department decided earlier this year that an exchange program with a major Canadian institution was a "high priority," Eizenman said.

Researcher and scientist Moshe Eizenman is one of the sponsors of the Zvi Eizenman Canada-Israel Exchange Program, named in honour of his late father.

"The aim of this program is to provide specialists in the ICU of the Meir Medical Center opportunities to interact with foreign specialists and different cultures while being exposed to different patient loads and treatment approaches," he said in a statement. "In addition to clinical exposure, the exchange program will provide opportunities for joint research projects, ICU education and simulation-teaching, and quality assurance."

Brian Fredman, chair of the department of anesthesiology, critical care and pain management at Meir hospital, said he is excited by this joint initiative.

"There is no doubt that education is the cornerstone to successful patient management," he said. "Training medical staff is a long process that requires not only time and dedication but also opportunities to see and be part of different systems and cutting-edge ideas. The exchange program provides just that."

When approached about the exchange, Mount Sinai's chief clinical officer, Dr. Toim Stewart, said he thought it was a "fantastic idea."

"We would welcome the exchange and hopefully will reciprocate in the future," Stewart added.

Lahav will also participate in simulation training sessions and spend time with Mount Sinai's critical care response team.

Meir Medical Center is one of Israel's most rapidly expanding care facilities, and is currently working on construction of a new 25,000-square-foot orthopedic pavilion.

The centre is currently roughly the size of Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre campus.

To build the new pavilion, Meir needs to raise $60 million over the next three years.

The teaching hospital, located in Kfar Saba, just north of Tel Aviv, serves nearly one million people, Arabs and Jews, each year.

Meir is known for its advances in the fields of cancer research, diabetes, geriatric care, pediatric care, head and neck surgery and orthopedic surgery.

It currently has ongoing projects with the Hospital for Sick Children and the University of Western Ontario.

Canadians are also some of the most passionate supporters and strongest donors to Meir hospital, with some $2 million raised for the centre through its Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Centre charity since 2010.

The charity will hold its annual Medal of Merit awards ceremony on April 28 at the Kehila Centre, 7026 Bathurst St., with proceeds going to support the hospital many endeavours.

For more information, visit www.meirfriends.com.

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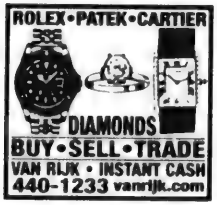

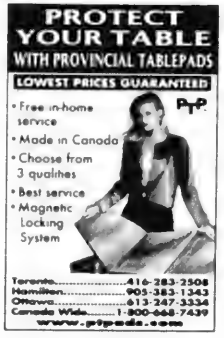

Rabbi, shul reach settlement after dismissal

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Martin Berman and Shaar Shalom Synagogue have reached a settlement of the wrongful dismissal lawsuit he launched against the Thornhill congregation in January.

Neither the rabbi nor the congregation would discuss details of the settlement.

Rabbi Berman, 63, has led the congregation since 1994. He was informed in October that the shul's board of governors and executive had decided not to renew his contract. He will remain spiritual leader of the congregation until his contract expires July 17.

Rabbi Berman had alleged wrongful dismissal and violation of his rights under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The rabbi told *The CJN* that the terms of the settlement, which was finalized outside of court last month, prevent him from discussing it, but that he would continue working full time and will be on vacation as of mid-May.

However, he will be at the shul for "a couple of celebrations" that take place on Shabbat, he added.

Shaar Shalom president Janice Shachter said the settlement was a "fair" one in terms of Ontario labour law and precedents, and that it was "roughly within" the shul's original offer.

"We're at a healing place" now, she said. "We're all very pleased that it came to such a fast conclusion."

The shul is in the process of looking for a new rabbi. "We have some good candidates that we are conducting second interviews with," Shachter said.

CELEBRATING ISRAEL: Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre nursery school students and their buddies from the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School worked together to prepare for Yom Ha'atzmaut. They read stories from Israel and made Israeli flags that they planned to use at their Yom Ha'atzamaut celebration. Pictured, from left, are Shira Rubinoff, Pascale Lederman, Hannah Kaman, Tali Elkin and Jonathan Shi.

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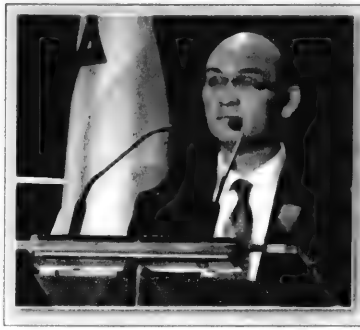

YOM HAZIKARON

Some 1,800 people attended the annual Israel Memorial Day ceremony in Toronto to honour the memory of the 23,085 soldiers who have fallen in defence of the Jewish state and the 2,493 Israeli men, women and children killed in terrorist attacks. Addressing the assembly at the April 14 ceremony organized by the consulate general of Israel for Toronto and Western Canada at Beth Tzedec Congregation, are, from left, Consul General DJ Schneeweiss; Israel Defence Forces Cpl. Aharon Laser, a Toronto-native, who read excerpts from the Order of the Day from the IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz; and Toronto chief of police William Blair, reading the prayer for the welfare of the State of Israel. *[Cara Stern photos]*

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Koffler Centre moving downtown

Continued from page 3

Hewer said the new downtown space, along with the centre's administrative offices at the Prosserman JCC, will give the Koffler "a presence all across the GTA."

The centre also runs arts classes out of the new Schwartz/Reisman Centre in Vaughan, Ont.

Proceeds from the Koffler Rocks! Event will go toward the move to the new space downtown.

Earlier this month, the Koffler Centre received a $150,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation "for all the building renovations and fit-up for our new Koffler Gallery and office spaces at Artscape Youngplace," Hewer said.

In an email, Bachman told *The CJN* he was excited to participate in the gala and help further the cause of the Jewish, arts-based non-profit.

"I had done several charity shows in Montreal a few years ago just before Chanukah to raise money for Jewish hospitals and extended old-folks care. The people were amazing, the charity event was a huge success, and I was warmly embraced both personally and professionally. It rocked!" he wrote.

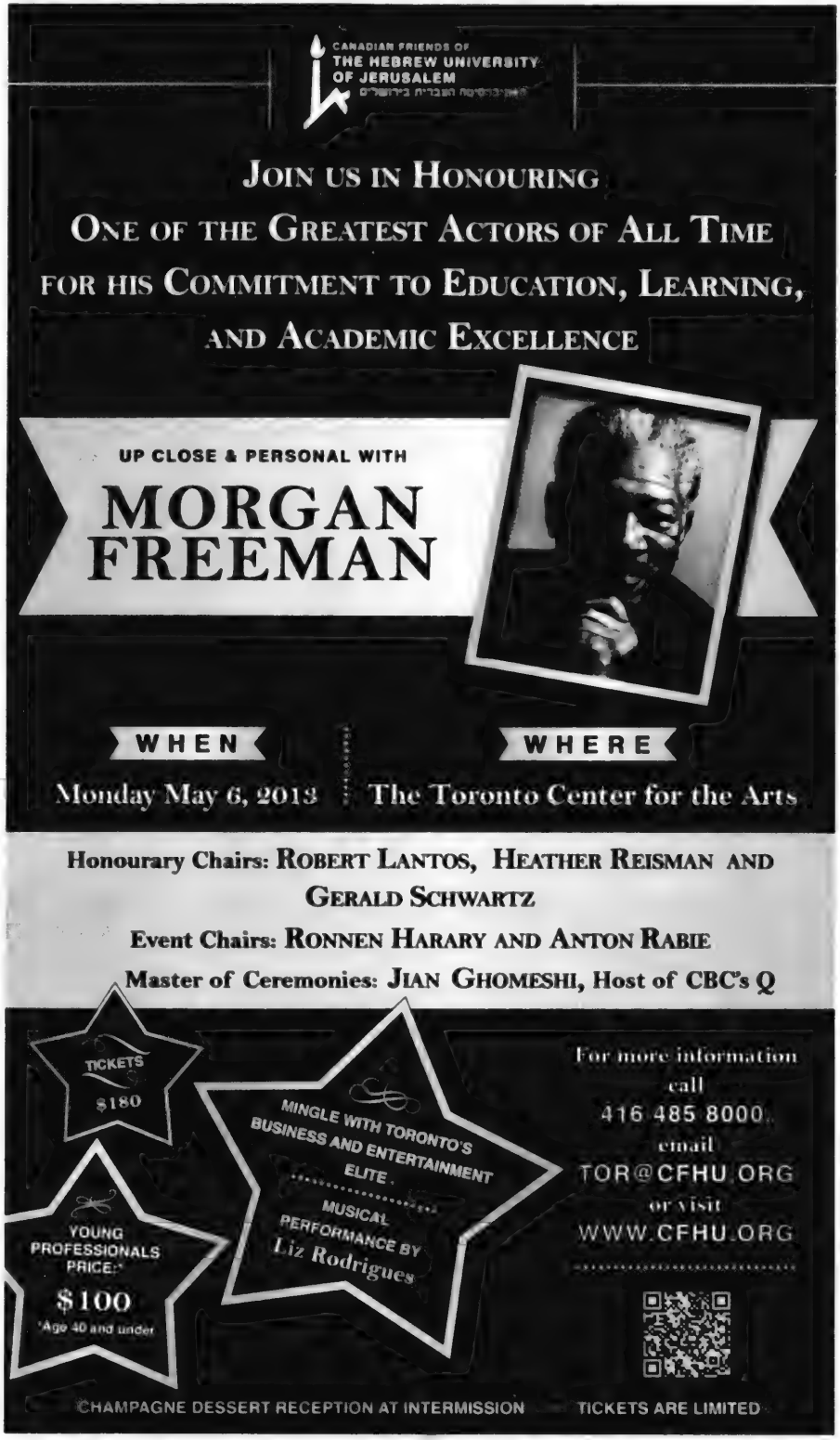
Asked what tunes the audience could expect him to play, Bachman said he planned to "celebrate the modern rock Jewish writers who have inspired me – Bob Dylan, Neil Diamond, Paul Simon, Leiber and Stoller, etc."

As a Mormon growing up in Winnipeg, Bachman said he was raised alongside Jews who positively influenced his life.

"I grew up in Winnipeg in a Jewish community. I went to the YMHA and loved it because all my friends went swimming there, and they had great dances, which I eventually performed at. The family strength and unity, respect for the elders and parents seemed very similar to me," he said.

Together with performances of live music, the Koffler Rocks! evening also includes a cocktail reception showcasing artists' works from Koffler education programs and a gourmet kosher dining experience. The event is hosted by the award-winning and bestselling author of *Born to Kvetch*, Michael Wex.

For more information, visit www.kofflerarts.org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Shuls celebrate special anniversaries

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Beth Torah turns 50, Lodzer marks 60 years

Two Toronto congregations are celebrating anniversaries on April 28.

Beth Torah Congregation is throwing a 1960s *Mad Men*-themed gala with gambling, cocktails and live music at the Park Hyatt hotel for its 50th on Sunday night.

The same evening, the Lodzer Synagogue will host a black tie-optional dinner for its 60th anniversary, with Frank Dimant, executive vice-president of B'nai Brith Canada, as MC, and featuring the Juno-nominated group Jaffa Road.

• • •

Beth Torah, an unaffiliated Conservative congregation near Dufferin Street and Lawrence Avenue West, was established in 1963 and broke ground in 1964.

Despite its location and longtime low profile, Beth Torah began to thrive under the leadership of Rabbi Yossi Sapirman, who became its youngest rabbi in August 1998. Four years ago, the shul completed an $8-million renovation and expansion.

The rabbi, who turns 45 the day of the gala, said that being "off the beaten track [geographically] is probably a metaphor for what I think shuls need to start considering – that maybe the mainstream is also the place most people leave from.

"Don't be afraid to try something new," he said.

Probably the biggest challenge for the synagogue arose when it was struggling in the early 1990s, Rabbi Sapirman said. "If not for the generosity of a few, the shul would have gone under."

Among recent innovations at the shul, small children are on the bimah during the Torah service, the rabbi and cantor greet every attendee during the Torah procession, and there is a sit-down lunch every Shabbat.

Founding member Mark Goldenberg said his biggest pleasure 50 years later is to see his children and grandchildren enjoying services at the shul.

Goldenberg credits Rabbi Sapirman for his efforts, particularly in making young children part of the service. "We weren't on the map as a shul [before]… Nobody knew Beth Torah."

Beth Torah's earliest services were held in the basement of a private home, and then in an unheated portable purchased from the Catholic Diocese of Mississauga, according to anniversary committee chair Ellen Scheinberg.

Goldenberg remembers that the 10 founding couples – young newlyweds who lived in the area – each signed a guarantee for $1,000 to the bank, "which we needed for a down payment for the land."

Rabbi Benjamin Hauer, an Orthodox rabbi, was the shul's first spiritual leader, before he moved to Montreal.

Scheinberg said the shul, which has more than 500 member families and almost 200 students at its Hebrew school, is now "very vibrant. It's growing."

• • •

The Lodzer traces its history to 1953, when it was founded as a mutual benefit society for families from Lodz, Poland. It became a synagogue only in 1981.

Rabbi Moshe Meirovich, who serves as the shul's rabbi and cantor, said the 200-family congregation, which is unaffiliated Conservative and now egalitarian, was "built on tremendous hope."

It has grown "from a place of social interaction to a place of Jewish worship, study and adult education," he said.

In recent years, more young families have joined, and a separate family service is held on the High Holidays, as well as a monthly family service. Also, on Shabbat, the rabbi is joined on the bimah by young children "to help conduct the *Musaf* service," he said.

The Lodzer's treasurer Morry Nosak said the congregation was like an extended family for him when he was growing up in the 1960s. As a child of survivors, he had no grandparents, aunts or uncles. His late father, Rafuel Nosak, was a shul founder who served as longtime gabbai.

Nosak describes the shul as "heimish and family-oriented… Even today that kind of feeling is still there."

The founders – *landsmen* from Lodz – supported each other financially, emotionally and spiritually, said Nosak, who is co-chairing the gala with his wife, Melanie Steiner.

As well, he added, even though the founders had their own financial needs, the focus of the society became supporting the State of Israel and raising funds for Israeli causes like Magen David Adom.

Now, Nosak said, the second generation "is trying to maintain the heritage from the past, and, at the same time, go forward."

Other recent changes include the rabbi "teaching and engaging the congregation" most Shabbat mornings, in lieu of a formal sermon. As a result, this year the shul instituted a study session after services, over kiddush lunch.

Other anniversary-related events include a Torah dedication by the family of founding members Izak and Regina Kozlowski the day of the gala, and a May 21 concert that will be part of Jewish music week.

Fall 2013 five-day preschool

Tots Together is a preschool program for children 21 months to 4 years, located at The Village Shul in the Toronto area.

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A special monthly message for the Baycrest community

CommunityMatters

Valuing our strong community relationships

By Garry Foster, Chair, Baycrest Board of Directors & Dr. William E. Reichman, Baycrest President and Chief Executive Officer

One of the more gratifying aspects of leading Baycrest Health Sciences is having the opportunity to meet so many members of our community on a regular basis. We are highly fortunate to be able to build ongoing relationships with clients and their families, as well as with our community at large—a dynamic group that comprises donors, students, healthcare professionals, volunteers of all ages, artists, researchers, business people and members of local Jewish congregations.

These relationships are highly valued by Baycrest, perhaps more so than by other healthcare organizations. You see, Baycrest is much more than just a bricks-and-mortar building. It's a jewel that exists because of the vision of its founders, generations of forward-looking community builders who recognized the need for a place to care for the most vulnerable older adults. And their continued involvement over the decades has helped transform Baycrest into a global leader in aging and brain health research and innovations.

We recognize the pride our community feels in this organization, and the strong connection it feels to our past and to our future. And as we continue on our journey, we are committed to ensuring ongoing opportunities for dialogue. Only by listening and responding to advice and the collective wisdom of our community can we hope to achieve greatness; we understand this, and we are actively providing the means for this sharing to take place.

OUR JEWISH COMMUNITY

Baycrest was founded by a group of women with the foresight to establish the Jewish Old Folks Home in 1918, an endeavor that has evolved into the world-class facility we know today. For nearly a century since, Baycrest has embraced its Jewish roots and traditions, and continues to meet the religious and cultural needs of residents—90 per cent of whom are Jewish—with weekly services, holiday celebrations and a unique Holocaust resource program. Staying well connected to our Jewish community is a priority, and a number of initiatives and events enable us to maintain strong relationships.

Next month, for example, Baycrest is marking Jewish Heritage Month with a number of special public art installations that reflect upon our history and our Jewish legacy as seen through the eyes of artists and our own residents.

Baycrest Foundation President Susan Sutton shares a conversation with Evelyn Burns-Weinrib, a long-time volunteer and donor.

Rabbi Dr. Geoffrey Haber, who joined us last year, has been meeting with leaders in our Jewish community, and has begun publishing a Rabbinic Reflections blog to share information with a broader online audience. Rabbi Geoff is helping to lead a number of outreach activities, including speakers' series events and a visiting cantor's program.

Members of our community were recently invited to attend our Yom Hashoah service to remember the six million who perished in the Holocaust. And on April 23, we will be joining Holocaust survivors and their families, as well as staff and volunteers, at the National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Our recently approved Strategic Plan, designed to guide Baycrest into our second century, was developed and refined after a thorough consultation process that involved nearly 700 members of our staff and our community. It was important that a strategy of this significance reflected the input of our internal and external stakeholders, ensuring we are working together on common goals and aspirations. Achieving the ambitious objectives in our plan requires a partnership with our community, one that will also require significant philanthropic support over the coming years. We know we can only be successful if our Strategic Plan resonates with our supporters, and if it aligns with their vision for our future. The plan we developed with our community's input is available on our website at **www.baycrest.org/strategicplan**.

OPINION PANELS

Strong relationships are built upon effective communications. And understanding the communication needs of our community—and, in turn, meeting those needs—is something Baycrest takes very seriously. Earlier this month, we launched an Opinion Panel to gather feedback from our clients, families and community members on a quarterly basis. These short surveys are designed to help measure our external reputation and the quality and effectiveness of our communications with you. By knowing your thoughts and perceptions, we can work to better meet your needs and forge even stronger communications in the future. The opinion panel can be accessed on our website at **www.baycrest.org/opinion**.

MEDIA UPDATES

The very column you are reading is another example of how we are reaching out to our community to share information on a regular basis. With a large readership in our Jewish community, *Canadian Jewish News* is an ideal forum for keeping you informed about happenings at Baycrest. But we're happy to note that Baycrest is in the media all the time. Our experts are routinely called upon for comment in the areas of aging and brain health, and our research, innovations and superior level of care attract considerable interest from reporters—locally, nationally and internationally.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Engagement is about more than just one-way communication. It's about sharing. And one of the best ways of sharing ideas, comments, photos, video and online links is through social media. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn have allowed us to engage with audiences on a new level, and to provide another opportunity for our community to communicate directly with us—and with each other—in a way that is simple, accessible and transparent. All of our social media sites may be accessed from the home page of our website.

We also encourage you to contact us directly with questions or comments by emailing us at **community@baycrest.org**.

Through ongoing dialogue with you, our community, we are able to ensure Baycrest remains a jewel of which we can all be proud. On behalf of Baycrest, thank you for your continued support.

ICRF honours women of action

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

The 12th annual Women of Action luncheon raised more than $400,000 for the Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF).

Some 400 guests attended the luncheon at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto on April 9 to pay tribute to four women who have made a difference though their achievements in business and medicine and their contribution to the community.

Lynda Reeves, founder and publisher of the *Canadian House & Home* magazine, received the inaugural Carole Tanenbaum Women of Action Business Award for her contribution to the business community.

For the past six years, Reeves, together with her team, have designed and decorated the grand-prize show house for the fall lottery in support of the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation, helping to raise more than $40 million for the cause.

Tanenbaum, the creator of the Carole Tanenbaum Vintage Collection and a longtime supporter of the ICRF, said that as a past Woman of Action business honoree "it is gratifying to continue to award outstanding women in business for their accomplishments and success," adding that she hopes the award will inspire "all women to pursue their goals and follow their dreams."

Honoree Jill Reitman, a community leader, received the Vicki Campbell "VAST" Community Award. The VAST award was established in 2012 to honour the late Campbell, who devoted much of her life to enhancing the lives of people in Toronto, Israel, and around the world. Campbell was an ICRF Women of Action honoree in 2009.

Reitman thanked the ICRF for giving her the "opportunity to serve as a role model for others and to inspire the next generation to action. I thank them for the opportunity to pay tribute to an inspiring and wonderful friend of mine – Vicki Campbell."

Honoree Emmanuelle Gattuso is a breast cancer survivor who became an advocate for breast cancer patients. Along with her husband, Allan Slaight, Gattuso has raised $25 million to establish the Gattuso Rapid Diagnostic Centre at the Princess Margaret Centre, which is a model for other cancer centres in Canada and beyond.

From left, Jill Reitman, Emmanuelle Gattuso, Dr. Meredith Irwin and Lynda Reeves, were honoured at the Israel Cancer Research Fund's Women of Action luncheon. [*Susan Minuk photo*]

Honoree Dr. Meredith Irwin is a clinician-scientist who has discovered several novel functions of genes that belong to the "p53" family. Her studies are aimed at unravelling the mystery of how genes are involved in pathways that lead to the development of cancer, and how they determine the sensitivity of cancer cells to therapies.

"We are delighted to celebrate four deserving women as this year's Women of Action for their contribution to our community," said ICRF president Bryna Goldberg. "We are honoured that they have chosen to help ICRF in our important mission of raising funds to support cancer scientists working in universities and cancer labs throughout Israel."

Since its inception in 2002, Women of Action has funded 40 Israeli scientists and raised more than $3 million for ICRF.

Luncheon guest Elaine Todres, a cancer survivor, said that if we haven't been touched by cancer directly, then we have been touched through our families. She added that it's "extremely important for there to be a wide societal understanding of the need for research and changes in clinical care and that's why I am here."

The Women of Action presenting sponsor was RBC, and the event co-chairs were Debra Campbell and Wendy Kady.

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Az got vil shtrofn an apikoyres git er im a frum vayb

When God wants to punish an unbeliever, He gives him a pious wife

אין אונדזער קולטור, איידער מען האָט תענות צו קינדער, אַרבעט, אַדער געזונט, האָט מען תענות צו גאָט.
אונדזערע שפּריכווערטער זײַנען ריין, אָנגעלאָדן, פֿרוכטבאַר מיט תענות צום אייבערשטער. אָט האָט איר...

גאָט היט אָפּ די נאַראָנים – ווער נאָך !

Got hit op di naronim – ver nokh?
Got protects fool – who else would?

דײַן מזל גאָט, וואָס דו ווינסט אַזוי הויך; אַניט וואָלט מען דיר די פֿענצטער אויסגעוואָרפֿן.

Dayn mazl, Got vos du voynst azoy hoykh; anit volt men dir di fentster oysgeshlogn.
You're lucky, God, that you live so high; otherwise people would smash your windows out.

אַתה בחרתנו מכל העמים – וואָס האָסטו געוואָלט האָבן פֿון ייד ?

Ato bohartonu mikol hoamim –vost hostu gevolt fun yidn?
Thou hast chosen us from among the nations – why did you have to pick on the Jews?

גאָט זיצט אויבן און באַראָבט אונטן.

Got zits oybn un bagrobt untn.
God sits on high and buries us down below.

גאָט לעבט און מיר מוטשען זיך !

Got lebt un mir mutshn zikh!
God lives and we suffer!

אַ גאָט האבן מיר – אַזאַ יאָר אויף אונדז און אַ פֿאָלק האָט ער – אַזאַ יאָר אויף אים !

A got hobn mir –aza yor oyf undz un a folk hot er – aza yor oyf im!
A God we have – woe to us; and a people He has –woe to Him!

שיינע ליינער . אויב איר ווילט זיך באקענט מאכן מיט פער יידישע ספרים
וועלטער רעקאמענדיר איך שוועלי קומאָווס צוויי בענד ...
For a rich introduction to Yiddish Folk sayings I recommend Shirley Kumove's
Words Like Arrows – University of Toronto Press and
More words – More Arrows – Wayne State University Press

אויב איר האָט נעראָנקען חתנן אונדזער וויקל שרייבט דורך פאָסט
אַדער בליץ- פאָסט : info@cjnews.com

An eyewitness look at a fascinating age

One of the great discoveries of the last century and a half occurred in 1887 at the Egyptian site of Tell el Amarna, which bore the ancient name of Akhetaton. It was the newly built capital city of the heretic pharaoh, Akhenaten, or Amenhotep IV, whose reign was known as the Amarna Age. It was also a revolutionary period, especially in religion and art, a time when Akhenaten briefly attempted to introduce a quasi-monotheistic faith to Egypt.

Fortunately for historians and archeologists, the new capital did not survive the reign of Akhenaten. As a result, the correspondence of the heretic pharaoh was buried in his abandoned capital, giving future generations an eyewitness account into this fascinating age.

It was in 1887 that tablets from Amarna started appearing in the antiquities market. Four years later, the great English Egyptologist, Matthew William Flinders Petrie excavated the site and discovered the archive as well as a large number of documents.

What was most significant about these tablets was the insight they provided into an amazing period of history. They were dated to the mid 14th century BCE, a period that the renowned American Egyptologist James Henry Breasted, founder of the University of Chicago's famed Oriental Institute, called the first international age. The tablets were written using the cuneiform script, primarily in the Akkadian language of Mesoptamia, the diplomatic *lingua franca* of the day.

Most of the well-known Near Eastern civilizations are mentioned in the tablets, including the Babylonians and the Hittites, (who were the subject of my last column). A number of rulers

Past Forward

Alex Gropper

of petty kingdoms in Canaan are mentioned as well, such as those of the city states of Shechem, Jerusalem and Byblos, in what is now Lebanon.

But it was the mention of a group called the Habiru that caught the attention of biblical scholars. The word sounded tantalizingly like "Hebrew" and started a debate that is still going on today.

These Habiru are portrayed as landless wanderers who are fugitives living outside of the settled communities in Canaan. The term first appears in the early second millennium BCE. Characteristically, the Habiru have many of the same qualities as the Hebrews, but the consensus is that the terms were not synonymous.

What adds to the fascination of both the Amarna letters and the mention of the Habiru in the texts is that these events occur roughly on the eve of the Exodus. They give us a first-hand account of the Land of Israel just before the arrival of the Israelites. It shows us a land where the grip of Pharaoh's rule is weakening and the rulers are divided. This is a situation that is begging to be exploited, which is exactly what Israel would do upon its arrival there.

Yet, there are scholars who doubt that arrival. Regardless of scholarly consensus, however, it is an occasion that we have celebrated for many generations. For those who have faith and believe, it is an event whose existence is without doubt.

You and your Jewish name, Pt. 1

Abraham, Itzik, Yarkon.

Sarah, Becky, Revital, Leora.

Your Jewish name says a great deal about you. It hints at when and where you were born, how traditional your parents were when they chose your name, your family's roots – and according to Jewish tradition, it reveals aspects of your personality.

"The name of a person describes his or her essence," explains Cantor Mark Kirshblum. "Just as God empowered Adam when He assigned him the first independent human act, the task of naming the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky and every living thing... A name can be a portent for the future or a wish that the person live up to the potential expressed in the meaning of the name. It is important, therefore, to give much thought to a child's *shem kodesh*, sacred or Hebrew name." **[http://bit.ly/jname1]**

The connection between a name and one's soul has deep kabbalistic roots. Rabbi Paysach Krohn points out that the Hebrew word for "soul" – neshamah – is spelled with the letters *nun, shin, mem* and *hei*. The Hebrew word for "name," *shem* – spelled *shin, mem* – is contained within the word neshamah, indicating the strong connection between one's name and one's soul, or essence. **[http://bit.ly/jname8]**

Jewish tradition has always placed a higher value on someone's first name than on the family name. Only the first name and father's name are used when being called up to the Torah. Similarly, it is a person's first name and nicknames that are crucial to the validity of the divorce document, the *get*. **[http://bit.ly/jname2]**

A given name can yield vital clues when researching your family tree. For example, if you are trying to guess what Great-Aunt Fannie's Jewish name was in Europe, the Given Names Data Base database

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

suggests it might have been:

Franya, Frumka, Vromot (in Poland);

Feyge, Foygl, Froma (in Hungary);

Fanni, Freydele, Fanya (in Galicia). **[http://bit.ly/jname4]**

And if you have a question about the origin of a Sephardi name, you can join the Sefard Forum Email Discussion List. **[http://bit.ly/jname11]**

Your Jewish name is yours for life, and tradition rarely allows it to be changed. One exception is in the case of serious illness. Rabbi Simkha Weintraub quotes the Talmud that says that one of the things that "may cause an evil decree passed on a person to be cancelled [is a] change of name." A man who is ill may be given an additional name such as Raphael (God heals) while a woman may be named Brachah (blessing.) **[http://bit.ly/jname6]**

Finally, a story via Rabbi Berel Wein about a brit milah that a friend of his attended. When the rabbi asked the father what he was going to name the newborn boy, the father responded:

"Avraham, Yitzchok, Yakov, David, Shlomo, Yosef."

The rabbi was astounded. "Why such a string of names?"

"Rabbi, I am a poor man so the child won't have much of an inheritance... If he resembles my wife's side of the family, he probably won't be that smart. And if he looks like my side of the family, he is not going to be too handsome, either. So, I decided, let him at least have a good name!" **[http://bit.ly/jname7]**

Next time, help finding that perfect name.

Highway@rogers.com

What character trait are you working on?

Rabbi Michael Skobac

As a young American Jew, Sara Riger didn't find that Judaism resonated with her spiritual aspirations. Like many others, she travelled to India and was drawn to Hinduism. After returning home and completing university, she spent the next 15 years living at an ashram teaching Vedanta philosophy and meditation.

That wasn't the final stop on her spiritual journey. Today, she lives in Jerusalem and is a best-selling author and teacher of Jewish spirituality. In a recent interview, Rigler was asked what was lacking in the Judaism of her youth. She said that Judaism was presented to her as a culture, heritage and identity, but not as a path to personal growth.

When we observe a child develop during the first decade of their life, we're witness to incredible changes and maturation. There's virtually nothing that a newborn has in common with an adolescent. The same seismic changes occur over the next 10 years as well from little kid to young adult almost ready for marriage. But what real growth takes place between 20 and 30 and in succeeding decades? There may be more grey hair and a larger waistline, but is there real personal development?

Sadly, Rigler never saw in Judaism any guidance on how to become someone with more patience and inner peace. She never understood how the Judaism she was raised in helped nurture a kinder and more generous nature. She didn't see a technology for personal transformation. She was fortunate at least to have discovered this core part of Judaism later in life.

The midrash actually teaches

Rabbinic Reflections

that the Torah and its practices were given for no other reason than to refine our characters (Leviticus Rabbah 13:3). Along these lines, the Gaon of Vilna wrote, "For a person is alive only in order to break a [negative] character trait that he has not broken until now. Therefore, one should always strengthen one's self, for if he does not strengthen himself, why is he alive?"

The Torah commands us to count the 49 days between the start of Passover and Shavuot, when the Almighty revealed the Torah to us at Mount Sinai (Leviticus 23:15-21). Our sages teach that these are special days of both anticipation and preparation. We "count down" in excitement toward the great day and make each day count by working on perfecting our character traits and actualizing our potential. It's a widespread custom to study one chapter each week from Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) that focuses on personal growth.

The Torah directs us to follow the ways of God (Deuteronomy 28:9). Kabbalistic literature refers to 10 *sefirot*, ways in which God relates to the world. Some people have the practice of working each week on another one of these attributes with a regimen of study, meditation and exercises. For example, during the first of the seven weeks, people may focus on various aspects of the trait of chesed (kindness). The idea of dedicating a period of time to working on our character traits is also a central aspect of Mussar practice that has become increasing popular in recent years.

Rabbi Michael Skobac is director of education and counselling at Jews for Judaism.

Holiness is right next door

Within our upcoming Torah portions is a sentence that has generated a tremendous amount of interpretation. Leviticus 19:18 states that every person should "love your neighbour as yourself." It seems like a simple statement, and yet there is so much subjectivity involved that one could argue it is meaningless.

For instance, do I love in any measurable form? What is an expression of love for me may not be an expression of love for anyone else. Also, who constitutes my neighbour? Is it someone who lives in my community? Is it my fellow Jew? Is it gender specific? All of these questions arise without even beginning to address how I love myself and whether I can extend that love to anyone else?

As with any other commandment in the Torah, there are varying opinions among commentators and much debate around this verse. It appears within the "Holiness Code," the portion of the Torah that describes how we can elevate ourselves toward holiness. Certainly we would want to pinpoint all the details that could help us elevate ourselves.

One of the approaches to this verse is expressed by the sage Rabbi Akiva, who taught us that the Torah equates your life with the life of your neighbor, but it doesn't prioritize your neighbour's life over your own. In other words, your love for your neighbour should not exceed your personal commitment to yourself. There is no model for martyrdom, but rather a model of self-appreciation that extends

Midrashic Moments

Rachael Turkienicz

toward those around us.

Within the Talmud, Rashi presents an interesting interpretation of identifying who would qualify as "your neighbour". According to Rashi, this neighbour is none other than God. This interpretation is additive to the literal. In other words, the Torah verse not only refers to our human neighbours, but also to our Divine Neighbour. The example given is that just as we would not want God to ignore our requests and demands, so we should not ignore God's requests and demands.

This interpretation certainly raises the bar of achieving holiness. It's difficult enough to treat everyone around us with the respect and honour we give ourselves, but to now extend that to God creates a layer of spiritual complexity that's challenging at best. It means I must keep God in my thoughts at all times. It means I must respect everything in this world as belonging to God the way I would want my belongings to be respected by others. It means everyone I meet is to be treated honourably as I would want anyone meeting my children to treat them. It puts God at the core of everything and all my relationships.

Rashi has taken the concept of holiness and introduced into it the aspect of God. Now, part of holiness involves my ability to view God as both a transcendent unknowing Being as well as my closest neighbour.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

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What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: April 22 is the deadline for the issue of May 2. April 29 is the deadline for the issue of May 9. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 18

ETGAR KERET

Author and director **Etgar Keret** is celebrated all day by the Centre for Jewish Studies, U of T. www.cjs.utoronto.ca/etgarkeret or 416-978-1624.

CAREERS WORKSHOP

Mount Sinai Hospital Auxiliary sponsors a workshop on caring for people with Alzheimer's, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., . $150. 416-586-4800, ext. 8282, or agarda@mtsinai.on.ca.

LONERS IN THE TANACH

Mitch Parker teaches "Loners and Outsiders in the Tanach," starting tonight, 7:15 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. RSVP 416-789-7400.

RAISING A MENSCH

Doctor of education **Audrey Huberman** discusses "The Ten Commandments of Raising a Mensch," 7 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Friday, April 19

ORAYNU SHABBAT

Stuart Schoenfeld discusses "The Case for Israeli-Palestinian Environmental Co-operation," 7:30 p.m., Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 18 Wynford Dr.

Saturday, April 20

'A LIGHT UNTO THE NATIONS'

Avrum Rosensweig discusses "The Jewish People: A Light Unto the Nations," Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 9 a.m.

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom, a Conservative congregation, meets in Oakville, 10 a.m. www.bnaishalom.ca; 905-901-9889.

YOM HA'ATZMAUT

Temple Sinai celebrates Yom Ha'atzmaut with Israeli food, music, dance and consul general, **DJ Schneeweiss**, 7 p.m. $28/$32. 416-487-3281.

Sunday, April 21

ENABLING THE DISABLED

Doctors Against Racism and Antisemitism present a conference on enabling the disabled, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Mt. Sinai Hospital. Register at www.daradocs.org.

RAV SOLOVEITCHIK

Tribute to **Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik,** marks his 20th yahrzeit, Shaarei Shomayim, 8 p.m. info@torontotorah.com; 647-234-7299.

YOM HA'ATZMAUT FUN

Beth David Synagogue holds a Maccabiah with games and dinner, 4-6 p.m. $10. Register at www.bethdavid.com.

THE NATURAL BIBLE

Baruch Sienna discusses his iBook, *The Natural Bible*, Congregation Darchei Noam, 7:30 p.m.

FIGHTING CITY HALL

United Jewish People's Order hosts a panel on strategies to fight city hall, 7 p.m., Winchevsky Centre.

WARSAW GHETTO MEMORIAL

The Workmen's Circle holds a program for the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, 2 p.m., 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

Continued on page 25

DAY CENTRE FOR SENIORS

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MORE THAN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE:
MEDIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Robert (Bob) Slater on Israel and the Media

Friday, May 3 and Shabbat, May 4

Friday, May 3 Shabbat Dinner and Presentation

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:30 PM Dinner and lecture follow

1948-1967: Israel as David, the Arabs as Goliath

Shabbat, May 4 Pulpit Address

1967-present: Israel as Goliath, the Arabs as David

Shabbat, May 4 Lunch and lecture following Services

My Personal Story as a Foreign Correspondent in Israel through Peace and War

May 4 *Minhah* 7:30 PM, *Seudah Shlisheet*

Overview, Questions and Answers

Robert (Bob) Slater is Editorial Consultant to The Jerusalem Post *and a columnist for the* Jerusalem Report. *A New York native, he was a correspondent for* Time Magazine *in Israel from 1976 to 1996. For several years he represented the foreign press in its dealings with Israel's government and the Israel Defense Forces*

Dinner and lunch by advance registration only. Cost: $36 Adults; $18 Children (6-14). To register, please contact Avital at 416-781-3511 or info@beth-tzedec.org by Tuesday, April 30.

Beth Tzedec Congregation
1700 Bathurst Street Toronto, ON
Tel 416-781-3511 Email info@beth-tzedec.org
www.beth-tzedec.org

בית צדק
Beth Tzedec Congregation

Continued from page 24

MUSICALE
Club Beersheba, Na'amat Canada holds a musical program, Bernard Betel Centre, 1:30 p.m. $18 at door. 416-636-5425.

WOMEN'S DAY OF LEARNING
Kehillat Shaarei Torah holds its Women's Day of Learning with **Sara Horowitz, Dvora Sussman, Esther Friedman.** $25 in advance. To register: womenslearning2013@gmail.com or 416-229-2600, ext. 5.

TAZPIT HEAD
Amotz Eyal, head of Israel's only non-profit news agency, at Beth Tikvah, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, April 22

'CONSTABLE AND TURNER'
Elizabeth Legge discusses "Constable and Turner," Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. 416-449-3880.

WITCHCRAFT & THE OCCULT
Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Witchcraft, Superstition and the Occult," 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah. 416-789-0020; toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Tuesday, April 23

BINGO!
Beth David Sisterhood holds a bingo night, 8 p.m. $5.

STATE OF WONDER
Heather Kassel reviews *State of Wonder* by **Ann Patchett,** 8 p.m., Adath Israel. $10/$15.

GERSHWIN AND MORE
Jordan Klapman discusses and performs songs by American Jewish composers, Beth Tikvah. Lunch at 12:15; program at 12:45. Must RSVP 416-221-3433, ext. 352; helen@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

Wednesday, April 24

JEWS IN POLAND & RUSSIA
The Jewish Genealogical Society and Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation present **Prof. Antony Polonsky** on "The Jews in Poland and Russia," 7:30 p.m., North York Central Library.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM
Rabbi Michael Skobac presents a counter-missionary survival seminar for deaf Jews, "Cross-Examining Christian Missionary Claims," 8 p.m., Toronto Zionist Council, 788 Marlee Ave. 416-789-0020; toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, April 25

ETGAR KERET REVIEWED
Harriett Morris reviews *Suddenly a Knock on the Door,* by **Etgar Keret,** Temple Emanu-El. Dessert, 1 p.m.; review, 1:30 p.m.

OTHER NEWS

KIDS BASEBALL LEAGUE
Clanton Park Shul Youth Baseball League for boys and girls (separate leagues)from SK to Grade 6 begins May 5. www.ClantonPark.com/baseball.

BALLROOM DANCING
Latin/Ballroom dance lessons begin April 28, 1:30 and 2:45 p.m., Stashover-Slipia Congregation, 11 Sultana Ave. First class free. Email: romancing.the.dance@gmail.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness, meditation. Starts April 27, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m.; April 25, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers +65: A 6-session group for men and women over 65 who have recently lost a partner or spouse, starts April 18, 1 p.m.

Younger Widows/Widowers: A 6-session group for people under 60 who have recently lost a spouse, starts April 23, 7:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Function in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals about higher-order thinking skills and children, April 24, 7 p.m.

Adult Children Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts April 30, 7:30 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS
Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer,** JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333, or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Hadar Senior Citizens Social Club is looking for new members. The club meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet A. Williams Community Centre. Call **Phyllis,** 905-889-5722.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club. 416-256-1892.

Circle of Care. Support group for caregivers over 55 caring for a spouse with dementia or disability, starts April 29, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call 905-738-1128, ext. 323, or 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

Association for Jewish Seniors. "Tax Tips for Seniors," April 18, Shaarei Shomayim. RSVP 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie,** 416-395-7881. Bingo, April 24, 12:30 p.m.; Crawford Lake, May 14, Casino Rama, May 15; Sunday dance, April 21, 7 p.m.; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre. 416-225-2112. April 23, **Gerald Zledenberg** discusses "Trial of Reszo Kastner in 1953," 10 a.m.; April 25, **Judy Weiss** discusses "Aging Gracefully," 1:30 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starts May. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Osnat Lippa presents "Influential Jewish Artists and Their Art," April 23, 30, $15.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Rabbi Jay Kelman discusses what ancient and modern texts say about current ethical challenges, April 23, 7:30 p.m., ext. 4235.

April 22, *Little Jerusalem* is shown, 1 p.m..

Yiddish conversation Mondays 1:30 p.m.; Folk dance, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; Recorder class, Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.; Current events, Thursdays, 12:45 p.m.; Duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; Shalom Singers are looking for new members, Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Rabbi Wayne Allen holds a pre-Shavuot Torah Roll program, May 13, 10 a.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Young Frankenstein is presented by the Alexander Showcase Theatre and the Al Green Theatre, to April 21. 416-324-1259.

Benjamin Hackman teaches "The Art and Craft of Poetry," starting April 18, 7-9 p.m., and "The Art and Craft of Short Fiction," starting April 21, 6:45-8:45 p.m. Ext. 154.

Celebrate Israel. Cooking class, April 18, 6 p.m.; Israeli movie night (*Ha'lehaka)* and sing-along, April 20, 7:30 p.m.; Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration for families, April 21, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Ext. 326.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers. April 22, "Political Science," 7 p.m.

Adult and children swim classes start April 20. Call ext. 530.

MNJCC Klezmer Ensemble led by **Eric Stein,** Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. Women's Chorus with **Gillian Steyck,** Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Daytime choir, Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

The exhibit *Nurture: Stories of New Midlife Mothers* is in the gallery until April 21.

Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles,** April 24, 7:30 p.m.

YiddishTog. A day of Yiddish-language celebration April 28, starts at 11 a.m. Evening concert with **Lenka Lichtenberg.**

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. April 18, 5-10 p.m., Israeli sports; April 19, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Israeli market.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

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To my dear friend,

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a wonderful human being, who was very philanthropic and just a beautiful person.

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Ed and Sylvia Fisch & Family

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Joan Lepofsky	Mar 29/13	15 St. Margarets Drive
Shirley Zarnett	Mar 30/13	2 Covington Road
Henry Wise	Mar 29/13	111 Avenue Rd.
Norma Fromer	Mar 30/13	77 Dunfield Ave.
Ben Liederman	Mar 30/13	1555 Finch Ave.E.
Irene Ehrenfeld	Apr 2/13	65 Skymark Drive
Miky Traubici	Apr 3/13	22 Shallmar Blvd.
Joan Alspector	Mar 30/13	55 The Esplanade
Peter Gotfrit	Apr 1/13	784 Centre Street
Pearl Wiseman	Apr 1/13	355 St.Clair Ave.W.
Ruth Warsh	Mar 31/13	355 St. Clair Ave.W.
Helen Weingarten	Apr 2/13	16 Challister Court
Sharon Kirsh	Apr 2/13	118 Wembley Rd.
Louis Goodman	Apr 4/13	3705 Bathurst St.
Martin Rabinovitch	Apr 4/13	30 Donwoods Drive
Norma Schechter	Apr 5/13	6200 Bathurst Street
Bessie Grossman	Apr 5/13	128 Ava Road
Ida Goldberg	Apr 5/13	22 Turner Road
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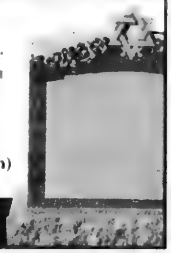

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Anti-Israel boycott draws little interest

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

An attempted boycott of a Halifax health food store that carries Israeli SodaStream products has mostly fizzled, according to Mark David, the Atlantic region consultant for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

Only about a dozen middle-aged protesters appeared at Planet Organic April 7 to urge a boycott of SodaStream products. They were shooed away from the store by management, and their efforts appear to have had no impact on sales, he said.

Instead, David and CIJA's "Buycott Israel" initiative is urging consumers to purchase SodaStream products and inform store management of their shopping decision, he added.

SodaStream is an Israeli company that sells soda-making gas cylinders that allow consumers to make their own carbonated beverages. One of the firm's principal Israeli production facilities is in Mishor Adumim, which protesters say is on occupied Palestinian land.

Marta Mikita-Wilson, president and CEO of SodaStream's Canadian operation, said the company has been the subject of boycott attempts at times over the past few years, but very little has come of it.

Sales have not been adversely affected, and the publicity has led some consumers, who were unaware of the company, to take a closer look at its products, she said.

"It's almost a reverse effect," she added. "You put us in the light of the media and people say what's this?"

They find out that "it's a huge wellness product" that's good for the environment, reduces pollution created by plastic bottles and is beneficial to consumers.

"People sell more after they create awareness," she added.

Mikita-Wilson, who hails from Poland, said protesters' concerns are unfounded. "When we built the factory, there was as of yet no agreement there would be a Palestinian state there," she said. "It's close to the border and... it's not sure how it's been established about what territory belongs to who."

She said in postwar Europe, the borders of Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia all moved, but "nobody boycotted over borders."

Mikita-Wilson said the company employs hundreds of Palestinians, about half its workforce.

"SodaStream has been targeted around the world. Somebody feels that we as a company don't recognize Palestinian workmanship. That's not true. We create the work for them. We give them a chance to make a decent living."

She pointed to a promotional video released by the company – "Building Bridges, not Walls" – which touts its positive impact on Palestinians. It provides them with jobs, respects their religious practices, brings them into the same workplace with Druze and Israelis, including those of Russian and Ethiopian backgrounds, pays them far more than the prevailing wage in the West Bank, and does so at the cost of profits.

Company CEO Daniel Birnbaum said in the video that the location of the factory would make more economic sense if it were closer to suppliers, technicians and the country's port.

David said advocates of the BDS movement have in the past attempted to boycott Halifax's Mountain Equipment Co-op store, which also carried Israeli products, but "we don't usually see this kind of boycott here."

David added that he purchased SodaStream merchandise at Planet Organic and "we made sure that Planet Organic was thanked for carrying Israeli products."

At *The CJN*'s press time, Planet Organic had not responded to a request for an interview.

Music legend Randy Bachman set for KOFFLER ROCKS!

Founder of the Guess Who and BTO to Headline Fundraiser

The Koffler Centre of the Arts, Canada's only contemporary, multidisciplinary, cutting-edge Jewish cultural institution, is going rock 'n' roll for its annual fundraising gala this year.

KOFFLER ROCKS! on May 2, 2013 at the Artscape Wychwood Barns will be a glorious gala evening of pop, rock, jazz, and R&B with a Jewish spin, hosted by the award-winning and bestselling author of *Born to Kvetch*, Michael Wex.

The evening will feature an elegant dinner reception showcasing artists' works from Koffler education programs and performances of live music from Canadian music superstars. Guests will also have the opportunity to bid on a Randy Bachman-autographed electric guitar.

Music legend Randy Bachman – founder and former band member of the Guess Who and Bachman Turner Overdrive, and now the host of the wildly popular CBC Radio program Vinyl Tap – will headline the live performance, celebrating the modern rock Jewish writers who have inspired him, from Bob Dylan to Neil Diamond, Paul Simon to Leiber + Stoller. Joining Bachman on stage will be Canadian indie and alt-country stars The Sadies, and two-time Grammy Award-winning and 2013 Juno Award-nominated R&B singer/songwriter Melanie Fiona. Together for the first time for one night only, the musicians will perform their own original songs and others from a uniquely Jewish perspective.

Randy Bachman

Proceeds from KOFFLER ROCKS! will benefit the many exhibitions, programs and educational activities of the Koffler Centre of the Arts. A registered not-for-profit and agency of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Koffler relies on the Gala each year to provide a significant portion of its operating funds.

This year is especially important for the Koffler, as its 4-year nomadic program of 'Off-Site' gallery exhibitions will come to an end. In fall 2013, the Koffler will open a new 4,600 square foot Koffler Gallery and office space at Artscape Youngplace – in the historic and newly renovated Beaux-Arts building on Shaw Street just north of Queen St. West – in the heart of Toronto's art and design district. The new downtown space will give the Koffler a presence across the GTA, with a downtown Koffler Gallery, classes and programs at the Prosserman JCC at Bathurst and Sheppard, and visual arts classes for families at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre in Vaughan. The centre will also continue to program events – such as the annual Toronto Jewish Literary Festival and Koffler Chamber Orchestra concerts – at other locations across the city.

To support the Koffler, purchase tickets for KOFFLER ROCKS! and for more information, go to www.kofflerarts.org or call 416-638-1881 x4022. General admission tickets start at $100.

UJA Federation's Shabbat Itanu promotes an inclusive community

By Daniel Koren

Itanu Toronto – UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's inclusion initiative – was born from the belief that a community should always welcome and include people with special needs. For several years, Itanu Toronto has organized a yearly, community-wide event known as Shabbat Itanu to draw attention to this issue. This year, 26 synagogues across the Greater Toronto Area are participating to help in shaping an inclusive Jewish community, the highest number the event has seen thus far.

"Through Shabbat Itanu, we encourage synagogues to focus on, and reach out to, people with special needs in our community," says Chair of this year's program, Daniel Schild. "Our idea is to attract as many congregations as possible to spread this message."

This year's Itanu Committee, which is comprised entirely of volunteers, has worked diligently to raise awareness throughout the community.

"Regardless of your beliefs or affiliations, everyone benefits from an inclusive community," Schild adds. "People with mobility issues, seniors in particular, need help attending synagogue. Most of them want to continue to live a Jewish life, and just because it's harder for them to, doesn't mean they shouldn't be able to."

This year's Shabbat Itanu will take place on Friday April 19th to Saturday, April 20th. The event hopes to attract larger audiences to a regular Shabbat service, providing rabbis and shul leaders the chance to create specific programming that highlights the importance of inclusion in our community.

Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto (BAYT) will feature a sermon directed by Rabbi Lavi Greenspan, a blind young rabbi who will share his moving journey with the congregation. "When BAYT decided to participate in Shabbat Itanu, we realized we had very capable partner agencies, such as Dani, Our Way, Reena and Yachad, which provide services to special needs members," says BAYT's Rabbi Daniel Korobkin. "What will result, we hope, will be a Shabbat where we all pray, sing and study together."

Shaarei Shomayim has partnered with Camp Aim, a therapeutic camp for children of all abilities, for their Shabbat Itanu program, and will feature guest speaker Ellen Schwartz, author, parent of a child with special needs, and co-director of Jacob's Ladder. "This is Shaarei Shomayim's third year participating in Shabbat Itanu," proclaims Rabbi Chaim Strauchler. "It's something our children look forward to. They love sharing Shabbat with the camp kids, and it's been a beautiful partnership with our synagogue."

Participating synagogues for this year's Shabbat Itanu include: Annex Shul, the BAYT, Beth David Bnai Israel Beth Am, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda, Beth Haminyan, Beth Sholom, Beth Tikvah, Beth Tzedec, City Shul, Darchei Noam, First Narayever Synagogue, Holy Blossom, Lodzer Centre Congregation, Makom Creative Downtown Judaism, Neshama, Or Hadash, Pride of Israel, Shaarei Beth El, Shaarei Shomayim, Temmy Latner Forest Hill Jewish Centre, Temple Emanuel, Temple Har Zion, Temple Kol Ami, Temple Sinai, Temple Shalom and The Village Shul.

For more information, please contact rgofine@ujafed.org or 416.631.5832

Montreal Orthodox shul hires first female clergy

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A woman will soon join the clergy of the Orthodox-practising Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, which has become the first synagogue to announce that it's hiring a graduate from the inaugural class of a new yeshiva that ordains women.

Rachel Kohl Finegold, 32, who presently serves a Chicago synagogue, will become director of education and spiritual enrichment at the synagogue effective Aug. 1. Among her duties will be speaking "periodically" from the pulpit, leading Torah text classes and visiting the sick and elderly, as well as developing programs for youth and young families.

Rachel Kohl Finegold

Finegold is one of three women slated to graduate in June from Yeshivat Maharat in the Bronx, N.Y., which was founded in 2009 as the first institution to train Orthodox women as spiritual leaders and halachic authorities. Its founder, Rabbi Avi Weiss, is a leading figure in modern Orthdoxy and is also the founder and president of the modern Orthodox Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School.

"Rachel's appointment breaks exciting new ground for our congregation," Shaar Hashomayim's Rabbi Adam Scheier and president Joseph Paperman said in a newsletter to congregants. "It is consistent with the evolution of modern Orthodoxy."

Yeshivat Maharat's four-year program includes Torah and Talmud study, halachic decision-making, pastoral counseling, and training as *poskot* (legal arbiters) for the community.

Maharat, which is the title Finegold will use, is a Hebrew acronym for "*manhigah hilchatit ruchanit Toranit*," which means a teacher or leader of Jewish law and spirituality. Although the honorific "Rabba" has been proposed for the graduates, she will not be known that way.

Finegold is coming to Montreal with her husband, Rabbi Avi Finegold, who is from Montreal, and their two young daughters (a third child is expected any day). She will work closely with Rabbi Scheier, whose wife, Abby Brown Scheier, is one of the other two soon-to-be Maharat graduates.

Finegold's position has been newly created for her. She will be part of a clerical team that also includes Cantor Gideon Zelermyer and ritual director Rabbi David Wolfson.

The position of associate rabbi, which was held by Rabbi Yonah Berman, until his departure last summer, won't be filled at this time, Rabbi Scheier said.

For the past six years, Finegold has been education and ritual director of the Orthodox Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation in Chicago, where she holds the Dr. Carol Fuchs Kaufman Rabbanit Chair.

In a telephone interview, Finegold downplayed any portrayal of her as a trailblazer.

"Nothing I'm doing is new [for Orthodox women], nothing is against Jewish law, yet the trappings are different, it looks different," she said.

The role of Orthodox women has been slowly progressing since they were given the opportunity of serious Torah study in the 1970s, she said.

The Yeshivat Maharat program has afforded them the possibility of "taking the next logical step" – being leaders in a synagogue – she said.

Finegold said the precise details of her participation in regular services at Shaar Hashomayim have yet to be ironed out, but in Chicago, she delivers the Shabbat sermon about once a month.

She will not sit on the bimah, but rather in one of the front rows, as she does in Chicago.

"In Chicago, there was hesitation at first [about her appointment] – this is the Midwest, it's very traditional. There were people who were nervous because it did not feel familiar, but I was really surprised how welcome I've felt… I've been told it's refreshing to hear a woman's voice."

With ordination, Finegold said she expects the major difference in what she will be doing will be having the ability provide more answers to questions about Jewish law. Women especially will appreciate this, if they are uncomfortable asking a man, she added

Outreach to potential new members will be an important part of Finegold's work at the Westmount congregation, which, with more than 1,400 families, is the largest in Montreal and the city's oldest Ashkenazi congregation.

Before entering Yeshivat Maharat, Finegold, a New York native, received a BA in religion from Boston University and completed the Drisha Institute Scholars Program in New York, an intensive graduate-level program in Judaic studies.

Finegold completed her internship at Ohev Shalom – the National Synagogue in Washington, D.C.

At the Chicago shul, she created weekly Shabbat tfillah groups for every age group and others activities that have attracted young families in particular.

She was recently recognized as one of the Chicago Jewish community's outstanding "36 Under 36" young leaders by the Jewish United Fund.

She is a member of the editorial board of the *Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance Journal*.

Although not officially an affiliate of the Orthodox movement, Shaar Hashomayim, which years ago was part of the Conservative United Synagogue, does follow modern Orthodoxy. The shul is fully supportive of the movement to expand women's leadership in Orthodox congregations, Rabbi Scheier said.

The congregation was looking to hire a woman to fill the vacancy in its clergy, and it invited Finegold to apply, on Rabbi Scheier's suggestion. The board agreed with him that she is an "extraordinary" person who has "swept us off our feet."

"This has been part of an ongoing conversation at the Shaar: how to maximize the role of women within the bounds of Halachah. This is a major step… The Shaar is not officially affiliated with any movement, but it does follow Orthodox law, practice and teaching," Rabbi Scheier said.

Finegold, Rabbi Scheier pointed out, is "deeply Orthodox," but he said the role of female members won't necessarily change with the addition of a female cleric.

Women can now speak from the pulpit and carry the Torah before the general congregation, and, at women's services, read from the Torah, he said. They can also lead certain prayers, such as those for the State of Israel and the government of Canada, and deliver benedictions at Shabbat morning services, he added.

Zionism and moderate Quebec nationalism

Richard Levy
Guest Voice

English-speaking Jews in Quebec have a unique vantage point to positively view the moderate versions of two kinds of nationalism: Quebec nationalism and Jewish nationalism (Zionism).

As part of the minority language community, we bear the brunt of protective language laws, the most visible offshoot of Quebec nationalism. As proud Zionists, we resent the sustained criticism of the Jewish state within the United Nations and by "progressives" who denounce the Law of Return and other "deviations" from an illusory ideal democracy.

But how is that we wince at the claims by even moderate Quebec nationalists (not secessionists) that their culture requires special protection but passionately champion Jewish nationalism and its immigration preferences and associated special measures?

To read this article, please go to cjnews.com

Israel right to be wary of Arab peace initiative

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

We're likely to hear quite a lot in the coming months about the Arab peace initiative (API), which U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry reportedly aims to employ as a way to advance a Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement.

Adopted by the 22-member Arab League in Beirut in March 2002 as an amended version of a more flexible Saudi plan, the API – on the surface – offers Israel "normal relations in the context of a comprehensive peace" (as the official text states).

Many western analysts have viewed this plan as a major breakthrough in Arab-Israeli relations and a peace plan that Israel should welcome, if not embrace. However, it's the details of the API that really matter. The API requires "full Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights, to the June 4, 1967 lines." It likewise calls for "a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem to be agreed upon in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 194." These two conditions are non-starters for Israel.

First, the API claims to adhere to UNSC Resolution 242, which calls only for Israeli withdrawal "from territories" not from "the territories" or "all the territories" acquired in 1967. But the API contradicts 242's implicit recognition that the 1967 lines (more accurately, the temporary 1949 armistice lines) would be modified through negotiations to achieve "secure" borders, in contrast to the weak defences afforded by the 1949 armistice.

Second, Arab parties (incorrectly) interpret UN General Assembly Resolution 194 as providing Palestinian refugees with a "right of return" to their former homes in present-day Israel. Given that this would spell the end of Israel as a Jewish state, such a position mocks the claim that the API embodies a "comprehensive peace."

Kerry reportedly hopes to get the Arab League's API committee to agree to changes on the first subject (the border issue). Nothing has been indicated about his views on the second subject (Palestinian refugees). In any event, the API was offered to Israel as a "take-it-or-leave-it" deal, as reconfirmed by the Arab summit in Riyadh in 2007, when efforts to make the initiative more acceptable to Israel were soundly defeated.

John Kerry and Benjamin Netanyahu

Some analysts have said that, in at least one respect, the API does allow for flexibility. In his April 10 *Globe and Mail* story about the API, Patrick Martin pointed out that the initiative "left the details open to negotiations" on the refugee issue. On this point, he's technically correct, since the relevant passage in the API speaks about "an agreed upon" solution.

Nonetheless, the API immediately adds that this is to be agreed upon "in accordance with" UNGA 194, which, as mentioned above, is interpreted by virtually all Arab parties in a way completely inimical to Israel's very existence. (The reference to 194 was added by Lebanon and Syria to the initial Saudi plan specifically to toughen it up, and make it palatable to those states that have traditionally been most hostile to peace with Israel.)

Today, with total rejectionist forces such as Hezbollah largely in control of Lebanon's government, Hamas ruling in Gaza, the Muslim Brotherhood in charge in Egypt, and Syria in the grip of a devastating civil war, with Islamist forces in the ascendancy, those dedicated to Israel's destruction are as influential as ever. In this atmosphere, the API, already encumbered by terms and conditions hostile to the Jewish state, becomes even harder to sell as a plan for "comprehensive peace" based on "normal relations" with Israel.

The surface language of the API serves today to put Israel, which has always sought genuine peace with its neighbours, on the defensive. Israel, for the above reasons, has solid grounds for deep concern about an initiative that appears to a great many outsiders as a perfectly reasonable opportunity to bring the Arab-Israeli conflict to an end.

The task for Israel is to pursue what is possible for peace, but also to explain to the world what's really at stake with the API.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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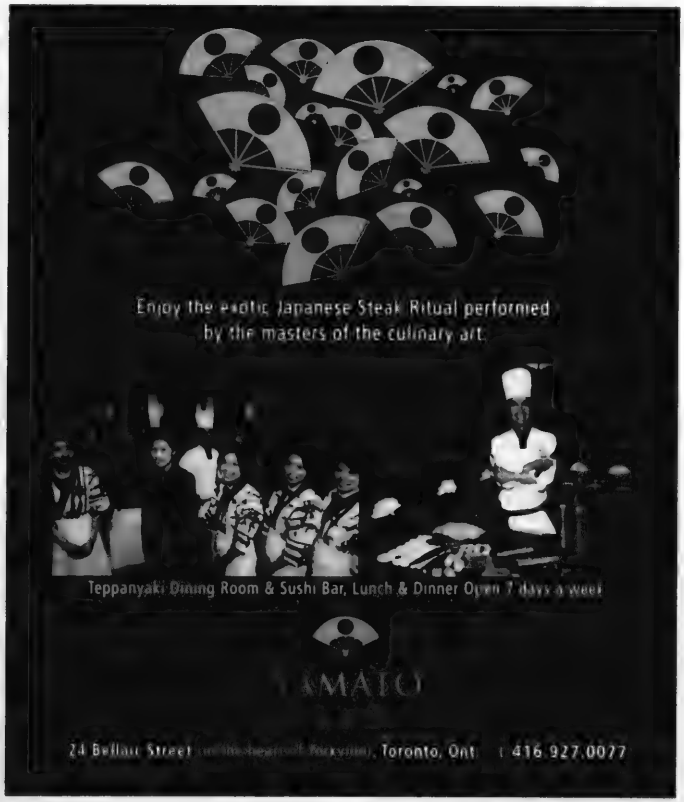
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Anti-bullying bill divides Winnipeg rabbis

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A new government anti-bullying bill is dividing Orthodox rabbis in Winnipeg over its requirement that publicly funded schools must accommodate students who want to form "gay-straight alliance" clubs at their schools.

Bill 18, introduced last December, is committed to supporting student initiatives in schools that promote inclusivity and talks about providing "safe and caring learning environments for students where all students feel respected and can reach their full potential."

The part of the bill that is causing controversy is the clause requiring all public schools and any private schools that get public funding to form a "gay-straight alliance" club if a student wants one.

The bill has been strongly criticized in other Manitoba faith communities, and a similar one that passed last year in Ontario sparked controversy among Catholic Church leaders and some Orthodox rabbis.

Winnipeg's two leading Orthodox rabbis have jumped into the fray, but on opposite sides.

Rabbi Avrohom Altein

Rabbi Avrohom Altein, Winnipeg's longtime Chabad Lubavitch rabbi, was the first to make his views known in a letter he wrote to Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger in mid-March.

In an interview with *The CJN*, Rabbi Altein said he applauds the government's efforts to protect people who are being bullied, but the clause encouraging gay-straight alliances in schools must be modified.

"Many religious people do not accept homosexuality," he said. "The Torah rejects homosexuality. You wouldn't tolerate someone going into an Orthodox shul and demanding treif food. Similarly, religious schools should not be forced to accept a gay rights group."

Rabbi Altein said he believes that everyone deserves respect and that he's not calling for anyone to be persecuted for who they are or what they believe.

"As Jews, we have to be particularly sensitive to persecution," he said. "But forcing religious institutions to accept homosexuality has nothing to do with teaching respect for individuals and combating bullying."

Rabbi Ari Ellis, spiritual leader of the Herzlia Adas-Yeshurun congregation, Winnipeg's largest Orthodox congregation, said he didn't intend to get involved in the debate over Bill 18, since it has little relevance to the Jewish community as a whole.

"I felt that I had to respond, though, when I read Rabbi Altein's letter and heard his comments on CBC," Rabbi Ellis said. "I understand what he said and why he said it, but it bothered me that he presented his point of view in the name of Orthodox Judaism rather than as a personal view. It's not a black-and-white issue."

Rabbi Ellis referred to the 2010 document Statement of Principles on the Place of Jews with a Homosexual Orientation in Our Community, signed by more than 200 leading Orthodox rabbis, educators, and community leaders, which affirmed that "it is critical to emphasize that Jewish law only prohibits homosexual acts; it does not prohibit orientation or feelings of same-sex attraction and nothing in the Bible devalues the human beings who struggle with them. Heterosexual marriage is the ideal model and sole legitimate outlet for human sexual expression."

Rabbi Ellis agreed with Rabbi Altein that, as a matter of faith, Orthodox Jews believe in the divinity of the Bible – both of the written and the oral law.

"Jewish law cannot change to reflect each and every latest fad or trend. I do not believe, however, that having a gay-straight alliance is similar to having a group for Jewish students who wish to promote the eating of pork," he added.

"At our synagogue, we don't judge individuals or ask someone whether they observe Shabbat or kashrut before welcoming them into our congregation. Everyone is welcome to attend and be a part of our community. But welcoming someone into our community doesn't mean that we endorse all their personal choices."

He added: "As an Orthodox rabbi and a Jewish educator, it is my belief that a gay-straight alliance could be a welcome institution in our schools and communities. In fact, I would want to encourage Jewish teenagers with a homosexual orientation to seek guidance from their rabbis and teachers in dealing with their struggles within a Jewish framework, instead of turning elsewhere for help."

Rory Paul, head of school and CEO at Gray Academy of Jewish Education, Winnipeg's only kindergarten to Grade 12 Jewish private school, said his institution has had a gay-straight alliance group for a couple of years.

"We are a community school. We are open to all students who wish to attend," he said.

"From our perspective, from a bullying point of view, we have been working for years to ensure that our school is a safe and secure place for students," he added "We deal with all negative situations as they arise."

Rabbi Ellis said the response to his comments on this issue from his congregation and the larger Jewish community has been mainly positive. "I've received only two negative responses," he said.

Bone marrow drives

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Thousands of people have registered for the national bone marrow registry since Warren and Kelly Roll of Montreal put out the call that their four-year-old daughter Jayden was in need of a match.

They hope more will join the registry at their upcoming bone marrow drives in Toronto on April 21.

"You're told your kid has cancer and it's been the most devastating feeling you can possibly imagine," Warren Roll said. "Most of us are ambitious people. We like to take control of things, and when it comes to cancer, there's not much we can do."

However, while the family waits to hear whether Jayden has a match in the international bone marrow registry, they and their friends have organized bone marrow drives in Canada and the United States.

Their Montreal drive at Concordia University was a huge success, registering an unprecedented total of about 2,700 people, Roll said.

They're hoping the Jewish community in Toronto will be just as supportive, especially since patients are most likely to find a match within their own ethnic background – in this case, Ashkenazi Jewish.

The Toronto drives will take place at Bialik Hebrew Day School and Aish Thornhill Community Shul on April 21 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, visit cureforjayden.ca.

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Winnipeg Reform shul marks 50 years

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — On April 20, Temple Shalom, Winnipeg's only Reform congregation, will host a special evening in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

"We will be having a concert and a dessert buffet," said Miral Gabor, Temple Shalom's current president. "We're hoping to have about 100 people."

It hasn't been easy for Temple Shalom over the years. Winnipeg's Jewish community has always been quite conservative. It's not that it was a stronghold of Orthodoxy – it had a strong socialist, Yiddishist strand for the first half of the 20th century. Nonetheless, Jewish Winnipeggers brought up in Orthodox or Conservative families, have tended to remain loyal to the synagogues their families first belonged to.

These days, that would be the Shaarey Zedek Congregation, this community's largest synagogue, or Congregation Etz Chayim in northern Winnipeg, which used to be the Rosh Pina before merging 11 years ago with two other large north Winnipeg congregations.

Gabor said Temple Shalom currently has about 110 member families, a figure that has remained relatively constant over the years. On an average Friday evening Oneg Shabbat, it attracts 40 people, though many more attend Cantor Len Udow's special music services, held every two months, more than 200 people attend High Holiday services.

Temple Shalom was founded in 1963 by three couples and two individuals. Initially, the small shul met in members' homes. In 1970, the growing group relocated to a building in the old North End that housed the National Council of Jewish Women's Golden Age club. At around the same time, the congregation hired its first spiritual leader. For Rabbi Jerry Steinberg, it was also his first pulpit. Rabbi Steinberg, who grew up in Regina and went to university in Winnipeg, wrote about his tenure at Temple Shalom in his recently published memoir, *Rogue Rabbi*. The congregation and the rabbi agreed to a parting of the ways after a few years.

Temple Shalom marks 50 years. *(Myron Love photo)*

After a time, Temple Shalom hired Rabbi Eric Silver. He was succeeded in 1986 by Rabbi Tracy Klirs, the first woman to serve as a rabbi in Winnipeg. By that time, the congregation has acquired a renovated house in south central Winnipeg.

Rabbi Klirs only stayed for a couple of years. She was succeeded by Rabbi Jeffrey Gale, whose 10-year tenure was the longest of Temple Shalom's spiritual leaders. The congregation moved into its current building in south Winnipeg in 1989, coincident with Rabbi Gale's arrival. Rabbi Michael Levenson, spiritual leader from 1999 to 2003, generated controversy in the larger community when he publicly announced that he'd perform mixed marriages and gay marriages.

After his departure, the temple relied on visiting student rabbis until Rabbi Karen Soria moved to Winnipeg in 2008 and became the current spiritual leader.

The congregation has long been blessed with popular cantors. Richard Yaffe, a lawyer by profession, served as its cantor and choir director for more than 20 years. When he left in 1998, he was succeeded by Udow, a longtime children's entertainer and folk singer who released an album of cantorial music last year.

Gabor and her sister, Sima Schachter, joined Temple Shalom when they were in their early 20s. They persuaded their parents, Phil and Lee Schachter, to join as well, and Phil Schachter has twice served as president.

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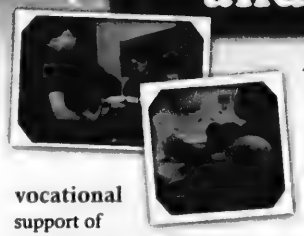

After an incredibly successful first summer at Moshava Ba'ir NJ, Yachad is thrilled to be teaming with Moshava Ba'ir Toronto for a Yachad program. Together with the vocational support of job coaches, young adults who have special needs will work in the day camp doing various jobs. **They will gain valuable vocational skills, be included in the community and have a great time!**

Ages: Young adults who have special needs ages 18-30
Dates: July 1- August 16 **Hours:** 9 AM - 4 PM
Location: Moshava Ba'Ir Day Camp
(in the Associated Hebrew Day School building)

YACHAD
ORTHODOX UNION

Conference to address importance of spiritual care

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Spiritual care is a vital component of the medical team caring for patients with protracted illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease, says the director of the Jewish Theological Seminary Center for Pastoral Education.

"The way families grapple with the illness is framed in how they understand the meaning of it," said Rabbi Mychal Springer, in a telephone interview from New York.

Rabbi Springer, 47, a certified Jewish chaplain, will explore Jewish spiritual approaches for families living with protracted illnesses including those whose loved ones are afflicted with Alzheimer's and dementia, at a program titled "The Long Goodbye: Living with Protracted Illness," April 21, 7 p.m. at the Lipa Green Centre.

The program, open to the community at no charge, is presented by the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

Rabbi Mychal Springer

On April 22, Rabbi Springer will speak at a breakfast for health-care professionals at Baycrest Health Sciences, and at a lunch program at Beth Sholom Synagogue for rabbis and non-Jewish clergy.

All programs are sponsored by Baycrest, the Benjamin Foundation, Beth Sholom, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Hereld Fund at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Rabbi Springer said that when she was on the verge of becoming ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in the early 1990s, she did not know how Judaism could help people.

"I knew a lot of text and tradition, but not how to help. I then did some clinical work at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and it was there that I came to see how religious resources can make a huge difference [in the lives of patients and their families.] I was [inspired] to change the direction of my work."

As part of her work now, she said, she trains clergy of all faiths in how to care for people in crisis. "At a certain point in their illnesses, patients often search for ways to understand their lives.

"[With the proper guidance] they can come to celebrate the gift of life, and understand how their life can best be lived. This can apply to families as well."

Spiritual care does not begin with what people know, she said, but rather with an internal dialogue. "The desire to connect to something larger may happen, but the approach is individualized."

In a hospice situation, Rabbi Springer said, we meet people "in the fullness of who they are. [The patients] are not seen as symptoms, but as people who need to reflect on their lives. Spiritual care plays a key role in helping people to find closure and peace."

It is a privilege for her to work with people at this point in their lives, she said. "It is inspiring to be part of the rawness of people's lives. It becomes clear to me and to the patient, what life is all about."

For information or to RSVP, email, information@torontoboardofrabbis.org.

Flower campaign to aid abused women in shelters

Compiled by CJN Staff

More than 400 women and their children in the Greater Toronto Area will be in a shelter for abused women on Mother's Day this year.

With their urgent need for housing, clothing, food, safety and employment, Mother's Day will just be another day for them to survive. The Act To End Violence Against Women Mother's Day flower campaign will remember these women with sincerity and dignity.

The campaign is a two-part process: for each minimum donation of $25, people can send cards to honour their mother, grandmother, mother-in-law, sister, aunt or friend, and Act To End Violence Against Women will pay these donations forward by sending bouquets of flowers to women in shelters across the GTA on Mother's Day.

This gesture will put a smile on the faces of many of the women. In addition, the funds raised will go to support Act To End Violence Against Women programs that empower women of all ages and help break the cycle of violence.

Violence against women is an ongoing global issue. In Canada, more than 50 per cent of women have survived at least one incident of physical or sexual violence. Act To End Violence Against Women, a registered, non-profit charitable organization envisions a world where women and children can live free from violence, abuse or oppression.

Some of the programs of Act To End Violence Against Women include a legal information service to help women navigate the legal system, shelters for abused women and their children, children's libraries installed in shelters across Canada, Sexual Violence Awareness Week on Canadian campuses, and community education and advocacy.

For more information, call 905-695-5372, toll free 1-866-333-5942; email info@acttoendvaw.org, or visit canadahelps.org and type in Act to End Violence Against Women.

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At St. Andrew's JHS, 131 Fenn Ave. (Bayview/York Mills)

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Funded with support from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto UJA Federation

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto

NOMINATION NOTICE

The Nominating Committee of Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto has prepared a list of ten (10) candidates for election to the Board of Directors for the ensuing term.

Gilad Abrahami	Elaine Osher	Joyce Rifkind
Sari Bercovitch	Dr. Naomi Mansell	Bonnie Wisener
Claire Glowinsky	Mayeer Pearl	Ian Zagdanski
Murray Klein		

Additional nominees will be accepted if properly received no later than 5:00 p.m. May 7, 2013. For further information please contact Elliott Brodkin, Executive Director/CFO, at (416) 494-7666, Ext. 200.

DATED April 18, 2013
TORONTO, Ontario

Sheldon Carr, Chair
Nominating Committee

International

Henrique Capriles

Capriles calls for recount after losing Venezuelan presidency

JTA

CARACAS — Venezuelan Opposition leader Henrique Capriles, the grandson of Holocaust survivors, is calling for a recount after narrowly losing the country's presidential election.

Nicolas Maduro, the acting president and preferred successor of the late president Hugo Chavez, was declared the winner of Sunday's election with 50.7 per cent of the vote. Capriles won 49.1 per cent, a difference of 235,000 ballots.

In calling for the recount, Capriles cited voting irregularities. He has not accepted Maduro's declaration of victory, *Reuters* reported.

Chavez died of cancer on March 5. Maduro will serve out the remainder of his six-year term.

In national elections last October, Capriles won 44 per cent of the vote in losing to Chavez by 11 percentage points.

During the 2012 presidential campaign, state-run media urged Venezuelans to reject "international Zionism" and vote against Capriles, describing him as having "a platform opposed to our national and independent interests."

Chavez also said the Mossad, Israel's secret service, was out to kill him, and he accused Israel of financing Venezuela's Opposition. Government media described Capriles as "Jewish-Zionist bourgeoisie."

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Featuring: **Dr. Eileen Rakovitch**, Director, Sunnybrook Louise Temerty Breast Cancer Centre; **Marla Lukofsky**, Survivor & Comedienne; **Ilana Waldston**, Entertainment

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Baird defends meeting in east Jerusalem

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

The Palestinian Authority summoned Canada's envoy in Ramallah for reprimand over the weekend in response to Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird's decision to meet Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni at her office in east Jerusalem.

The Palestinians objected to Canada breaking a longstanding tradition of diplomats not meeting Israeli officials in the eastern part of the city, which the Palestinians claim as their capital, saying it legitimizes Israel's unrecognized claims to sovereignty there.

Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat also sent a strongly worded letter to Baird last Friday in which he said the meeting amounted to Canada's "diplomatic recognition of the situation created by the attempted annexation of our capital is a flagrant violation of international law."

Baird's meeting with Livni came during a visit to Israel from April 6 to 9 to reaffirm the friendship between the two nations. It was part of a broader Middle East trip that included Jordan, Qatar, Lebanon, and the West Bank.

Baird also visited the Golan Heights while in the region.

The subject of his meeting with Livni was raised earlier last week when Baird, speaking to reporters in a conference call April 11 while attending G8 meetings in London, was asked why he broke what Palestinian officials called "the taboo" on foreign diplomats visiting east Jerusalem.

Baird shrugged off the question, responding that all his meetings with Israeli and PA representatives aimed to help further the peace process.

"I'm just not interested in getting into these semantic arguments about whether you have a meeting with one person on one side of the street it's OK, if you have a meeting on the other side of the street it's not," he said.

"We're focused on trying to tackle the difficult serious challenges: that's the security for Israelis in any end to the conflict and the legitimate aspirations for a state from those... in the Palestinian side. And where I had coffee with Tzipi Livni is I think irrelevant to that and it doesn't signal a change in Canadian foreign policy."

Overall, the foreign affairs department called the minister's visit to Israel "warm and constructive."

In Baird's meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres, talks revolved around how Canada could support Israeli security concerns in the region as well as how both countries could expand existing economic and cultural ties.

John Baird and Shimon Peres

In a statement, Baird's office said his April 9 meeting with Netanyahu touched on many issues, including Iran's continuing nuclear program and its sponsorship of international terrorism, the crisis in Syria, renewed peace talks with the Palestinians and "the value of a constructive Turkey-Israel relationship."

Netanyahu also asked Baird to consider how Canada might take more of a role in "revitalizing" peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

The two politicians also spoke about continued co-operation on energy issues. Israel and Canada jointly announced the creation of the Canada-Israel Energy Science and Technology Fund last October in light of the Jewish state's newfound massive offshore natural gas and oil reserves.

The fund is supposed to "spur the development of innovative energy technologies and processes that enable the responsible development of unconventional oil and gas resources, including commercial applications that address shared environmental challenges," Baird's office said.

It's also designed to strengthen co-operation in areas of renewable energy and energy efficiency and prompt investment from both countries.

According to the ministry, the fund is expected to "generate $20 to $40 million in collaborative research and development [projects] over the next three years. Two successful Canadian research and development workshops took place [last month] and brought together leading Canadian and Israeli stakeholders to identify potential partnering opportunities. The first call for proposals is expected later [this month]."

Canada and Israel are also planning to establish what is being called a "Strategic Partnership Agreement," described by the ministry as "a work plan which will provide both countries concrete benchmarks to further deepen the bilateral relationship."

Speaking to Israeli media on April 8, Baird said Canada supports Israel's right to defend itself from its enemies.

Referring to Iran specifically in an interview with Israel's Channel 10 news, he said if Israel decides to strike unilaterally at Iran, the Iranians will only have themselves to blame, while stressing that Canada does not support unilateral Israeli military action to thwart Tehran's rogue nuclear program.

"Iran is clearly doing all it can to waste time" in negotiations, Baird said.

"Iran is not going to get rewarded for just showing up at the negotiating table," he added. "Iran represents the biggest threat to international peace and security in the world today, and the world should respond with that in mind."

In welcoming Baird to Israel, Peres said his country considers Canada and its current government to be "among our closest friends and I want to thank you for an outstanding friendship which is based not only on interests but on profound values. We appreciate the ongoing support of the Canadian government, and the prime minster. On all occasions, in all domains and with every opportunity your government took a clear and courageous position including a very clear position vis-à-vis the greatest danger of our time, Iran."

Peres also praised the Canadian Jewish community, characterizing it as "exceedingly warm" toward Israel.

Baird also met with Palestinian leadership to determine the future of Canada's humanitarian aid to the Palestinian Authority.

Canada's five-year, $300-million aid package to the PA expired as of April 1. Administration of the funding transferred to the department of foreign affairs from the Canadian International Development Agency in late March.

For complete story, visit www.cjnews.com

With files from TimesofIsrael.com

Kerry's bid to revive peace talks rejected

Joshua Davidovich and Gavriel Fiske
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Despite what U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry termed as "constructive talks" in his bid to revive negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians last week, indications from both sides pointed to an unwillingness to go along with the U.S. initiative.

Senior officials quoted in Israeli media on April 10 said Israel had taken issue with a number of parts of Kerry's plan, including pre-negotiations on goodwill gestures and the shape the talks would take.

The reports came hours after Palestinians said they would only come to the table in exchange for "a clear formula" concerning final borders and the release of detainees in Israeli jails, underscoring the fragility of U.S. efforts to jump-start peace talks after a 2-1/2 year hiatus.

Kerry left the region on April 11, after several days of talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. Press reports indicated that he had offered the Palestinians a package of Israeli good-faith concessions in exchange for a return to the negotiation table.

Speaking to reporters before flying to London, Kerry stressed that he was being mindful of the "good intentions and failed efforts" that have dogged Middle East diplomacy in the past and said he would focus on "laying the groundwork so we can bring people to the table with a clear understanding of what we're beginning on, what we're trying to do, and where we're trying to end up."

But a senior Israeli official told news website *Ynet* that Jerusalem had no intention of providing the Palestinians with any concessions ahead of talks, which had reportedly been a keystone of Kerry's efforts.

Kerry is expected to spend the next several months engaging in a type of shuttle diplomacy to push the sides closer together. Talks between the sides have been frozen since 2010, at the tail end of a 10-month moratorium on Israeli settlement construction.

The Palestinians say they want another freeze before coming to the table while Israel has called for talks without preconditions.

U.S. President Barack Obama, during his visit in March, endorsed Israel's position in favour of new talks without preconditions. Still, Abbas is understood to be demanding assurances that Israel is prepared in principle to relinquish 100 per cent of the West Bank, with various one-for-one land swaps to enable Israel to keep key settlement blocs.

TimesofIsrael.com

Rabbi Gilles Bernheim

French chief rabbi resigns

JTA

PARIS — France's chief rabbi, Gilles Bernheim, beset by a plagiarism scandal, has resigned.

Rabbi Bernheim, 60, announced his decision April 11 during an emergency meeting with the Consistoire, the Jewish religious services body that employs him.

Until a new election is organized, the chief rabbi of Paris, Michel Guggenheim, and the director of France's rabbinical school, Rabbi Olivier Kaufmann, will fill the vacancy.

Rabbi Bernheim, who has served as chief rabbi of France since 2008, has been plagued over the past few weeks by a scandal in which it was revealed he committed several instances of plagiarism in two of his books and in an essay against gay marriage published last year.

He was also accused of not correcting his official biographies, which say he holds a degree in philosophy that he never actually earned.

After initially denying one accusation, Rabbi Bernheim acknowledged his "serious mistakes" on April 9 in an interview with the Paris-based Radio Shalom.

Rabbi Bernheim had said he would not resign, arguing that a resignation would be a "desertion" and an "act of pride."

PA prime minister resigns

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad after an internal power struggle. Abbas asked Fayyad to stay on to lead a caretaker government until a new government is formed, the *WAFA Palestinian News* service reported. New elections have not yet been scheduled, as the two major parties, Hamas and Fatah, work toward reconciliation. In the past few weeks, already tense relations between Fayyad and Abbas reportedly deteriorated due to major disagreements over government policy in the Palestinian Authority and rumours that Abbas would fire Fayyad, who also serves as finance minister. Fayyad, who was educated in the United States, had the backing of U.S. President Barack Obama and other western leaders, who believed him to be essential to building an independent Palestinian state.

Erdogan postpones Gaza visit

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he would delay a planned trip to the Gaza Strip until after he meets with U.S. President Barack Obama at the White House in Washington on May 16. According to the Turkish daily *Hurriyet*, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry advised the Turkish prime minister to reconsider the timing of his planned visit to Gaza. Erdogan announced his intention to visit the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip following Israel's apology to Turkey last month over the May 2010 deaths of nine Turkish militants who attacked Israeli soldiers aboard the Mavi Marmara. Lawsuits against Israeli soldiers involved in the incident will continue in Turkey despite the apology by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israel launches new TV network

A new Israeli television channel that will broadcast news 24 hours a day in English, French and Arabic is set to launch this summer. The channel plans to compete with established global news outlets such as Al Jazeera, according to Carlos Gurovich, head of production for i24news in France. The i24news channel, based in Jaffa Port near Tel Aviv, "will broadcast news from the heart of Middle East," the channel said in a statement. Gurovich said the channel would be funded privately, unlike other projects such as the Alef Network in South America or the J channel in France, which depend on the support of their Jewish communities. "This gives the channel the independence to work without depending on community money or donor funds," he told *JTA*.

Files from JTA and JNS.org

Montreal lawyer and businessman, Michael Kastner, has donated One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00) to support Save the Children Canada through the auspices of the Jewish Community Foundation in honor of the late Bernard Roy, Q.C., Ad.E.

The monies shall be used to fund the distribution of lifesaving vaccines and/or other treatments to combat illnesses such as, but not limited to, tuberculosis and diarrhea, for vulnerable children living in developing countries, often where there is conflict as well as poverty.

Head of School
The Ottawa Jewish Community School

Ottawa Jewish Community School

The Ottawa Jewish Community School is seeking a new Head of School to continue our tradition of academic excellence and broad Jewish education. OJCS (formerly Hillel Academy and Yitzhak Rabin High School) includes both a primary and secondary school, and boasts small class sizes, tri-lingual education, and a range of extra-curricular and community activities. OJCS develops academic and personal qualities in its students in an inclusive, caring environment based on Jewish religion, culture and values.

OJCS is an academic leader among Ottawa schools, and this position offers an excellent salary and benefits package, as well as opportunity for continuing education.

The Head of School will lead in planning and delivering the school educational curriculum and oversee school budget and finances along with the school CFO. Additionally, the Head of School is responsible for extra-curricular programming, school culture, community involvement, and a safe and positive school environment. The Head of School will oversee the continued introduction of modern and innovative educational methods to foster 21st century skills and provide world-class education.

The new Head of School will be an exceptional leader with experience fostering faculty dedication and development. Interpersonal and communication skills, and a reputation for character, will be essential for the successful applicant. The new Head of OJCS will be an educational visionary with a track record of introducing new academic methods and raising standards.

Canada's capital has a thriving Jewish community and this school is central to it. The new Head of School will be helping to create our future. With excellent cultural attractions and limitless outdoor recreational activities, it is a great place to raise a family.

The successful candidate will be chosen by Fall 2013, and will assume their position by Summer 2014.

For further information on applicant qualifications and application process, please go to www.theojcs.ca and click on the Head of School Search button.

An Israeli army medical team helps Haitians deal with the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. *[IDF photos]*

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The top 65 ways Israel is saving our planet

Nicky Blackburn
Israel21c.org

When 22-year-old Emmanuel Buso was pulled barely alive from the rubble of a three-storey building 10 days after an earthquake devastated the island of Haiti, the first faces he saw were those of the Israeli rescue workers who had flown across the world to save lives.

For Haji Edum, from Zanzibar, his life-saving moment came twice, when he was flown at age 15, and then again at 23, to Israel for open-heart surgery. He is just one of thousands of youngsters to receive emergency heart care from volunteer doctors in Israel.

War veterans suffering post-traumatic stress in the United States; farmers in Senegal, India and China; young women in South Sudan; the wheelchair-bound in Africa; cardiac patients in Gaza and Iraq – all have received life-changing help and expertise from Israeli specialists.

Today, we all know the story of Israel the startup nation. News of its technological prowess and incredible innovation has spread far and wide. But what many people don't know is that Israel is exporting far more than just technology. It is also sharing its experience and skills in a whole range of humanitarian and environmental fields to help people everywhere live better, fuller and healthier lives.

Since Israel was founded in 1948, the country has set itself the goal of becoming a light unto the nations. In the early years of the state, despite austerity rationing, the Israeli government founded Mashav, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Center for International Cooperation, as a vehicle to share Israel's creative solutions with the rest of the developing world.

Israel remains true to that vision, and every year, with little fanfare, and sometimes very little press attention, Israelis work long hours to find solutions and offer relief to some of the most pressing problems of our times.

From environmental breakthroughs that will help reduce greenhouse emissions and technologies that can increase food production and save vital crops to humanitarian aid missions in the wake of catastrophic natural disasters, Israelis are providing significant assistance.

To celebrate Israel's 65th birthday, *Israel21c* takes a look at some of the many creative and varied ways Israel is helping to enrich and improve our planet.

The list comes in no particular order, and is by no means exhaustive. There are hundreds, if not thousands, more worthy projects going on every day.

For the entire list, visit cjnews.com .

Yes. You can hike in a wheelchair

Abigail Klein Leichman
Israel21c.org

Thirty years ago, Israeli hiker Amos Ziv saw a group of visually impaired teens on a nature trail. They were having a rough time of it, and Ziv decided the only solution was for him to find a way for people with disabilities to experience the outdoors safely and enjoyably.

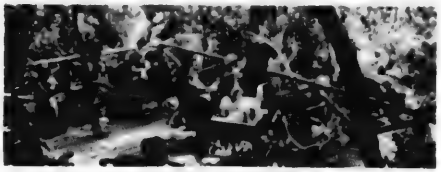
That's the story behind LOTEM, a non-profit organization that serves about 30,000 Israelis every year through a range of nature clubs and outdoor programs geared to children and adults with physical, communication and intellectual disorders, and hearing and vision impairment. It also serves at-risk populations, including women and children living in temporary shelters in refuge from domestic abuse.

The organization runs a one-of-a-kind ecological farm in Emek HaShalom (Valley of Peace) near the northern city of Yokneam, where people with disabilities participate in seasonal activities such as pressing grapes and olives, as well as drawing well water and baking pita.

Together with Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF), LOTEM built Israel's only fully accessible circular hiking trail, situated in the picturesque Galilee region of Nahal HaShofet, in 2002.

LOTEM also works with special-needs groups from abroad such as Yachad, the National Jewish Council for Disabilities, an American organization that leads its own Birthright trip to Israel.

"We're the experts in the field of accessible hikes, so it's really something we'll be working to expand," said JNF-LOTEM liaison Alisa Bodner. She also arranges free "inclusive Israel" day trips for visiting individuals or families – able-bodied or not – to learn about LOTEM and experience a different side of Israel.



Together with Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund, the non-profit LOTEM built Israel's only fully accessible hiking trail.

"When we make our tours accessible, it's not only physical accessibility but also pedagogic accessibility," Bodner told *Israel21c*. "We provide each group with guides who can give specialized instruction to fit their particular special needs and level of understanding."

Hallel Ben-David, a 12-year-old girl who visited the Emek HaShalom farm with her family, blogged afterward that LOTEM guide Paula Friedland told them about a local boy who often hiked through Nahal HaShofet.

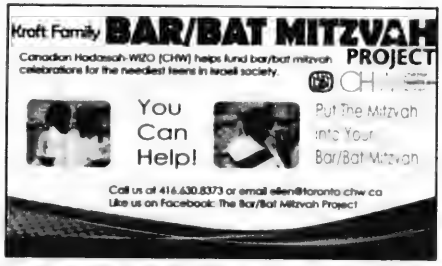
"He would hike on a trail that led to a particular cave there, until he was in a car accident and became paralyzed. When LOTEM was planning to construct the accessible trail, they... asked what they can do to bring back his experience of hiking. He told them that they should build the trail in a way so that he can return to the cave. This is what they did," Hallel wrote.

Bodner said about 12 per cent of the Israeli population has some form of disability, whether as a result of a medical condition, accident or violence. LOTEM co-founder Sorin Hershko ended up a paraplegic due to injuries he received in his military unit's daring rescue of Israeli hostages from Entebbe, Uganda, in 1976.

An acronym for the Hebrew phrase "integrated nature studies," LOTEM works with the Israeli ministries of education, agriculture, health and welfare, the National Insurance Institute, and also with private foundations and donors in Israel and abroad. For the past seven years, LOTEM has been a JNF partner organization.

In addition to accessible hikes and agricultural activities at Emek HaShalom, LOTEM runs "Integra-Teva," which uses nature and outdoor activities to foster coexistence among Jewish and Arab youth with special needs.

Two LOTEM programs focus on facilitating friendships between children from special-needs and mainstream classrooms. The group also has nature clubs for children, adults and senior citizens confined to residential facilities and rehab centres.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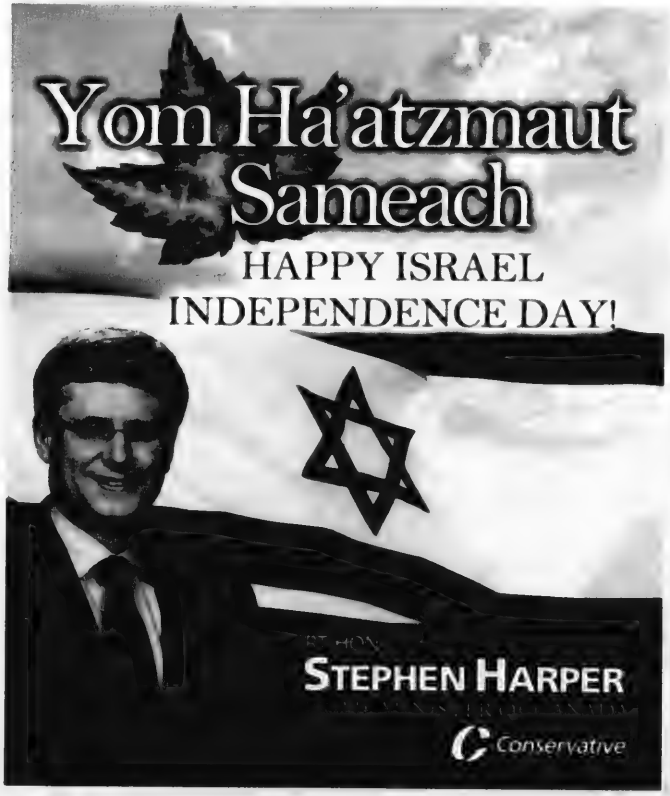

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'Grandma Esther' helps the poor in Kiryat Gat

Anna Harwood
Special To The CJN

Israel was engulfed in fighting on its southern border, on Nov. 14, 2012. Operation Pillar of Defence was launched by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) in response to the barrage of rockets emanating from the Gaza Strip.

Israel looked on as the IDF began its widespread campaign, targeting military structures and operatives throughout Gaza. In response, Hamas shot more than 1,400 rockets into Israel, reaching as far as Tel Aviv and the outskirts of Jerusalem.

The south of Israel was under attack. The sirens wailed day and night and the south shut down. Residents of cities such as Ashkelon, Kiryat Gat, Kiryat Melachi and Be'er Sheva fled to their shelters. Sderot residents on Gaza's border had long become familiar with the "red alert" warning them of imminent attack, but for those cities located up to 30 miles from Gaza, the operation came as a shock.

Factories closed, transport ceased and citizens took cover. Six Israelis were killed, 269 Israelis were injured and houses, cars and businesses were damaged. For the south, which contains some of the most economically disadvantaged areas in Israel, the operation was yet another blow to their fragile economy.

But as the shelters once again gather dust, the south of Israel is still struggling to pick its feet up economically after years of poverty, distress and neglect.

According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2001, 31 per cent of the south was classified as "poor." The research used a new indicator to measure poverty and defined a person as poor when their "physical existence and needs distract [them] every minute of the day and therefore most of [their] economic resources are allocated to food consumption and residence."

Just 15 miles from the Gaza Strip lies Kiryat Gat. During Operation Pillar of Defence, rockets sent residents running for shelter, and this already poverty-stricken city was plunged further into darkness. "The economic situation in Kiryat Gat is unstable. The operation made it worse. People didn't leave their houses," said Maya Naim, whose house in Kiryat Gat was hit by one of the rockets coming from Gaza. "My business suffered, my house was damaged and my disabled son's car was destroyed." Naim has received compensation for the damage to her house, but the car was not included in this. She is now spending hundreds of shekels each month on taxis to enable her son to get to work.

Kiryat Gat's residents struggle to provide for their families' basic needs, with the average wage being around 50 per cent lower than the national average. Though the situation is dramatic and unemployment rates run high, there are organizations and people making a real difference in this troubled community.

Esther Richtman is one such shining beacon. She was recently honoured with the Citizen of the City award at a ceremony in the city centre.

Richtman arrived in Kiryat Gat in 1964 from Romania with her husband, Abraham, and their first child on the way. Following a long career in the textile industry, the couple decided to spend their retirement giving back to the people of Kiryat Gat. Richtman, who is known as "Savta Esther" (Grandma Esther), has now become somewhat of a local celebrity, thanks to her work with Meir Panim.

Esther Richtman, top, who's known as Savta (Grandma) Esther, runs the Meir Panim after-school club in Kiryat Gat. Here she is with Chagit Hazan and her two children.

The leading Israeli relief organization Meir Panim operates two Power of Giving warehouses in southern Israel to distribute furniture, clothes and household necessities to those who cannot afford to purchase them at regular prices. At first, Richtman volunteered at the Kiryat Gat warehouse sorting items and mending donated clothes.

"I saw the good that Meir Panim was doing by supporting the poor, but more importantly, how they did it with dignity" [customers pay a nominal fee for each item so that they don't feel they're receiving a handout]," Richtman said.

Eight years ago, when working in the warehouse, she overheard that Meir Panim was looking for someone to run their after-school facility for some of the poorest children in Kiryat Gat and she jumped at the chance to help.

"Within a week, Meir Panim had located premises for me, provided me with National Service volunteers and we had decorated the club to feel like a home," Richtman said. "We are dealing with children whose parents cannot afford to feed them healthy meals each day, who are left to their own devices and who simply continue their parents' cycle of poverty."

Together with Meir Panim, Richtman is working to break this cycle of poverty. The children turn up at school prepared because she delivers school supplies at the beginning of the school year. The children are able to study because they receive two hot meals a day, and studying at school is complemented with homework help from the National Service volunteers.

"I'm so grateful that Savta Esther came into our lives eight years ago," said Chagit Hazan, the mother of two participants in the after-school club. "I work long hours in an old-age home and try to support my children on my own, but without Savta Esther and Meir Panim I don't know what we'd do." Hazan added that there are parents and children queuing up to be admitted to the after-school club.

Kiryat Gat is just one example of a city trying to get back on its feet now that peace has returned to the area, but it is not easy. "When the rockets stopped falling, southern Israel slipped off the media radar," said Goldie Sternbuch, assistant director of overseas relations at Meir Panim. "But for those of us who witness this poverty daily, it is clear that help is needed now, as much as ever before."

Meir Panim is currently building a nutrition centre in Kiryat Gat, which will not only produce the thousands of hot meals that Meir Panim needs to feed Israel's poor each day but also provide a much-needed boost to Kiryat Gat's dwindling economy.

Getting the south back on its feet after years of trauma caused by rocket fire and economic distress is no easy feat, but slowly but surely the future looks more positive. "This [past] Pesach we will be yet again distributing food cards to enable residents stock their cupboards with the special foods needed at this time of year," Sternbuch said. "We will be hosting hundreds of adults and children for communal seders and hoping to bring a little joy to those in the midst of economic distress."

As in previous years, Richtman also has a few tricks up her sleeves for the children of Kiryat Gat, and she looked forward to truly celebrating Pesach both with the children and also with their extended families.

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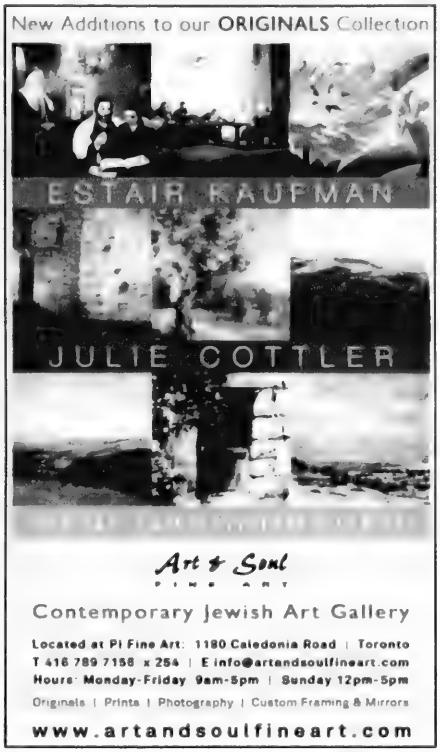
JERUSALEM STREET PARTY: As Yom Hazikaron ends and is followed by Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israelis take to the streets to celebrate. Here a group of friends walks with the Israeli flag in Jerusalem to mark the joyous occasion. *[Israel Sun file photo]*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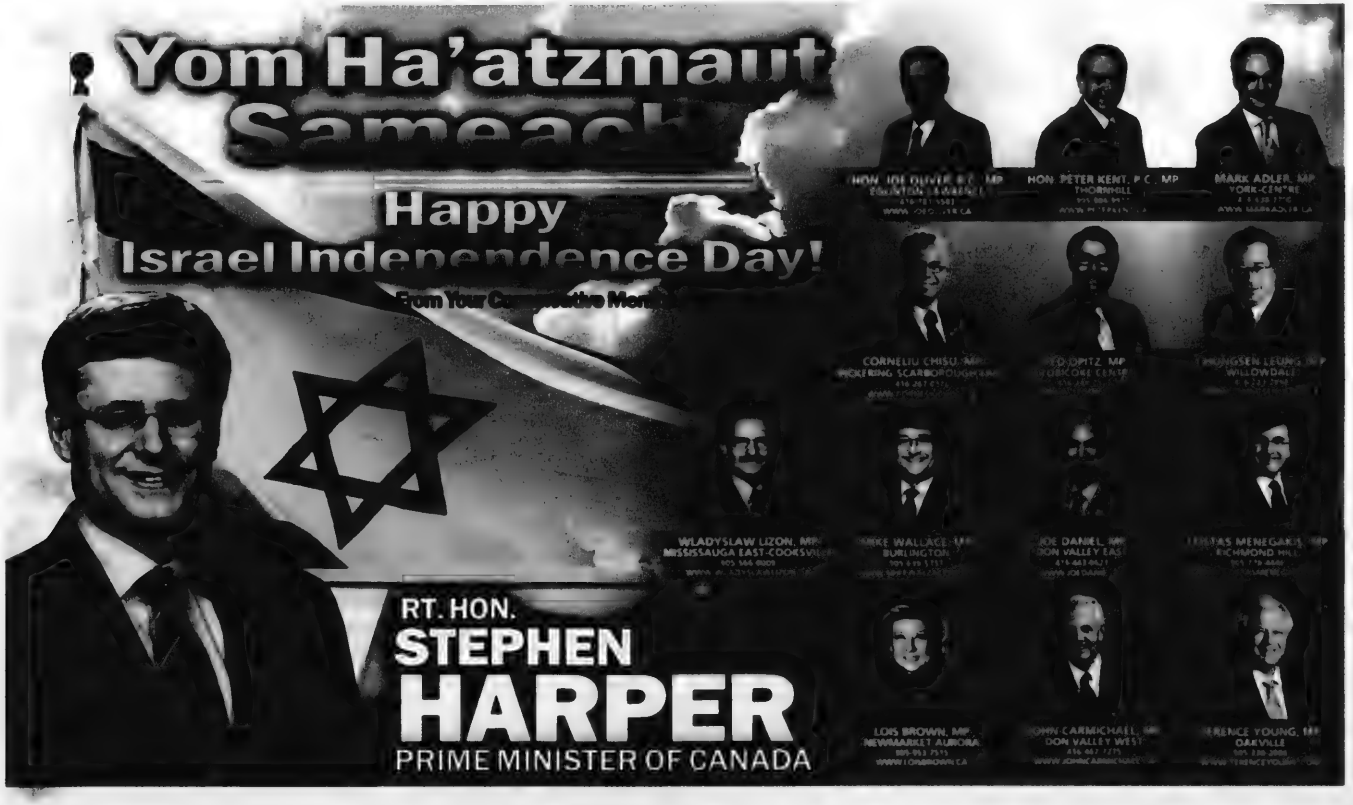

Isrotel to open two new hotels in Israel

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

In 1981, British immigrant David Lewis built a luxury hotel in Eilat that catapulted the sleepy Red Sea port town into the major leagues of international tourism.

The King Solomon Palace attracted thousands of British and French sun-seekers, and laid the groundwork for construction of even more hotels by Lewis's Isrotel chain.

Eilat remains the site of seven of Isrotel's 17 hotels, but the country's second-largest chain has plans to open more. Nahum Kara, the company's director of marketing and sales, described the company's expansion plans last week at a meeting in Toronto. Speaking to members of the travel industry gathered under the auspices of the Israel Government Tourist Office (IGTO), Kara said the company has set June 2 and June 7 as the "soft openings" of the Royal Beach Hotel in Tel Aviv and the Cramim Spa Hotel in the Jerusalem Hills, respectively.

Nahum Kara

The company has plans to add yet a third new hotel in two or three years. Land has been acquired in the Gan Hapamon neighbourhood in Jerusalem near the old train station and within walking distance of the Old City, Kara told *The CJN*. The proposed five-star hotel will offer 250 rooms to go along with 30 condominium residences.

The new venues add to a roster of largely upscale units recently added by Isrotel. Perhaps the most unusual of the new inns is the Beresheet, a boutique hotel situated on the rim of the Ramon Crater in Israel's Negev Desert.

The deluxe facility opened two years ago and has attracted visitors from around the world.

"Missions have put this hotel on their itinerary because it is unique," Kara said, adding that so far, 30 per cent of the facility's visitors hail from North America. In addition to offering a spectacular view of a unique geological formation, the hotel provides jeep tours, camel rides, hiking, bicycle trips and other outdoor adventure activities.

Kara said Isrotel plans to expand, testifying to the health of the tourism business in the country. "Tourism is a growth area in Israel," he said.

Though its latest ventures are in the luxury category, the company continues to operate three- and four-star hotels as well. And it is regionally diverse. In addition to its stronghold in Eilat, it runs several hotels along the Dead Sea. This region of Israel, only about an hour or two drive from Jerusalem, caters to those seeking the therapeutic benefits of the region, including mud baths and healing waters.

"The Dead Sea is considered a spa region and east Europeans and Russians respect the natural spa facilities," Kara said.

Isrotel has managed to compete with international chains because of the vision first laid out by Lewis more than 30 years ago, Kara said. "There is no future without a past, and the company was established by a Zionist Jew from the UK... He was a dreamer. He was a pioneer in developing tourism to Eilat, and today Eilat is a resort destination for [people from] around the world.

"We want to be the best in all categories. First, it starts with the condition of our buildings. We constantly renew our properties." In addition, the chain focuses on quality of service, delivered promptly, and on its food and beverage service. Kara said.

The results can be found in the financial statement's top and bottom lines. In 2012, Isrotel generated 987 million shekels ($275 million) in revenue, and reported a net profit of 73.5 million shekels ($21 million).

Continuing a policy established by Lewis, who died in 2011, the company reinvests all its profits into the venture, Kara said.

The Lewis family retains control over 87 per cent of the company; the remaining shares are traded in the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

There is more to the company than business, Kara said. "We are continuing the policy of the founder. He used to be a great Zionist. Today we employ more than 4,000 employees and bring tourism to the country. We are proud of what we are doing."

• • •

Joining Kara in addressing the travel industry mavens was Dinah Kutner, general manager of El Al Airlines in Canada. Kutner said the carrier has added an Economy Plus category to its flights out of Pearson. Something between business class and economy, the Plus offers more leg room, the use of an iPad, 30 per cent more recline for the chairs and small "amenity kits." Cost for the Plus section is the normal economy fare, plus $150.

• • •

IGTO director Ami Alon said some 70,000 Canadian passport holders travel each year to Israel, but his goal is boost the number to 80,000. The agency is continuing to work with "decision-makers in the Christian and Jewish communities," who help promote missions to the Jewish state.

"Our goal," Alon said, "is to make it a must, not an accessory."

Israel is investing in new infrastructure that will add "new products" for returning visitors, including more than $1 million on bicycle routes. In addition, Israel is promoting wine tours and the "Gospel trail."

Though hopeful the 80,000 figure can be reached, Alon said, "I'm aiming for that goal in the future, but I don't see it happening this year... This year we won't get there, but it will be close."

Finance minister calls PotashCorp's proposal 'un-Zionist'

The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Israeli Finance Minister Yair Lapid last week spoke out against a proposed merger between Israel Chemicals Ltd. (ICL) and Canada's Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, saying Israelis should benefit from the country's national resources.

Employees of ICL have vehemently opposed the deal, which would increase PotashCorp's grip on the potash industry. The potassium-based product, which ICL produces at its Dead Sea plant, is primarily used in fertilizers.

"Israel's natural resources are public property, and the Israeli public should be the first to benefit from them," Lapid said.

He also called for the creation of a committee to re-examine Israel's rights to natural resources that are managed by private companies.

In late February, before he was named finance minister, Lapid called the sale of ICL to PotashCorp an "un-Zionist act."

The Canadian company is seeking to increase its current 13.8 per cent share of ICL to between 51 per cent and 100 per cent. The deal would require approval by the Israeli government, which holds a "golden share" in the Israel Corporation, ICL's parent company. Such a share allows special voting rights in a company, including veto power on mergers.

Talks came to a standstill as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu struggled to form a new government following January's elections. But in recent weeks, PotashCorp has been renewing its lobbying effort with top government officials, including the prime minister, a known proponent of privatization.

TimesofIsrael.com

'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

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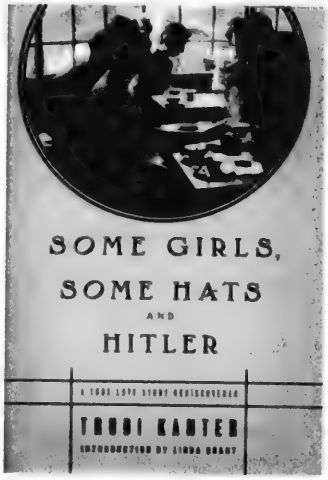
A WWII memoir and near-future fiction

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

In a voice as fresh, direct and charming as Sylvia Plath's, the late writer Trudi Kanter tells the story of her journey through war-torn Europe, seeking safe haven for herself and her beloved Walter, two Austrian Jews hoping to escape the Nazi juggernaut of destruction.

In *Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler: A True Love Story Rediscovered* (Scribner) Trudi Miller (the author's maiden name) runs a hat shop in Vienna, city of delicious cafés and nightlife. But on a buying trip to Paris, she realizes the Nazis are preparing to roll their tanks into Vienna (where they will be warmly welcomed by the cheering throngs). All of her Parisian friends and business associates warn her she must not go back, but she returns to try to persuade skeptical Walter to escape with her immediately.



She's been away only a few days but already Vienna has changed, even before the Nazis have arrived. "It's not so much what has actually happened. It's what is going to happen," her shop forelady tearfully explains. "Hitler isn't even here, but suddenly everyone is a Nazi. They've all been members of the party for a long time. They don't hide their swastika pins anymore – they wear them openly. Proudly."

Even in Trudi's own shop, two young seamstresses have become members of the Nazi party. Trudi upbraids them, then regrets her impulsive words. A few days later the seamstresses try to reassure her. "Frau Trudi," one says. "We have come to tell you not to worry. We are members of the Nazi party, and we have told our friends in our group how nice and kind you are. They promised to protect you. Nothing bad will happen to you."

Some Girls, Some Hats and Hitler is a beautifully written memoir of resilience and strength that reads like fiction. The story moves from Vienna to sumptuous Paris, then to Prague, then to blitzed London, which at last provides safe haven. The charm of the love story plus the threat of the Nazi menace combine to give this book the vividness and immediacy of eyewitness accounts such as Irene Nemirovsky's *Suite Française*, Victor Klemperer's *I Will Bear Witness* and even the more retrospective non-fiction thriller, Eric Larsen's *In the Garden of Beasts*.

Kanter's book has a remarkable back-story. A British publisher first brought it into print in 1984, but then it fell into obscurity. Its author, who settled in England with her husband, died in 1992 with no children and so the book became what is called in the trade an "orphaned work of art." Fortunately, a British book lover happened upon a copy in a used bookstore in 2011, recognized its worth, and became determined to reprint it. This Scribner edition is the happy result.

• • •

King of the Class (Now or Never Publishing) is an impressive first novel by Gila Green, formerly of Ottawa and now of Israel. It takes place during the time of Israel's civil war: no, not the 1947-48 War of Independence but the fiercely fought civil war that tears Israel apart in 2018 and from which the country is still reeling in 2030, which are also the approximate years that frame the story's action.

In this well-written tale of near-future fiction, Israel's religious and secular communities fall into battle with the result that a second Jewish state is established called Shalem, homeland to haredi and Orthodox Jews. Secular Jews entering Shalem are suspected of being spies or undercover workers, as are Orthodox Jews who enter Israel, where all travel restrictions on the Sabbath have been lifted and kosher restaurants outlawed.

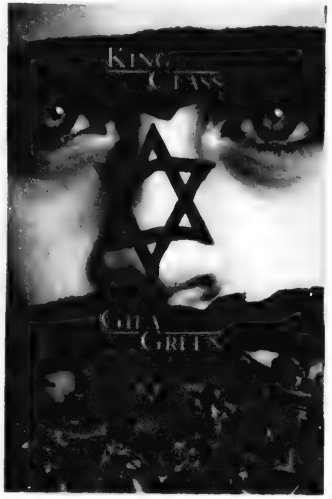
Correspondingly, television is banned in Shalem and only visitors with special visas, such as the story's protagonist, Eve, are permitted to dress liberally. "The only reason she can walk around dressed in ripped jeans is because she has her international student pass, and there have been several movements to cancel this freedom. So far, Shalem has not figured out how to impose its will on its non-citizens and still receive the income those non-citizens bring in, not to mention the co-operation it still needs from Israel on international matters."

El Al, Israel's national airline, has been split into two components, El Al Israel and El Al Shalem, each of which has its own airport. Eve's sister, Jordannah, complains about the way Shalem security officers treat women in the arrivals level: "I'm not about to put a shmatte over my head and some elastic waistband skirt to my ankles so that they'll let me through," she says angrily.

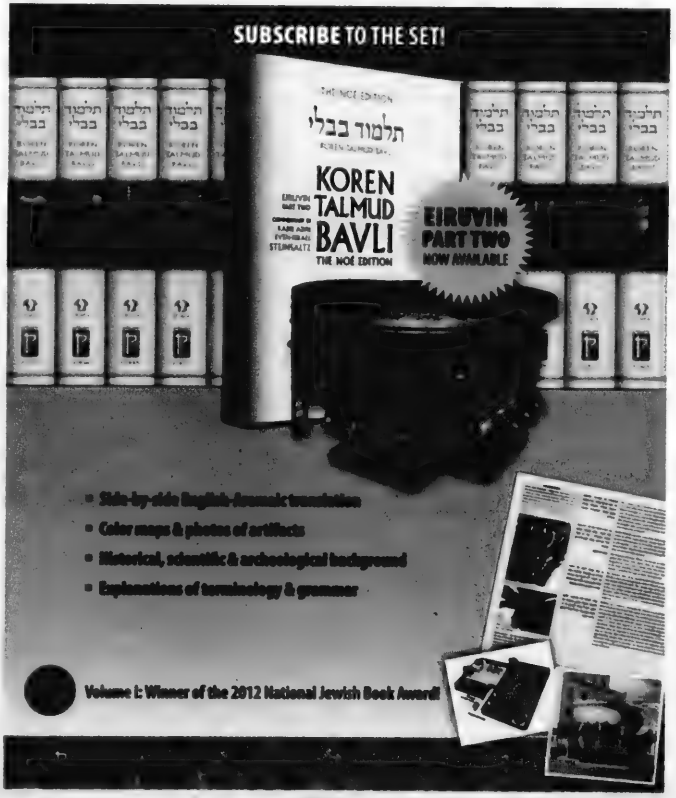
The surrounding Arab nations are also not pleased, especially since Shalem as well as Israel now has its own powerful army. "Israel's immediate neighbours in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Egypt, are demanding the dismantlement of this second Jewish army, calling it a blatant violation of international law and another Jewish attempt at a land grab," says a newscaster. "In a joint declaration, they stressed they're not fooled by this show of breaking into two separate entities when it is, quote, 'an obvious international ruse.'"

This imaginary world frames the action in *King of the Class*, which begins when Eve's boyfriend, Manny, with whom she has been living, reveals to her that he has become Orthodox. Eve's inner conflict is compounded when she has a visitation with a supernatural being, a blue-eyed child named Ben who claims to be the unborn soul of the future son that she and Manny would have if they can overcome their differences. Ben begs Eve to find a way to adapt to Manny's religious requirements so they can get married and he can be born.

In the hands of a lesser writer, this strange and otherworldly element would have seemed too implausible for readers to continue to suspend their disbelief. But Green's realistic and minimalistic treatment of the supernatural element somehow avoids being too jarring.



This futuristic satire reminds me of Israeli writer Orly Castel-Bloom's *Human Parts* or even one of several imaginative novels from our own Margaret Atwood. In short, Green is a talent to watch.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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

BARBRA STREISAND TO PERFORM IN TEL AVIV

Show-business legend **Barbra Streisand** will perform for the first time ever in Israel this summer. She's booked to give two concerts in Tel Aviv's Bloomfield Stadium, June 20 and 22.

Streisand is also expected to appear for a private performance at the annual Presidential Conference in Jerusalem in honour of **President Shimon Peres**' 90th birthday two days prior to her concert.

The American singer-actor has sold a cumulative total of 140 million records worldwide and won eight Grammy Awards, five Emmy Awards and two Academy Awards.

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Lenka Lichtenberg Concert: Musician **Lenka Lichtenberg** celebrates the release of her new CD *Embrace* with a CD launch concert featuring Lichtenberg with her group **Fray** and additional musicians. Glenn Gould Studio, 250 Front St. W. April 28, 8 p.m. $25, $15 for seniors and students. 416-872-4255, www.cbc.ca/glenngould

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Writing Workshops: Author **Benjamin Hackman** leads two writing workshops at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. The Art and Craft of Poetry runs Thursdays from April 18 to June 27, 7 to 9 p.m. The Art and Craft of Short Fiction runs Sundays, April 21, to June 23, 6:45 to 8:45 p.m. Each course is $235. 416-924-6211, ext. 154, sharonis@mnjcc.org

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Names in the News: Montreal writer **Dana Szeflan Bell** has recently published *Danusia: The Story of a Child Survivor*. Beginning from the age of two, Bell survived a wartime ordeal of being deported in a cattle car to a remote slave labour camp in northern Russia. Enhancing her memory with knowledge gained from copious research, she describes the abuse and hunger she suffered along with hundreds of thousands of others who were subjected to similar treatment.

Yad Vashem recently asked Bell to participate in a ceremony that will honour Holocaust survivors in Ottawa on April 23. A book launch takes place in Montreal on April 29.

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Names in the News II: Acting Up Stage Company presents *Falsettos*, a play about the birth of a non-traditional family in 1979. The cast includes 11-year-old actor **Michael Levinson**, who has already had much experience over the past few years in both theatre and television. Acting Up's executive producer is **Mitchell Marcus**.

• • •

Concert for Heart and Stroke Foundation: Hit That Jive Jack is a concert-cabaret being staged to raise funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The event features **Kelly Holliff** hosting, singing, telling stories and inviting well-known theatrical performers to sing with her. Last year's concert sold more than 300 tickets and raised $12,000. Capital Theatre, 2492 Yonge St. Sunday, April 28, 8 to 11 p.m. www.hitthatjivejack.com

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Arts in Brief

• There are still several days of programming left in this year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival, which finished on April 21. www.tjff.com

• The Israeli movie *Ha'lehaka* (*The Troupe*) is being screened in celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut in an Israeli Movie Night and Sing-along. Miles Nadal JCC, Saturday, April 20, 7:30 p.m. $5 at the door.

• Film critic **Adam Nayman** continues his series on the **Coen brothers** with a session titled "Political Science: *Barton Fink* and *Burn After Reading*." Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, April 22, 7 to 9 p.m. $12, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606, film@mnjcc.org

• Active Seniors & Boomers presents **Osnat Lipa** talking about influential Jewish artists. Miles Nadal JCC, April 23 and 30, 1:30 p.m. Cost $15.

• **Arthur Schnitzler**'s "sex-drenched shocker," adapted for modern audiences by **Jason Sherman**, is currently on stage at Soulpepper. Visit the website www.soulpepper.ca for showtimes and tickets.

• Newly released tickets for $100 are now available for Koffler Rocks!, a fundraising concert featuring **Randy Bachman** and special guests, hosted by writer-raconteur **Michael Wex**. Funds to benefit the Koffler Centre of the Arts. Artscape Wychwood Barns, 601 Christie St. Thursday, May 2, reception 6:30 p.m., performance 8:30 p.m. www.kofflerarts.org

• The Isrock Festival presents a taste of Israel in Toronto with a concert by the hip-hop ensemble **Hadag Nahash**, as well as performances by **Mashina** and **Yael Deckelbaum**. Sound Academy, 11 Polson St. Sunday, April 28, doors open 7 p.m. for 8 p.m. concert. VIP $180, general $65, student $55. Presented by the Motek Cultural Initiative, motektoronto.com

• Eye On Arts has received late word that first-time Israeli author **Ayelet Tsabari**, whose new book is *The Best Place on Earth*, was a featured artist at the recently concluded Spur Festival of Politics, Art and Ideas, which ran in mid-month in Toronto, and which is scheduled for Winnipeg in late April and in Vancouver in mid-June. The Toronto Spur Festival also featured New Yorker senior writer **Hendrik Hertzberg** and playwright **Hannah Moscovitch**.

Falsettos *is a 'straight through musical, well sung'*

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Michael Levinson, 11, plays Jason, the son of rather dysfunctional parents, in the award-winning, groundbreaking musical *Falsettos*.

Falsettos, directed by Robert McQueen, runs at the Daniels Spectrum cultural centre in Toronto from April 25 to May 12. The show is presented by Acting Up Stage Company, in association with Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company.

"The play is a little bit like the TV show *Modern Family*," Michael says. "My father, Marvin, divorced my mother, Trina. Trina is falling for another man, and another man is falling for Marvin. I'm in the middle of it and I feel very confused. No one is able to talk to me. Jason is complex, smart, and he is neglected."

Michael – who was a Dora Award nominee for the musical *Caroline, or Change*, about an African-American maid to a Southern Jewish family – says the biggest challenge of playing Jason is that the character is nothing like him.

Michael lives in Toronto with his South African-born parents, Andrea and Ari, and three siblings – a brother, Asher, 13, and sisters, Hanna, 6, and Izzy, 15 months. He is a Grade 6 student at Crestwood Lower School.

Michael says these days people are more accepting of those who are gay. "Many people who are gay are coming out like a lot of movie stars, and people are starting to accept the fact, but there is still some work to be done.

"I think Acting Up Stage is taking a big risk doing... shows that not everyone wants to hear about, instead of the big commercial shows. The director, Rob McQueen, is a really good director. I aspire to be a director like him one day."

Michael Levinson

Falsettos takes place in New York City in 1979 during the sexual revolution and the rise of AIDS. For this production only, composer and lyricist William Finn granted the use of the text and score of his original one-act plays, *Falsettos*, *March of the Falsettos* and *Falsettoland*, which mirror significant social changes, mainly within the gay community between the writing of Act 1 in 1981 and Act 2 in 1990.

"It is a straight through musical, well sung. The music is jazzy and some rock 'n' roll... it's great music," Michael says.

When he was seven, Michael told his mom that he wanted an agent, and she agreed but suggested he needed acting training first.

"I have a music teacher, Deva Neely at Crestwood Lower School, so we had a couple weeks of lessons with her," he says. "She directed this show called *Oliver* and asked if I would like to audition in Etobicoke. It was quite a schlep! I was just in the ensemble, but I loved it. So we decided to get an agent."

Michael was a series regular playing Simon on the recently cancelled CW Television and MuchMusic series, *The LA Complex*. His theatre credits include *The Full Monty* and *A Christmas Carol*, and he plays the lead role of Iggy in the soon-to-be-released feature film drama, *Algonquin*, about a canoe trip taken by half-brothers.

When he's not acting, Michael likes to watch movies and give commentaries on them, make his own short films involving friends and do lots of "kid stuff" like bicycling and skateboarding.

Joining the young actor in *Falsettos* are theatrical veterans Darrin Baker, Sara-Jeanne Hosie, Sarah Gibbons, Erin Morin, Stephen Patterson and Glynis Ranney.

Falsettos is written by James Lapine and Finn, the music director is Reza Jacobs and the choreography is by Tim French.

For tickets, call: 1-800-838-3006 or visit online at: www.actingupstage.com. Daniels Spectrum is at 585 Dundas St. E., east of Parliament Street.

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Political thriller focuses on Islamic fundamentalism

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Mira Nair's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* contains all the ingredients of a first-rate political thriller: exotic locales, espionage and intrigue, as well as violence.

Scheduled to open in local theatres on April 24, it is based on Mohsin Hamid's eponymous novel about a smart and ambitious Muslim man from Pakistan whose dogged pursuit of the American dream is abruptly upended by the Arab terrorist attack on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

The Pakistani, Changez (Riz Ahmed), is so radicalized by these events that he must choose between the allure of his upwardly mobile career or the siren call of his homeland. The tension inherent in this agonizing choice endows this crackling movie with much of its vigour and elan.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist gets under way with the abduction of an expatriate American academic in Lahore, Pakistan. As it shifts to an atmospheric outdoor café in the same city, Changez relates his experiences in the United States to Bobby (Liev Schreiber), an American journalist who moonlights as a spy.

"Looks can be deceiving," says Changez as the film flashes back a decade to his early days in America.

Nair draws a well-rounded portrait of a Princeton University graduate with a taste for the finer things in life whose post-9/11 disillusionment with the United States drives him back to Pakistan and Islam and away from the western values he appears to have internalized.

The first segment moves at an almost frantic pace as Changez becomes a high-flying financial analyst and valuator at a reputable Wall Street management consulting company. His all-American mentor, Jim Cross (Kiefer Sutherland), is impressed by Changez's smarts, energy and work ethic and sends him off on missions around the world.

But in an ominous harbinger of the future, Changez predicts that he will be the dictator of an Islamic republic with a nuclear capability.

Shades of contemporary Pakistan, a virtually dysfunctional nation riven by the poison of sectarian politics.

As Changez makes his mark on his bosses, he falls for Erica (Kate Hudson), the demure niece of one of the principals of the firm that employs him. These scenes unfold in seamless fashion, enveloping a viewer in Changez's relentless quest for success.

In the second segment, Changez undergoes a wholesale transformation that tears him away from his American roots. As he confides to Bobby, 9/11 was a turning point. As the Twin Towers in Manhattan came crashing down, he recalls, waves of awe and pleasure rolled over him.

But for Changez, glee soon turns to anger as America embarks on the war against international terrorism. At an airport, he is racially profiled, and much to his indignation, he is treated like an enemy of the state: detained, strip-searched and interrogated.

Having been sorely disappointed by what he describes as U.S. arrogance and xenophobia, he grows a beard and modifies his views of the world. This transformation affects his relationship with Erica. As his life unravels, Changez decides to "live in the truth." Retreating to his Pakistani identity, he is recruited by an Islamic extremist group in Pakistan, where he has taken a new job.

With a haunting Urdu soundtrack defining its mood, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, filmed in Lahore, New York City, Atlanta, Istanbul and New Delhi, generally moves along briskly. But at times, it is somewhat disjointed and bogs down in confusion.

The performances, however, are first-rate, and Ahmed and Sutherland are especially effective.

Kiefer Sutherland and Riz Ahmed star in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

Steve Koven Trio celebrates its 20th anniversary

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

Steve Koven

It's all about to come full circle for the Steve Koven Trio. The jazz group is celebrating its 20th anniversary with special performances in May at the Jazz Bistro in Toronto, the site of the group's debut album.

Their debut album was recorded live at the Top o' the Senator, which closed eight years ago and has since reopened as the Jazz Bistro. The band has now released its ninth album, *20*

"Here we are celebrating our 20th anniversary at the home of the old Top o' the Senator, where we recorded our first CD," Koven said. "That's pretty cool."

Koven, who writes the songs and plays piano, admits that he's been really lucky since he was introduced to bassist Rob Clutton and drummer Anthony Michelli 20 years ago.

"Not too many bands have stayed together for 20 years. Just us and the Rolling Stones," Koven quips.

"We work well together. Music isn't just about playing notes – it's about respect, admiration, and the willingness to share and listen to each other."

Included with the new CD is a bonus 20-minute DVD that documents the band's history.

One of the highlights for the band in the past 20 years has been representing Canada in several cultural festivals all over the world.

Just recently, for instance, the band played El Cervantino, one of the largest cultural festivals in North America, held in Guanajuato, Mexico. "We represented Canada and were the only Canadian act," he says. "We were in the middle of Mexico – not in a resort town, in the core. It's an amazing place. That was a big, big one for us."

The trio has been performing international events for around 15 years. "We started to establish relationships with embassies and high commissions around the world, and then word got out that the Steve Koven Trio is a good representative of Canada." Now, the embassies and high commissions contact the band whenever an event comes up.

"Along with this comes a huge responsibility," Koven admits. "We are representing Canada on international stages, and you have to go to these events and dinners and cocktail receptions and interact with people and government officials. We've done a lot of work representing Canada. It's a great label to have."

The trio has played in Barbados, Bahamas, Jamaica, Japan, Ecuador, Colombia, China and several other countries.

Along with performances, these cultural events often include an educational component. The band holds seminars and workshops for university students and even younger children on musical improvisation and self-expression. All three of the musicians are instructors at York University.

"I never thought I'd be doing this," Koven said. I'd never dreamed that I'd be performing worldwide and representing Canada on the international stage."

Travelling also provides Koven with plenty of inspiration for songwriting.

"I get to these countries and get exposed to the way people interact, their food, environment, and you want to capture that through a camera, through video, or through a song or a story. I try to capture one element and use that in my compositions."

At the same time, Koven's developed a love-hate relationship with travel. "I'll be at the airport before leaving and I always say to the band, '10 more sleeps to get home.' As Dorothy said, 'there's no place like home.'"

The opening song on *20* is *Cervantino*, a song inspired by the festival in Mexico. The CD also features two songs, *Bongo Bob* and *Artists*, written as part of his thesis for his master's degree in music composition, which he completed at York recently in his late 40s.

"It was a personal challenge," Koven said. "I've been avoiding it for years, worried about failure. It's the greatest thing I've done at this stage in my life."

His thesis included writing 10 songs based on inspirations from 10 paintings. "I became a better writer. I'm now doing lectures in Barbados about using visual art to help inspire musical compositions and to give the kids inspiration."

The CD features 10 original compositions by Koven. "It borrows from many traditions," he said. "I'm not interested in playing standards. I wanted to write music for this CD that represents where I am in my life. I wanted to venture out and borrow from any element.

"There's very little about swing, there's a lot of pop-oriented songs, soul, R&B. I don't like to call it jazz. Anything you put a label to is very limiting. I want to write nice melodies and music that I feel is me."

Over the years, several of his songs have been featured in TV shows and films. "My music is very conducive for that," he says.

The Steve Koven Trio performs at the Jazz Bistro on May 2, 3 and 4. They also perform frequently at the Pantages Martini Bar. For more information, visit www.stevekoven.com.

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Nystrom looks forward to coaching U.S. Maccabiah team

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

As the NHL trade deadline came and went on April 3, Dallas Stars forward Eric Nystrom was a little unsure of where he stood. A pending unrestricted free agent (UFA), he was just the kind of "rental" player who is dealt from teams that are out of the playoff race to those hoping to beef up for the post-season. Thing was, the Stars weren't out of the race – they were only a few points out of eighth in the ultra-competitive Western Conference.

Still, the Stars made moves, dealing future Hall of Famer Jaromir Jagr to the Boston Bruins and Derek Roy to the Vancouver Canucks. In an earlier move, captain Brendan Morrow was dispatched to the Penguins. Nystrom stayed put and was on hand to see what few would have predicted: the Stars got better.

Some of the young guys added to the roster gave the team a boost, and as of this writing, the Stars sat two points out of a final playoff position.

"I think it's been a good year. We made a lot of moves to get younger, and we're only two points out of a playoff spot."

"We got rid of two highly talented players, but we got better," he said. "We brought up a bunch of guys."

Still, for Nystrom, losing someone like Jagr was a jolt to the system. Not only was Jagr a supremely talented player who could educate others on what it takes to succeed, but he was also Nystrom's linemate for a time.

"It was a pretty unique experience to be on a line with him, to see first hand the skill and strength and power, even at 41. It's pretty amazing," Nystrom said on the phone from Dallas.

Adding to the lustre was that, as a kid, he had a poster of Jagr hanging in his room.

Playing with Jagr, his role was to "get in there first, get the puck to him. Once I got it, to get away." Those were Jagr's instructions. He wanted the room to go against the defender one on one. "He told me to get away, to go find a spot, and he would put it on my tape," Nystrom said.

The son of New York Islanders' Bobby Nystrom – he scored the Cup-winning goal in OT versus Philadelphia in 1980 – Eric was always exposed to hockey, but never felt any pressure to become a pro.

Growing up on Long Island, he learned to skate at a young age and would be at the rink for his dad's games. He took up the sport and continued to improve. As he got better, "doors opened," he said.

In his teens, he tried out for the U.S. national team development program and made the cut. He played for the junior national team and earned a scholarship to the University of Michigan. In 2002, when he was 18, the Calgary Flames selected him in the first round of the entry draft, 10th overall.

Canadian kids, he said, dream of making the NHL. "I just loved playing hockey."

As he grew up, he received valuable guidance from his father, who retired in 1986 with four Cups to his credit. "He was so great growing up," Eric recalled. "He never over-coached me. He was not a fanatical hockey parent."

His dad helped all the teams Eric played for, but while Eric was a forward, Bob would work with the defence "and was never looking over my shoulder.

"The only time he yelled at me was when I wasn't working hard," Eric said.

Even to this day, his dad provides fatherly advice. He watches Eric's games on TV and will sometimes make suggestions to tweak his game – stuff that Eric might've missed on his own.

One example cited by Eric relates to his high-energy style. At six-foot-one, 193 pounds, Eric is usually a third line digger and mucker. "He'll recognize I'm over-skating and he'll tell me to slow down, or handle the puck more, don't get rid of it so fast."

When he's implemented the advice, he's found it works, Eric said.

Though his dad is a native of Sweden – his family moved to Canada when he was four – his mom comes from Long Island. Eric was raised Jewish, attended Hebrew school weekly and had a bar mitzvah.

Earlier this winter, he accepted an invitation from William (Billy) Jaffe to serve as assistant coach of the U.S. hockey team at the Maccabiah Games in Israel this summer.

"I said, 'Sure, it's a great opportunity to do something so unique, something connected to hockey,'" he said.

This will be Nystrom's first trip to the Holy Land. Jaffe, an NHL Network hockey analyst, served as captain of the U.S. hockey team in the 1997 Maccabiah Games. That outfit lost to Team Canada in the gold medal game, the one and only time hockey was previously part of the Games. Coincidentally, Jaffe played hockey at the University of Michigan, as did Jewish NHLer Mike Brown and Mike Cammalleri, whose mother's family is Jewish.

This will be Nystrom's first attempt at coaching. It's something he's considering full time when his playing days are over. "I just want to go behind the bench and see how it is," he said.

Maccabi Canada organizers have put together a talented roster of NCAA, Major Junior and minor league professionals that should be tough to beat. Maccabi USA has a lot of quality college players to draw from, but Nystrom admits that so far, the recruitment has been tough. "Players are worried about training. It's a big commitment, absolutely."

Many don't want to disrupt their summer training programs, others are concerned about the paperwork and the fundraising that's expected of them.

"I tell them, 'It's a great life experience and it's foolish not to take advantage of it,'" Nystrom said.

For his part, Nystrom is looking forward to the experience. "It will be great to see all those Jewish athletes together," he said.

Eric Nystrom

Knicks' Stoudemire to help Canadian hoops team

Compiled by CJN staff

NEW YORK — New York Knicks forward Amar'e Stoudemire will serve as assistant coach of the Canadian men's basketball team at this summer's Maccabiah Games in Israel.

According to a report in the *New York Times*, Stoudemire's involvement should boost interest in the team and the international sporting event. John Dore, head coach of the Concordia Stingers in Montreal, will serve as the Maccabi team's head coach.

It was Dore who brought Stoudemire the idea of going to Israel as a part of the Canadian delegation.

"I heard about these games and I know how important they are. When I got the call, it was a no-brainer for me," Stoudemire said.

Stoudemire assisted Dore last summer during team tryouts and training, giving instructions and taking notes.

The Games get under way on July 18. Some 9,000 athletes and coaches from more than 70 countries are expected to participate. Canada is sending a contingent of 600 to compete in open, junior, masters and paralympic classes. The Maccabiah Games are held every four years and are the third-largest athletic event after the Olympics and the Asian Games.

Stoudemire visited Israel in 2010. He described the trip as spiritual in nature. He has said he suspects he is part Jewish.

"It was a bit of a dream scenario to reach out to Amar'e because of his discovering his Jewish roots and his playing basketball," Alex Brainis, the head of Maccabi Canada's delegation, told the *Times*. "We figured that if he said yes, this would be a big recruiting tool."

When offered the post, "Amar'e was nothing but enthusiastic," Brainis said.

According to the *Times*, Brainis, a guard, played for Dore in the 2005 Maccabiah Games. Dore's assistant coach there was Glen Grunwald, who had been fired the previous year as the Raptors' general manager but still lived in Toronto. Last year, Brainis asked Dore to call Grunwald, who by then was working as the Knicks' executive vice-president and general manager, to help make the introduction to Stoudemire. On a visit to the Knicks' practice facility during last year's Knicks-Miami Heat playoff series, Dore formally extended the job offer to Stoudemire.

"What he'll bring to the team is individual skill development," Dore told the *Times*. "He'll also be learning about himself, as to whether he wants to pursue a coaching career. This is his first go-round in coaching. It'll be a great experience for him."

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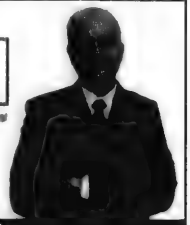

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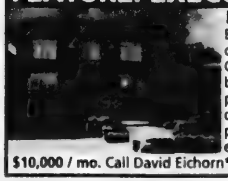

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Regina group repeals support for boycotts

Continued from page 1

"We are shocked that UMSU would ban Students Against Israeli Apartheid without any evidence or basis for the accusations brought forward in the motion," spokesperson Liz Carlyle said in a statement released by the Winnipeg Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid.

Judy Zelikovitz, vice-president of university and local partner services for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, commended and congratulated the local student activists who led the initiative in Winnipeg.

B'nai Brith Canada hailed the vote as "precedent setting" and called on other universities to follow suit.

Not all Canadian backers of Israel supported the move. Ezra Levant, a conservative television commentator and outspoken supporter of Israel, condemned SAIA, but warned that the vote set a dangerous censorship precedent on campuses and made the anti-Israel group look like the victim.

However, Zelikovitz said the resolution does not harm free speech on campus.

"It in no way infringes the right of students to organize or voice their opinions in open spaces on campus. Rather, the motion ensures that student union fees and resources are not misused to promote divisive and discriminatory agendas," she said in a statement to *The CJN*.

The resolution barring SAIA was the brainchild of student council member Josh Morry, who said SAIA's events were making Jewish students feel uncomfortable, although there haven't been any incidents of violence during its five-year run on campus.

"I didn't have to prove that Israeli Apartheid Week has actually incited hatred, but that it is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of students on campus who are Zionists," Morry told the *Winnipeg Jewish Review*.

The University of Manitoba has approximately 28,000 students, and Avi Posen, director of Hillel Winnipeg, said the number of Jewish students is "in the hundreds."

The UMSU decision comes after several student unions across the country endorsed the boycott movement against Israel recently, including at York University and U of T's Scarborough and Mississauga campuses.

Meanwhile, the University of Regina Students' Union repealed its endorsement of the BDS movement at a general meeting of the group on April 10.

Although there was no official vote count, Sean Wilson, a student representative who spearheaded the campaign, estimated about 130 people voted to withdraw support of the motion, while around 70 voted against the idea.

"I knew that when people were faced with what [BDS] actually was, they'd vote in favour of repealing it," Wilson said. "The fact of the matter is, us adopting BDS doesn't change anything overseas but it makes our Jewish students feel extremely uncomfortable and alienated."

With files from Cara Stern

U of T Scarborough motion passes by one vote

Continued from page 6

At one point, as Hillel representatives spoke, someone from outside the room screamed for them to "shut the f--- up," she said.

Hillel students took the position that the student union should support peace in the region, while BDS would simply cast blame on Israel.

She said she was also upset the SCSU didn't notify her directly once the vote was scheduled, and that she only heard about it from others about a week in advance. She added that she only had a few days to prepare after seeing the actual wording of the motion.

Despite the fact the motion was passed, Bergstrom-Borins said she was proud of the efforts of pro-Israel students for fighting against it, especially since there are only about 20 students on campus involved with Hillel, compared to the "huge" Muslim and Arab population.

David Borzykowski, CIJA's campus advocacy co-ordinator, said Hillel's efforts were partially successful, in that the motion needed a simple majority to be adopted, meaning at least eight votes, and therefore only barely passed.

Although several student unions at U of T have endorsed the BDS campaign, Borzykowski said that the vote "means next to nothing.

"The student union can pat themselves on the back, but they're not going to change the policies at the University of Toronto," he added.

"Passing a motion isn't going to change where the university puts its investments."

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Israeli music stars to perform at Isrock Festival

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Popular Israeli musicians will bring Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations to Toronto on April 28 as part of the Isrock Festival, a concert designed to bring Israeli music to the masses.

This is the second year for Motek Cultural Initiative, which will be showcasing three musical acts at the one-night-only event at the Sound Academy, designed to emulate Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations in Israel, said organizer Ravid Dahan.

Amidst the event's carnival-like festivities will be a live concert with a lineup that includes hip-hop and funksters Hadag Nahash and rock veterans Mashina, who will be playing with folk musician Yael Deckelbaum.

It's a great time to be an Israeli artist, said Sha'anan Streett, lead vocalist of the ever-political Hadag Nahash. "The entire art world is booming. We have more success than ever before in the world charts."

Mashina *(Eldad Refaeli photo)*

Hadag Nahash

The band is on tour visiting five North American cities to promote its new album, *Time to Wake Up*. Streett said the album was largely inspired by the Arab Spring, which he called a time of hope.

"There's a sense the people were taking their fate into their hands and working together for a better tomorrow," he said. "We found that very inspiring."

This album is the band's seventh, and it has more of a Middle Eastern feel to it than their previous releases, he said. While preparing for the new album, Streett said he bought more than 20 Arabic albums, hoping to "let it into my bloodstream."

The fact that the band sometimes takes controversial political stances means not everybody is a fan. Streett described it as only half the people liking them, "but we always have our half."

He recalled one concert in Texas when he found there were protesters demonstrating against their show. The band met with the protesters, and some of them enjoyed the show in the end.

"Our band is for peace. If the people demonstrating are for peace, we have something in common with them," he said.

Someone uninitiated in the band's music can expect to find in the live show a very rich sound, unlike many other hip-hop bands, in that there are many instruments on the stage, he said. "We take it to reggae, rock 'n' roll. It's very live, and it's everything but boring."

Performing in North America poses a challenge Hadag Nahash wouldn't face in Israel – most of the audience probably doesn't understand the lyrics to their Hebrew-language songs. That means that they have to emphasize the groove and the beat, Streett said. "As a group, we focus more on making it danceable."

Michael Benson, bassist and vocalist of co-headliner Mashina, said he's noticed many Hebrew speakers at their past Canadian concerts, but even those who can't sing along love to dance and have a good time.

"Usually they have someone who understands explaining to them," he said, although he admitted the lyrics perhaps wouldn't be as meaningful when translated from its original language.

Since Mashina was formed in 1983, the band has visited Canada several times. Other than the language differences, Benson said he hasn't noticed a huge difference performing in Canada versus Israel.

"There are a lot of Israelis everywhere, so we feel exactly how we feel at home – but it's a little colder," he joked.

Mashina has been a fixture of the Israeli music scene for decades, releasing their music over 30 years (minus an eight-year hiatus from 1995 to 2003). Dahan said although Mashina isn't as well-known in the Jewish Diaspora as a band like Hadag Nahash, their music is embedded into Israeli history and culture.

"You can't understand what is Israeli if you don't know who is Mashina," she said.

Benson pointed out that it's hard to find another band that's been together as long as Mashina has, without any lineup changes.

He said his band's music is not political at all. They prefer to sing about love, joy, dancing, death, family and friends, and many of their songs even focus on real people and real situations.

Dahan said Mashina is especially good at portraying these emotions in a way that listeners find the music inextricably attached to their memories.

The band's sound is not quite rock 'n' roll, Benson said, since that's too "hardcore" of a term for their music. It's more along the lines of pop and ethnic rock, he said.

Over 30 years, the sound has evolved into many new styles, but Benson said these days, the band is returning to its roots.

"We're finding ourselves going back to the beginning, or in any case, a few years after the beginning," he said, adding that it's perhaps an updated version of their early sound that's making its way into their new songs, which they've been recording with hopes they'll release it in the summer.

Mashina has been performing mostly acoustic sets throughout the winter, but band members are ready to plug in their instruments once again for their spring and summer run, including the Toronto stop.

"Anyone who comes will have a great time. I can guarantee that," Benson said.

For tickets to the Isrock Festival, visit motekculturalinitiative.com.

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The birthday party 're-gift'

Married With Kids

Lauren Kramer

Anyone with kids can recognize it a mile away: the re-gift. It's the birthday present no kid really wants – the CD usable only on a game they don't own, or the box containing some outdated gizmo that's been batted around from one birthday party to the next.

Most of us are guilty of re-gifting at some time or other. Sometimes we re-gift unwanted items, other times we use duplicate gifts received at the same party, or toys we bought on sale because we thought our kids would enjoy them.

I've been a long-time advocate of stocking my cupboard shelf with gifts at all times. That way, when my children are invited to birthday parties, I'm prepared and don't have to head out to the toy store. I just reach into my stash of possible gifts at home, pop one of them into a recycled gift bag and wham! We're ready to go.

My son was once re-gifted a toy he'd given to the same child just a few months earlier. I was appalled the gift had come full circle in so short a time, but not totally surprised.

It did catch me by surprise, though, when my friend Sharon called last week, blurting out her dismay at the large box of Play-Dough I'd recently given her son on his birthday.

"No one likes Play-Dough! It's the quintessential re-gift," she declared passionately. "I won't even let it into my house. I can't believe you gave my son a re-gift, especially after all the care I go to in selecting gifts for *your* kids!"

I tried to explain that the Play-Dough was not a re-gift, that in fact I thought he'd enjoy playing with it. But there was no dissuading Sharon. In her mind, it was a re-gift, and she wasn't having any of it. A day later, it was unceremoniously dumped on my doorstep with a card that said bluntly, "No Thanks."

Choosing a gift for most of my friends' kids is a hard task. These are children who lack nothing, kids with play rooms stocked with toys that, by and large, gather dust. I know because this is precisely the case in my own home. The toys accumulate each birthday, entertain my kids for all of an hour and are then relegated to a dark shelf until The Great Spring Clean, when I whisk them into a bag and donate them to charity.

Kids today are jaded by expensive Wiis, iPhones and iPads. The puzzles that kept me entranced for days on end 30 years ago don't cut it anymore. Neither, apparently, does the humble Play-Dough, its malleable form considered too messy and too "yesterday" for some homes.

It's back in my cupboard now, that box of Play-Dough, but its days as a gift are over. I'll extract it on the next rainy day, glad that *my* kids, if not Sharon's, can still enjoy the simple pleasure of shaping Play-Dough into faces and french fries.

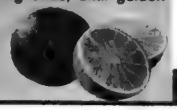
SWEET POTATO WEDGES WITH LIME MAYO

3 sweet potatoes, peeled, (each cut lengthwise into 8 wedges)
2 tbls vegetable oil
Kosher salt
freshly ground pepper

DIP
1/3 c mayonnaise
1/4 tsp finely grated lime zest
2 tsp fresh lime juice

Preheat oven to 450°F. Toss sweet potatoes and oil on a parchment-lined large baking sheet; season with salt and pepper. Roast, turning once, until golden brown and crisp, 25-30 min.

Dip: whisk together mayonnaise, lime zest, and juice in a small bowl.



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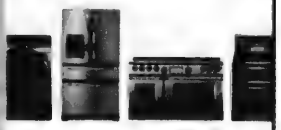

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On cjnews.com

Hebrew web columnist Yossi Tastassa says that family life has a special significance for Israelis living in Canada.

The boards of the two largest Jewish long-term care institutions in Montreal have voted unanimously to merge.

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which officially opens it doors on April 19, the 70th anniversary of Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, welcomed 600 teens from Canada, who were the museum's first visitors in late March.

The young people were part of approximately 10,000 students and adults taking part in the 2013 March of the Living, a weeklong program in Poland that includes visits to once-thriving sites of Jewish life and culture, followed by a march from Auschwitz-Birkenau on Holocaust Remembrance Day, in memory of the victims of Nazi genocide. In Canada, the program is sponsored by Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA and by local federations.

Although the museum's permanent exhibit will not be on display for another year, March of the Living organizers felt it "important that students visit this landmark museum, since it is, in fact, the world's only museum dedicated solely to the history of Polish Jews," said Eli Rubenstein, national director of March of the Living Canada and director of education for March of the Living International.

Three tikkun olam issues

I wrote a column called "The Josh committee" in March. I asked readers to become part of a community committee to get 10-year-old Josh adopted. The response was greater than to any previous piece I penned.

Posts on my blog went through the roof for two days, and the number of "shares" for the column on cjnews.com totalled about 1,500. Most importantly, staff at Jewish Family & Child said they received calls from interested families. It seems the Toronto Jewish community wants Josh to get a "forever home" and is committed to trying. Well done.

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

Let's now strengthen our efforts and give it another go-around. Please share this or the March column, at cjnews.com. Let people know Josh is a bright, sensitive and loving, little guy and that funds are available through JF&CS and the Ontario government for adoptive parents who need assistance. The "Josh committee" will not disband until we get Josh adopted. Imagine, when Josh is settled in his new home, and a few months go by and he is safe in his "forever home." Contact Marsha Urowitz at 416-638-7800, ext. 6306.

I wrote a series of columns in 2007 about a Jewish woman who was living in her car. She was forced to make her car her home in the cold of the winter because she was – and is – lacking important enzymes, and becomes seriously ill when exposed to potent fragrance chemicals. At that time, we were able to get her off the street. Some kind people stepped forward and assisted her with therapy, the resources she needed and ultimately a home.

Unfortunately, due to a change in circumstances, Rochelle could wind up back in her car again. This time, older and wearier, the prospect is a precarious one for her. Rochelle's challenge is finding a place that is fragrance chemical free (or close). If you know of a house, apartment or condo, or even a cottage, that Rochelle could live in with no exposure to chemicals such as scented detergents, scented soaps and lotions, and chemical-laden cleaning agents, let me know. She can pay an average rent. In spite of everything, Rochelle has a joie de vivre and wants to live the life she deserves to have. I know Rochelle to be a fine person. Contact me if you can help. Thanks.

A few weeks ago, immigration officials came into the home of a local Roma family and handcuffed the father, grandfather and grandmother, in front of their three young children (aged 10, 6 and newborn), and hauled them to a detention centre. The mother cries all day, and the children are too frightened to go to school. A few good Jews were able to put some money together to help them with immediate food expenses, diapers and other such things for their household. In this case, this family was scammed by an "immigration professional" who took their money but never filed their papers.

The Jewish community is beginning to step up to help the Roma and fight the Conservative's government Bill C-31, under which rejected claimants from countries on the so-called "safe country" list are not allowed to appeal. The bill discounts the treatment of the Roma in Europe. Funds are needed, as is a grassroots response. Contact me if you are interested in helping the Roma. Imagine officials coming to your door, handcuffing you and taking you away in front of your children. The trauma will likely never go away. Yasher koach.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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This Week

National

Shuls must change to remain relevant, rabbi says. *Page 12*

Mormon leader allays concern over baptisms. *Page 19*

Seniors

Winnipeg senior celebrates 100th birthday. *Page 24*

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The CJN to close

CJN Staff

The Canadian Jewish News will cease publishing in two months.

The board of directors arrived at the decision on Friday, April 19, having regard to the fact that there were still assets on hand with which to provide meaningful severance to the newspaper's employees and to wind up operations properly.

Donald Carr, president of *The CJN*, announced the decision to close the newspaper "with great sadness." (Please see Carr's message to readers, below.)

The current incarnation of *The CJN* was founded some 42 years ago. It was the initiative of the late Ray Wolfe, businessman and philanthropist. Wolfe brought together a consortium of individuals who bought the newspaper from Meyer Nurenberger and converted it into an award-winning, nationally oriented, weekly newspaper whose mission was "to serve the Jewish People, in Canada, in Israel and in all its habitations."

With its head office in Toronto, the newspaper published weekly editions in Toronto and Montreal.

The CJN fell victim to the tsunami-like changes that are currently sweeping across the print newspaper industry.

More information will become available to subscribers in the days ahead.

The last edition of *The CJN* will be June 20, 2013.

The Canadian Jewish news
Israeli voters surprise experts
The Canadian Jewish news
"The Torah speaks of four children..."
The Canadian Jewish news
lives have meaning

Message to our readers

With great sadness, I have to announce that *The Canadian Jewish News* will cease publishing its printed newspaper with its June 20 edition.

I never dreamed that I would be writing this. No nightmare of mine envisioned it.

For some time, we have known of the ravages that printed newspapers and magazines have been experiencing across the world. The digital age, in which news and commentary are retrieved instantly on smartphones, on computers and on all kinds of new devices, has overtaken the printed word. For the most part, the attractions of printed paper are welcome experiences only for an older generation and appear to be destined to be things of the past. Added to this that much of the world believes that news and commentary should be free.

Newspapers depend for their existence on advertising. It is their lifeblood. Growing numbers of advertisers are no longer convinced that they will get responses to what they pay for in printed publications. Add to that the economic situation in effect over the past few years has left little monies for advertising.

While we were alert to what was happening around us, we hoped that *The CJN*, with its "niche" attraction, would not be like others, and that our print edition would survive and flourish. We made substantial operating changes, which we thought would assist. After careful analysis, we have concluded that they do not.

We are pained to have to make this decision. We know the role that *The CJN* has played in the community for the past 42 years. Notwithstanding our editorial integrity and a cadre of superb writers, we face an evolving society, a different readership and changed demands.

If *The CJN* is to be a vibrant part of the future, it will only be as an enhanced and expanded digital edition. That is our hope. However, *The CJN* will disappear from your mailboxes and the newsstands.

We appreciate the loyalty of our subscribers and advertisers. As importantly, we appreciate our committed staff – some 50 people – many of whom have worked for the paper for so long and with the greatest dedication.

Reality dictates to us that "for every thing there is a season...."

Donald Carr, President
The Canadian Jewish News

Emor
Candlelighting: 7:55
Havdalah: 8:59
Greater Toronto Area

Canada's head of armed forces visits Israel – please see page 31

CANADA

Chabad Rabbi Dies

VANCOUVER — Rabbi Lipa Dubrawsky, educational director of Chabad Lubavitch of B.C. since 1988, died suddenly on April 7. He was 56. The third child of two Holocaust survivors, Rabbi Dubrawsky and his wife also served in Caracas, Venezuela, and worked for a time in New York City.

WORLD

New Leader Chosen

CAIRO — Egypt's Jewish community elected a new leader, Magda Haroun. The April 16 announcement follows the death of Carmen Weinstein on April 13, who led the community for more than 20 years. "My goal is to preserve the cultural heritage of the Egyptian Jews so that when we are gone it will endure, because it belongs to all Egyptians," Haroun, 60, told the *Daily News Egypt*. Haroun was unanimously elected to head the Egyptian Jewish Community Council. She told *Associated Press* there are about 40 Jews remaining in Egypt, mostly elderly women, split between Cairo and Alexandria. "I will continue taking care of them, socially, medically, gathering them for the holidays, and burying them with dignity," she said. Her father, Chehata Haroun, was a nationalist politician who was anti-Zionist, and she told *AP* she considers herself Egyptian first.

Report Clears School

NEW YORK — Brooklyn College did not engage in religious discrimination in its handling of an event critical of Israel, a report prepared by the City University of New York's general counsel and an outside lawyer concluded. It said the college erred in removing four students for disturbing a panel discussion about divesting from Israel, but cleared it of charges it removed the students because they were Jewish, the New York *Jewish Week* reported. "It is clear that there was no justification for the removal of the four students," the report said. But since other Jewish students attended without incident, the report concluded "there is no support for an inference of discrimination." More likely, their removal "was motivated by their political viewpoint." Karen Gould, the college president, apologized to the four students and pledged to implement new procedures for public events.

Six Canadians On Jewish Billionaire List

JERUSALEM — Six Canadians are among the 165 Jewish billionaires around the world that have $812 billion in joint wealth, *Forbes Israel* reported.

The Hebrew magazine released its Jewish billionaires list April 18.

Barry Sherman

The richest Jew in the world is Oracle CEO Larry Ellison, with a net worth of $43 billion (all figures US), according to Forbes, up $7 billion from last year. Ellison was fifth on the Forbes 2013 world billionaires list

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg is in second place with $27 billion, up $5 billion from 2012. He appeared 13th on the world list. Casino mogul and Republican Party political donor Sheldon Adelson is in third place with $26.5 billion and was 15th on the world list.

Pharmaceutical mogul Barry Sherman is the highest-ranking Canadian on the list at No. 57 (with $3.7 billion), followed by drugstore magnate Darryl Katz (No. 81, $2.6 billion), fashion retailer Lawrence Stroll (No. 100, $2.1 billion), liquor heir Charles Bronfman (No. 102, $2 billion), real estate developer Mitchell Goldhar (No. 128, $1.6 billion) and financier Gerald Schwartz (No. 142, $1.4 billion).

Eight of the Top 10 are from the United States. The remaining two are Russian. The other Jewish billionaires in the top 10 are Google's Larry Page with $23 billion; Google's Sergey Brin with $22.5 billion; Carl Icahn with $20 billion; George Soros with $19.2 billion; Alisher Usmanov with $17.6 billion; Mikhail Fridman with $16.5 billion, and Len Blavatnik with $16 billion.

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Teen experiences life at Queen's Park

Serves as legislative page

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Unlike many teenagers, Daniella Mikanovsky has already been involved in politics – years before she's even allowed to vote.

The 14-year-old student, who is finishing Grade 8 at Thornhill Public School, recently served as a legislative page at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario in Toronto.

During her term of duty, Mikanovsky was a messenger on the floor of the legislative chamber. She met key parliamentary figures and learned about Ontario's parliamentary system of government.

"I first heard about the page program when I was visiting Queen's Park with my family, in the summer before seventh grade," she said. "Near the end of the tour, the guide took us to a mock [legislative] chamber and explained where different people in the chamber would sit. She started explaining about Grade 7 and 8 students from all over Ontario who would also work in the chamber."

Mikanovsky was instantly intrigued and asked for more information. "I was interested about the program because I liked being challenged. I wanted to try something new and different. As well, I really felt that I met the criteria."

To apply for the Legislative Page Program, students must have an 80 per cent average or higher, be living and studying in Ontario, and be involved in the community and responsible.

"I had to write a 750-word essay explaining why I was a good candidate for the program," Mikanovsky said. "At the time of my application, I had volunteered several times, raised and donated money, was on my school's volleyball and basketball teams, was qualified with a bronze medallion [in swimming and lifesaving], worked on my school's yearbook, took care of my school's pets and was on the Media Club."

Continued on page 17

Daniella Mikanovsky

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Happy 65th to Israel

Politicians of all stripes turned out for ceremonies across Ontario last Tuesday to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. Top: MPPs and Ontario Jewish community leaders gather on the front lawn of Queen's Park for a flag-raising ceremony. Middle row, left: Israeli consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, DJ Schneeweiss, centre, cuts a flag-themed birthday cake at Markham City Hall, accompanied by Mayor Frank Scarpitti, left, and Ward 2 Councillor Howard Shore; right, Israeli ambassador to Canada Miriam Ziv and Foreign Minister John Baird in Ottawa. Bottom: Toronto city councillors and Mayor Rob Ford, second from left, raise the flag on the roof of City Hall.

From the editor's desk... appears on page 6

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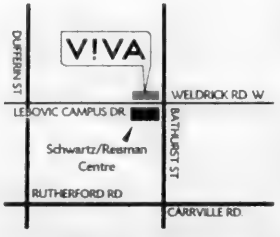

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Where Jews live

Last week, in this space, I referred to the most recent demographic study of the world's Jewish community published in the 2012 *American Jewish Yearbook*.

The article on population comprises Chapter 6 of a 23-chapter report on the state of world Jewry. The report is a treasure of important, interesting and worthwhile information.

The population study was compiled by Hebrew University professor Sergio DellaPergola. In this column I continue to mine its rich, instructive veins of detail and data.

It is no exaggeration to write that DellaPergola is the Jewish world's pre-eminent demographer. As his biography notes, inter alia, he "holds a PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is the former chairman and professor of population studies at the Hebrew University's Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry. He has published numerous books and over 100 papers on historical demography, the family, international migration, Jewish identification, and population projections in the Diaspora and in Israel."

DellaPergola's data is reliable. His observations are sound. His conclusions are insightful.

All the figures relate to 2012. And of course, DellaPergola discusses at great length the various ways by which one might be defined as being Jewish. I avoid any reference to that discussion and will simply report the final figures used by DellaPergola.

In 2012, the number of Jews in the world was 13,746,100.

Israel's Jewish population was 5,901,100. (We know Israel's Jewish population has since then exceeded 6,000,000.)

Throughout the rest of the world, there are 7,845,000 Jews. When one subtracts from this number, the number of Jews in the United States, namely 5,425,000, we are left with a total of 2,420,000 Jews outside Israel and the United States.

DellaPergola provides concise numbers for the Jews that comprise the Diaspora communities.

In North, South and Central America – not counting the United States – there are 758,200 Jews. By far, the largest of these communities is our own in Canada with 375.000. Canada is home to the fourth-largest Jewish community in the world. South America has 329,000 Jews and Central America, 54,200. Argentina's community is 181,800-strong. Brazil's is 95,300.

The total number of Jews in Europe is 1,426,900. The community there will never restore the Jewish civilization that the Nazis destroyed. Of that number, 1,109,400 Jews live in the countries of the European Union.

The three largest EU communities are: France, 480,000; the United Kingdom, 291,000 and Germany, 119,000. The size of the community in the European portion of the former Soviet Union is 276,900.

DellaPergola reports that some 119,600 Jews live in Australia and New Zealand and that 75,300 in Africa. Of this latter number 70,200 live in South Africa. In the once flourishing Jewish communities north of the Sahara in the Arab countries of the Maghreb, there are now only 3,600 Jews. And finally, DellaPergola notes that 40,000 Jews live in Asia.

This latest study by DellaPergola is a comprehensive sweep of world Jewry. In his concluding remarks, DellaPergola notes that most of the Diaspora communities are not growing. (Canada, for the time being at least, is an exception.) Typically, he writes in an understated manner, inviting – if not hoping, too – that we draw the appropriate conclusions.

"It is important to recognize that powerful and consistent trends constantly shape and reshape the demographic profile of world Jewry. It is important that we read current data in historical and comparative context. The recent momentum of Jewish population change in the United States and in most other countries of the world – at best tending to zero growth – contrasts with that of Israel, characterized by the continuation of significant natural increase.

"While the transition of Israel to the status of largest Jewish population in the world is grounded on solid empirical foundations, the United States remains a very large, culturally and socioeconomically powerful, creative, resilient and influential centre of Jewish life. The aggregate weight of other Jewish communities globally – aside from their continuing cultural relevance – is gradually decreasing. In a Jewish world that has become demographically more bipolar, but also more individualistic and transnational, the cultural and institutional projection and influence of the two major centres, Israel and the United States, tends to become more significant in other geographical areas of Jewish presence."

DellaPergola tells us with unsparing, footnoted detail where we are across the globe. He cannot tell us, of course, who we are. That detail lies within our own hearts. And it is for each of us to spend our entire lives to discover and act upon it.

– MBD

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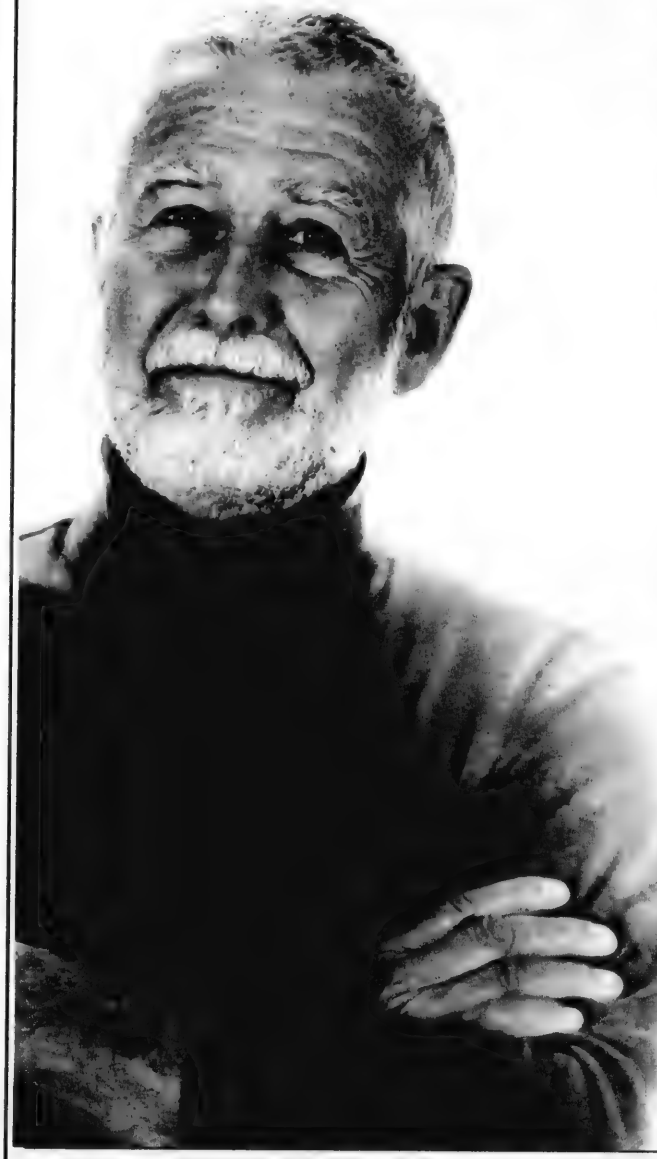

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They underestimate freedom's strength

As of this writing, more is known about the manner of the bombings last week at the Boston Marathon, the horrible toll of the human carnage and the details of the demise and capture of the alleged bombers than the motive for and planning of the murderous evil acts.

Two brothers, originally from Chechnya, long since residents and even citizens of the United States – but clearly not feeling settled there – Tamerlan, 26, and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, 19, were identified by authorities as the suspected perpetrators of the terror. Tamerlan was killed in a shootout last Thursday. Dzhokar is in custody, severely wounded from that same shootout. Early reports last week also claimed that an alleged accomplice was in custody, but that was never confirmed.

Too much information is still missing about the blood-soaked event for authorities to draw all the appropriate and necessary conclusions. But the interrogation of the younger brother is already underway. He is reported to be providing answers to questions.

For the families, however, of eight-year-old Martin Richard, 23-year-old Lu Lingzi, 29-year-old Krystle Campbell and 26-year-old Sean Collier, the four individuals killed in the marathon nightmare and the nearly 200 people injured and disfigured, full justice will be a worthy but comfortless result incapable of filling the space in the hearts left empty by the deliberate concussion of nails, ball bearings and other pieces of shrapnel that ripped through their loved ones and themselves.

Despite the ongoing investigation, we have no qualms in calling the bombings acts of terror by terrorists.

Innocent people in an entirely civilian setting – not military or security or other infrastructure installations – were targeted. Indeed innocent people were hideously and brutally cut down.

The open and free society that was the nurturing shelter of the alleged terrorists, was also, temporarily at least, cut down.

Open and free societies must constantly struggle with the deeply searing conundrum of the extent to which our freedoms can – or must – be curtailed in order to protect themselves from terrorists.

But terrorists, even home-grown ones, always underestimate the extent to which our freedoms give our societies the strength we need to persevere through the human devastation they cause, the resilience we find to rebuild broken homes and broken hearts, and the resolve we share never to surrender our cherished freedoms to those who have no understanding of what a true treasure those freedoms are.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres remained Israel's most popular choice for prime minister, but his Likud rival, incumbent Yitzhak Shamir, had managed to close the popularity gap considerably in recent months, according to a poll published in the daily Ma'ariv newspaper.

Dry Bones ISRAEL'S POLITICAL COMIC STRIP

TERRORISM IN OUR OPEN WESTERN SOCIETIES HAS THREE BASIC CHARACTERISTICS:
1 IT CAN STRIKE ANYWHERE,
BOSTON MARATHON
2 CAN BE FELT EVERYWHERE,
3 . . . AND DRAWS US TOGETHER NO MATTER WHERE ON THE GLOBE WE ARE.
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CIJA has helped

I read with interest the recent two-part series on the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) ("Is CIJA better or worse than what came before," March 28; "CIJA working in a more competitive market," April 11). While there are inevitably mixed views within the Jewish community about our collective advocacy, I would add my voice to those who have found CIJA to be highly responsive to the needs of the local community.

In 2011, my synagogue was defaced by antisemitic graffiti. I immediately called CIJA, which quickly responded with extraordinary support and resources in helping to manage our communications response and security improvements. Perhaps most importantly, CIJA didn't try to take things over. Instead, they quietly helped me and my congregation during a deeply upsetting time.

It is the practical work that CIJA and other agencies do, quietly and often without fanfare, that perhaps has the greatest impact. I for one am grateful that CIJA was there when Beth Tikvah Synagogue most needed support.

Rabbi Jarrod Grover
Beth Tikvah Synagogue
Toronto

• • •

CIJA has failed

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) has failed in almost every respect to unite and lead the Jewish community in Canada ("Three tikkun olam issues," April 18). Progressive-minded Jews of all ages who are supporters of Israel but not of the current Canadian government have been largely excluded from CIJA-related activities.

While the fight against recent immigration policy changes has been led in part by Jewish lawyers and doctors (many active in Jewish communal activities), none were consulted by CIJA. On its website, CIJA adopted a position largely favouring the federal government's so called immigration "reforms." If ever there was an issue that demanded a strong and high-profile Jewish response in opposition to the government's policies, immigration policy would surely qualify.

CIJA's fecklessness even reaches into the territory of combating antisemitism and anti-Israel activity. In its first major test, CIJA failed utterly to prevent the United Church from adopting its anti-Israel and boycott position last summer.

CIJA is disconnected and out of touch with the majority of Canadian Jews. The name CIJA makes clear that its priority is Israel, followed by Jewish, and in that order. It is shackled to the current government, believing that support for Israel and opposition to the Conservative government are mutually exclusive. What a mistake. One of the many benefits of the existence of a Jewish state to Diaspora Jews is the confidence, security and safety of such Jews to participate fully in the affairs of their home communities.

Philip Berger
Toronto

• • •

CIJA and federations

The article "Is CIJA better or worse than what came before" (March 28) raises some interesting conundrums for Jews across Canada. I met with the now-CIJA CEO, Shimon Fogel, and was told that CIJA, in its formation, had the "hechsher" of all the federations, but with no assurance of their input in decision-making, so there may be some support for the position taken by Prof. Sally Zerker that CIJA does not represent the Jewish community, but only those monied principals who cobbled it together.

Prof. Harold Waller intimates that CIJA's only rival is B'nai Brith Canada. There may be a few BBC lodges scattered across the country, with few members, but it may be mere hyperbole to suggest B'nai Brith is a truly national presence or a representative of Canadian Jewry.

Morley S. Wolfe
Brampton, Ont.

• • •

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

Case study on former Jewish inmates

I am a master's student in Carleton University's religion and public life program. My major research seeks to add to our knowledge of religious accommodation in Canadian prisons by way of archival research and a case study on former Jewish inmates. I'm seeking to interview adult members of the Jewish community who have been incarcerated about their conception of Judaism, as it relates to their time in prison and following their release. With the recent changes in policy to part-time federal-prison chaplaincy, I would like to pay special attention to any religious guidance they received while incarcerated and the challenges they may have faced in order to adhere to Jewish practices. Anonymity will be ensured.

Elizabeth Ennis Dawson
Ottawa
Elizabeth_ennisdawson@carleton.ca

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The Herzl comeback

Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka

It may seem like an exaggeration, yet it looks as if Theodor Herzl has been making a comeback recently. For some, Herzl never left; for others, it is Herzl finally discovered. But for all, Herzl has been more in the news in the past few years than previously.

David Matlow of Toronto and his exhibit of items from his collection of Herzl memorabilia, called *The Dream Fulfilled: Theodor Herzl and the Jewish State*, are a prime contributor, as is his new Herzl video. The Simon Weisenthal Center production about the life of Herzl is another factor.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka

And of course, U. S. President Barack Obama has made a great Herzlian impact with his insistence on laying a wreath at Herzl's grave during his recent visit to Israel, his first since moving into the White House. This went a long way toward correcting his major mistake of saying that Israel was created as a result of the Holocaust. We cringed at that thought, with its implication that Israel was a global corrective to the Jewish People for the brutal murder of six million, and the traumatization of every Jew. It is historically inaccurate, as the life of Herzl clearly shows.

Indeed, the return to Israel has been on our mind and embedded in the Jewish consciousness ever since the beginning of our long exile from the land of Israel. For anyone who doubts this, just check our daily prayers, and the thrice daily plea for God to return us to Jerusalem.

Back to Herzl. Herzl is the person who deserves the credit for catalyzing the re-establishment of the State of Israel in our time. He is Israel's George Washington or Sir John A. Macdonald, the father responsible for Israel's rebirth, even though he never saw the fruits of his labours.

Yet, Herzl is not a universally appreciated figure within the Jewish community. For those who did not receive any Jewish education, he is virtually unknown. And, alas, there are many who have received very intense Jewish education for whom Herzl is irrelevant, if not worse. I refer to that part of the Yeshiva stream that does not identify with Zionism, or is even anti-Zionist. For them, Herzl is worthy of disdain, not to be mentioned in the galaxy of significant Jewish personalities. After all, Herzl, David Ben-Gurion, Chaim Weizmann and other Zionist leaders were all non-religious, if not anti-religious. Why, then, should the religious community endorse them, or their achievements, in any way?

The unfortunate upshot of all this is the failure to fully appreciate the redemptive nature of Israel in our time. The great divide presently exploding into the media, related to the haredi community in Israel, is the natural progression of this refusal to acknowledge the theological legitimacy of the Jewish state.

Perhaps it is time to revisit the life of Theodor Herzl. Perhaps, if we can accurately place him in the right historical-religious place, we can undo the great damage done by the failure of so many to fully appreciate Herzl.

The late, great, sainted Chief Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, so instrumental in the promulgation of religious Zionism, argued with great conviction that the absence of religiousness in the Zionist leaders does not detract from their mission, and their accomplishment. Indeed, we can readily embrace Israel's rebirth as expressing God's desire, and therefore containing a redemptive quality, since God's agenda can be fulfilled via non-religious people, even people who do not believe in God.

Parenthetically, the notion of denigrating those who are not religious (read: not as religious as we are, or as religious as they should be), is fraught with danger. It is one thing to eagerly embrace the tenets of Judaism and to happily live by them. It is another to presume that because of this, one therefore becomes superior to others not as observant. This "arrogance of observance" flies in the face of the clear mandate we have to be humble in front of God. Indeed, it is safe to say that the true giants of Jewish tradition never evinced such attitudes, nor did they harbour them. Instead, they genuinely embraced everyone and accepted them.

There is nothing that stands in the way of embracing the re-establishment of the State of Israel as the work of God

The Talmud records an interesting observation regarding King Jeroboam son of Yoash, not the same person as the notorious Jeroboam son of Nebat, but not so different in behaviour. "Rabbi Yohanan said: How did Jeroboam the son of Yoash king of Israel merit to be counted with the kings of Judah? [a reference to Hosea, 1:1] Because he did not accept slander against Amos." (Pesahim, 87b)

The slander is referred to in Amos (7:10-11). "Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying Amos has conspired against you... For thus did Amos say – Jeroboam shall die by the sword..."

Jeroboam's reaction as reported in the Talmud went as follows: "Heaven forbid that this righteous man should have said that. And if he did, what can I do to him? The Shchinah told it to him."

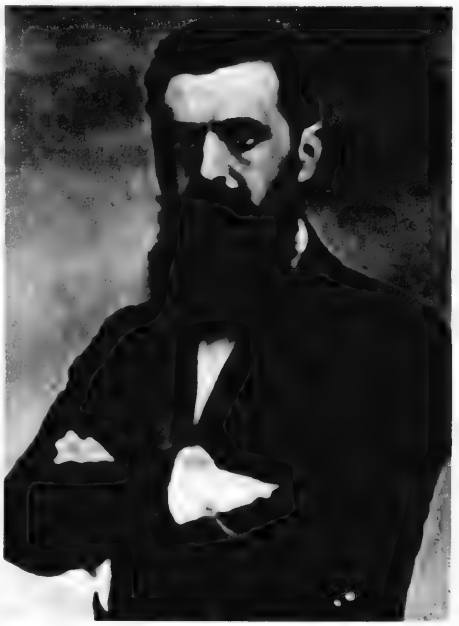
This fellow, Jeroboam – who was he, and what was his standing? Scripture is quite explicit about him. It records that "he did evil in the eyes of God. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin." (II Kings, 14:24) Not exactly a scintillating resume. In fact, a roundhouse condemnation.

Yet in almost the same breath we are told that he restored Israel's borders. (II Kings, 14:25) In a most remarkable scriptural observation on the life of this less than laudable king, we are told: "But God did not say to erase the name of Israel from under the heavens, and He saved them through the hand of Jeroboam son of Yoash." (II Kings, 14:27).

The point of this seemingly unnecessary verse, as it states the obvious, is that lest people think Israel was saved in spite of Jeroboam, we are told that Israel was saved through him, by God. If this does not shatter the notion that God works only through religious people, then nothing will. But only someone who stubbornly refuses to acknowledge this truth still maintains such a position.

Now let us see how Herzl stacks up against Jeroboam. Unlike Jeroboam, there is no evidence that Herzl tried to entice Israel into idolatry. Yes, he flirted with the idea of a mass conversion to Christianity, but quickly abandoned that idea. In the desperation of the times, one could readily understand what drove him. More to the point is that he did not make this move. Yes, he had a tree in his home, but in time he got rid of it. There is every reason to believe that within the severe constraints of his terrible circumstance, Herzl was a "*hozer b'tshuvah*," a true penitent. Even mentioning him in the same breath as Jeroboam is an unforgivable travesty.

Having proven beyond a doubt, and in the words of Scripture itself, that God works even through evil people, we can confidently affirm that it is entirely possible that God works through people who are not identified as "religious," and certainly not evil. Therefore, in the light of what has transpired since Herzl's time,



Theodor Herzl

there is nothing, I repeat, *nothing*, that stands in the way of embracing the re-establishment of the State of Israel as the work of God, expressing God's desires for the Jewish People.

As for Herzl himself, the superficial awareness we have is of a man who is responsible for the re-establishment of Israel. Less known is the depth of his dedication to this cause. It literally took over his life and led to his early death, at the age of 44. He was consumed with the love of his fellow Jews, and unstoppable in his relentless pursuit of a return to the homeland, to escape the virulent anti-semitism and lurking danger to life that Jews faced in his time. His resume is that of a towering figure thanks to whom Jews everywhere have a home to welcome them from imminent danger of any kind.

That qualifies Herzl as a massive lifesaver, a true hero in Jewish history, a hero to be admired by Jews of all stripes and affirmations, certainly no less than Cyrus. Regrettably, the venerated teachers going back many decades never imparted that feeling about Herzl and early Zionism. Those who developed a Zionistic fervour did so in spite of, rather than because of, their education.

Communally, I hope this changes immediately, if not sooner.

The sooner the Yeshiva world places Herzl on the pedestal he has justly earned and genuinely deserves, the better our chances of tackling the great divide that threatens to undermine Israel's coherence as a state for all Jews.

Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka is the spiritual leader of Congregation Machzikei Hadas in Ottawa.

Sticks, stones and the limits of free speech

Amira Hass is an Israeli correspondent for *Ha'aretz* presently living in the West Bank town of Ramallah. In the past she's resided in Gaza. While having a distinctly pro-Palestinian bent, she prides herself in telling stories that neither the Israeli nor the Palestinian establishments want to hear.

In that vein, on April 3, *Ha'aretz* published an article by Hass headlined "The inner syntax of Palestinian stone-throwing." In it, she opined that "throwing stones is the birthright and duty of anyone subject to foreign rule. Throwing stones is an action as well as a metaphor of resistance."

Coming in the wake of what some perceive as signs of a nascent third Palestinian intifadah, Hass' article has sparked a public debate, still ongoing, about freedom of speech, morality, journalistic ethics, incitement to violence and more.

Whether intended or not, the piece was published just a couple of weeks after three-year-old Edel Biton of the West Bank settlement of Yakir was critically injured when stones thrown by Palestinian youths hit the car in which she was travelling with her mother and two sisters.

Edel's mom lost control of the vehicle, colliding with a truck parked at the side of the road. All four were injured, Edel most severely. She sustained serious head wounds, from which she has yet to regain consciousness.

And if that timing wasn't troublesome enough, Hass' piece was published the day after the Ofer Military Court, just north of Jerusalem, issued a verdict convicting Waal al-Araja, a member of the Palestinian security services, of murdering Asher Palmer and his infant son Yonatan. In September 2011, while driving near Hebron, Palmer was hit in the head by a rock thrown by al-Araja. He was knocked unconscious and his car overturned in a roadside ditch. Both father and son died at the scene.

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

Hass and *Ha'aretz* were assailed soon after her article's publication. Politicians and publicists lambasted them. Leaders of Moetzet Yesha (the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza) lodged criminal complaints against both and held a demonstration outside the paper's offices, claiming the article encouraged Palestinians to continue hurling stones at Israelis in the West Bank, endangering them. As such, they claimed, the article was an act of criminal incitement.

While not addressing Hass' article directly, Brig.-Gen. Hagai Mordechai, outgoing commander of the IDF's Judea and Samaria division, declared that people engaged in stone-throwing were committing acts of terrorism.

Most of those supporting Hass did so less because they agreed with her argument for the legitimacy of stone-throwing, but rather because they believe she has the right to express her opinion and that *Ha'aretz* was justified when it published it. Some argued that from a strictly legal point of view, Hass' article was not an act of incitement.

Other *Ha'aretz* writers and its publisher, Amos Schocken, wrote and spoke about the inherent violence of Israel's long-term occupation of the West Bank, violence that must be juxtaposed with that of Palestinian stone-throwers. They also suggested reading Hass' article to its end, asserting that in essence it calls on the Palestinians to use Gandhian methods of civil disobedience, not violence, to confront Israel's military occupation.

I'll admit I'm usually ambivalent when it comes to Hass and her articles. They take me back to my days as the IDF's legal adviser to Judea and Samaria and having to answer what I perceived to be annoying questions from her regarding different aspects of the IDF's presence in the West Bank. On the other hand, I have respect for an Israeli reporter who tells us the Palestinian narrative from within, usually more openly than her Palestinian counterparts. And although her articles are usually critical of Israel and the IDF, she has also criticized the Palestinian Authority on many issues.

But Hass got it wrong this time. Completely wrong.

Yes, she has a right to express her opinion and should not be threatened with criminal proceedings for what she wrote. The debate should continue in the press, not the courts. But by encouraging Palestinians to throw stones at Israelis, she has lost her moral compass and created a double-edged sword that could easily boomerang. Violence is violence. No distinction based on the side one roots for can justify wanton acts of hostility and innocent victims.

Hass and her editors at *Ha'aretz* should be more responsible in the future.

Israel at 65: positive signs in the political war

In early April, the student council of the University of California at Santa Barbara held an all-night debate on an anti-Israel "Resolution to divest from companies that profit from apartheid." In the vote at the end of this exhausting session, the resolution was defeated, shocking the anti-Israel activists who had invested heavily in the effort to win an important battle on this campus, known for its radical politics.

At almost the same time, the student union at the University of Manitoba voted to deny any support to the organizers of the Israeli apartheid week on its campus, citing the discrimination and harassment inherent in these activities.

The events at Santa Barbara and Manitoba are indicative of a gradual turnaround in the anti-Israel demonization campaigns that began at the NGO forum of the infamous 2001 UN anti-racism conference in Durban, South Africa.

In both examples, the outcome was the result of very strong and convincing arguments exposing the fundamental immorality of the demonization campaigns that single-out Israel for attack by exploiting terms such as "apartheid" and "war crimes."

At York University, where, in contrast to Manitoba and Santa Barbara, the student council recently did the wrong thing by lining up to endorse an instant boycott resolution, media accounts quoted a Jewish student leader who condemned the action as "fundamentally racist." In the battlefield of ideology and ideals, highlighting the immoral basis of the political war to destroy Israel is essential. In the longer term, the aggressive messaging and tactics used to attack Israel at York and elsewhere will turn out to be counterproductive and self-defeating.

For many years, the leaders of this dirty political war have exploited the language of morality, human rights and humanitarian aid without much effective push-back. With no knowledge of the realities, entertainers such as Pink Floyd's Roger Waters have been recruited to join the boycott, giving it publicity. Among some powerful Christian groups, expressions of sympathy for "Palestinian suffering" at the hands of Israel emphasize theological antisemitic themes and images.

But the dominance of the anti-Israel campaigns on the digital battlefields of Facebook, blogs, Twitter, and Wikipedia is now being answered effectively. Similarly, at the United Nations, the blatant double standards of the Human Rights Council have been exposed, including in the contrast between automatic condemnations of Israel and the minimal response on Syria. In parallel, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and their allies are being named and shamed, and the displays of bias that were overlooked in the past now draw negative publicity, tarnishing their moral claims and impact.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

In Israel, there is growing recognition of the demonization and false narratives that consistently shift the blame of violence and warfare to Israel, while promoting the myths of Palestinian victimhood. A highly professional documentary on antisemitism, old and new, by Canadian producer Martin Himel, was shown in prime time on a major Israeli television channel, triggering extended discussions in the print media and blogs. And the hypocrisy of fringe Israeli academics and journalists who have given the façade of legitimacy to vicious anti-Israel campaigns around the world are subject to well-deserved criticism at home.

Both on university campuses abroad (including in Canada) and in Israel, there are now many more articulate and dedicated activists promoting the legitimacy of Zionism, compared to just a few years ago. In this sense, as well as others, Israel's stock on the international political market is going up, while the layers of fiction and lies leading to demonization are being peeled back. The impact of this revival will grow as more pro-Israel activists are trained and enter positions of leadership.

So, as Israel celebrates 65 years of growth, there is room for optimism regarding the political war. The immoral attacks on Israel's legitimacy and the Jewish right to national sovereignty are continuing, and there are many battles to be fought on this front. But this fight is no longer one-sided, and the recent victories are signs of a fundamental change in the right direction.

Letter from Wurzburg

The Johanna Stahl Center for Jewish History and Culture in Lower Franconia is named in honour of an accomplished Jewish woman from the southern German city of Wurzburg.

Stahl, born in 1895, was one of the first females in Wurzburg to attend university. Then, as a journalist, she wrote for a daily newspaper, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. In her spare time, she fought for the rights of women. During the Nazi era, she was a social worker in the besieged Jewish community.

Sheldon Kirshner in Germany

By the early 1930s, Lower Franconia was home to 8,500 Jews, of whom 2,200 resided in Wurzburg, a centre of Germany's wine industry. One of its Jewish residents, Ludwig Pfeuffer, Hebraicized his name to Yehuda Amichai after immigrating to Palestine and establishing himself as a major poet in Israel.

The remainder of the Jews of Lower Franconia could be found in the towns of Schweinfurt and Aschaffenburg and in villages like Arnstein, Thungen, Obbach and Rimpar (from which the ancestors of the Lehman Brothers banking family in the United States originated).

With the Nazi takeover in 1933, everything changed, observes Wurzburg's current mayor, Georg Rosenthal (who is not Jewish). "They became subject to systematic isolation and disenfranchisement, administrative arbitrariness and harassment and state-tolerated violence, all of which culminated in the pogrom night of Nov. 9, 1938," says Rosenthal, who last year invited former Jewish residents living abroad for a week-long visit to Wurzburg.

During Kristallnacht – a pogrom wholeheartedly supported by the Franconian Nazi leader Julius Streicher, a radical antisemite who published *Der Sturmer* – the synagogue was set alight, homes and businesses were looted and demolished, and four Jews were killed. Almost immediately afterward, 300 Jewish men were arrested and imprisoned in the Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps.

From 1941 until 1943, 2,063 Jews from the area who had not emigrated were sent away in five deportations from Wurzburg and in one transport from the nearby town of Kitzingen, says Rotraud Ries, a 56-year-old historian from the state of Hesse and the director of the Johanna Stahl Center for Jewish History and Culture in Lower Franconia.

On June 17, 1943, three months before the community was officially liquidated, Stahl herself was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in the final deportation, says Ries, a Protestant whose interest in German Jewish history was aroused by Leon Uris' novel *Exodus*.

Thirty to 40 Jews married to Christians, plus some children of mixed ancestry, were allowed to remain behind.

At the Shalom Europa Jewish Museum, an annex of the Johanna Stahl Center, the names of local Jews murdered during the Holocaust are etched into six glass panels. I jotted some of their names in my notebook: Frieda Heinemann, Norbert Fulder, David Benjamin, Lina Altmann, Wilhelm Reinstein and Gretchen Lewald.

Eerily enough, the persecution and deportation of Jews were an echo of the past. Jews, having settled in Wurzburg about 900 years ago, were subjected to violent antisemitism during the First Crusade in 1096. Further pogroms erupted in 1298 and 1349. In the early 15th century, Jews were permitted to return to Wurzburg. When they were persecuted yet again in the 17th century, Jews gravitated toward villages in the countryside.

In 1576, Wurzburg's local ruler, a prince bishop, built a hospital on the grounds of a Jewish cemetery. The tombstones were removed and used as building materials.

Construction workers discovered them in 1987, and today, most of the 1,435 headstones are stored on shelves in a locked room in the basement of the Shalom Europa Jewish Museum, constituting the world's single largest collection of medieval Jewish tombstones. A few of them are displayed in glass cases in the museum, which opened in 2006.

It was not until the beginning of the 19th century that Jews were permitted to resettle in Wurzburg. Yet in 1819, in the so-called Hep-Hep riots, which broke out in Wurzburg and spread to other cities, Jews were verbally and physically abused. Nonetheless, Wurzburg developed into a hub of Orthodox Judaism under the leadership of Rabbi Abraham Bing.

At the end of World War II, a trickle of Jews began returning to Wurzburg, which was heavily damaged by a massive Allied air raid in March 1945.

In the mid-1950s, Julius Schuster and his son, David, who hailed from Brueckenau, a town some 80 kilometres north of Wurzburg, returned to what was then West Germany.

[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

Josef Schuster

Rotraud Ries

In 1938, before the advent of Kristallnacht, the Schusters were taken to Buchenwald and incarcerated there for seven months. In exchange for giving up their properties, they were released and given permission to leave Germany in December 1939.

Bound for Palestine, they settled in Haifa. In 1954, David's wife gave birth to a boy, Josef. Meanwhile, having been given back their German properties, they left Israel and settled down in Wurzburg.

"They couldn't manage the properties from Israel," said Josef Schuster, the current leader of Wurzburg's Jewish community – a title he inherited from his father – as well as president of the Congregation of Jewish Communities in Bavaria.

Now a physician specializing in internal medicine, Josef Schuster was raised in a German milieu and felt comfortable growing up in Germany.

"My parents gave me the feeling we were here to stay in Germany. We were not sitting on our suitcases. They told me all about our history."

Schuster's wife, Jutta, comes from a similar background. Born in Berlin, her mother was a "submarine" during the last phase of the Nazi period, surviving underground in hiding.

By the late 1980s, only 200 Jews, mainly of eastern European origin, lived in Wurzburg, whose population stands at around 130,000 today. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, tens of thousands of Jews streamed into reunified Germany.

Hundreds arrived in Wurzburg, bolstering its Jewish population by a considerable margin. "We welcomed them with open arms," says Schuster, who's also vice-president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, the chief umbrella group of Germany's national Jewish community.

These days, 950 of the estimated 1,100 Jews in Lower Franconia live in Wurzburg and its suburbs. And as in the rest of Germany, where there are 110,000 registered Jews in 105 communities, Soviet Jews comprise at least 70 per cent of Lower Franconia's Jewish population.

As might be expected, elderly immigrants have not really adjusted to their new surroundings. They have not mastered German and are dependent on social welfare payments. But their children have acclimatized themselves to Germany and form the backbone of Wurzburg's reconstituted Jewish community.

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ROMSPEN

Shuls must remain relevant, says rabbi

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman of Hebrew Union College believes synagogues that don't change will become irrelevant.

Unfortunately for a packed crowd at Holy Blossom Temple on April 11, a snowstorm kept Rabbi Hoffman in New York for the second in a series of two lectures on "The End of the Shul as We Know It?" co-sponsored by Holy Blossom, Beth Tzedec Congregation, and the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto.

Rabbi Aaron Levy
[J.M. MacLeod]

But with such an urgent question on the agenda, Rabbi Hoffman's keynote lecture was delivered eloquently by U of T's Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein.

"Non-Orthodox synagogues have never been very religious," wrote Rabbi Hoffman. Instead, they focus on gains that "[do] not require them to wrestle with God."

This must change, believes Rabbi Hoffman, the author of dozens of books and co-president of Synagogue 3000, an organization re-envisioning synagogues as "sacred and vital centres of Jewish life."

Will religion here in Canada go the way of Europe, where "tourists [view] religion under glass," Rabbi Hoffman asked, or of the United States, where it's alive and well?

Religious institutions compete just like businesses do, he contends. In the United States, religions have operated in a "free market," while in Europe, established churches have enjoyed state aid.

"As goes the church, so goes the synagogue." In England, the position of chief rabbi has traditionally privileged Orthodoxy, while other denominations struggle for market share.

"The future for non-Orthodox synagogues in Europe is bleak, unless they are forced into the market."

The same is true, Rabbi Hoffman believes, in Israel, "where one brand [of Judaism] enjoys power."

Rabbi Hoffman sketched the evolution of the North American synagogue, from late-1800s immigrants who built shuls on the model of grand churches and cathedrals like those they'd seen in Europe to later immigrants from Poland and Russia whose cultural Judaism fuelled the growth of the Conservative movement as what sociologist Marshall Sklare called an "ethnic church."

When the end of overt antisemitism threatened to make cultural Judaism obsolete, each era redefined the synagogue in various ways: the fight for civil rights, saving Soviet Jews, supporting Israel, and later, life-cycle events, "ritualized demonstrations that family ties still bind."

Today, organizations such as Chabad compete for life-cycle events, and the synagogue is again in trouble, even as evangelical Christianity prospers and "America finds itself awash once again in spiritual awakening" – an awakening too often neglected by synagogues, Rabbi Hoffman argues.

Any other strategy to regain market share usually backfires, as "religions compete not only with each other, but with other cultural offerings."

Religion as community is a lost cause if "synagogues are not perceived as communities that care," he contends.

Courting young families alienates baby boomers with a "purely pediatric religion that doesn't have anything to offer adults."

Meanwhile, leaders still perceive Jewish life as a wheel, with the synagogue at the hub, while young adults seek a less centralized Jewish life, leading to the "growing irrelevance of programs to bring in the troops from the periphery to the centre, and while they're at it, bring in the dues."

"The last thing overly busy people need is more ways to keep busier," wrote Rabbi Hoffman, "but what busy people still need is transcendent meaning... spirituality."

This is where the synagogue may yet find its strength and its future. "As synagogues abandon their old tasks of ethnicity... programs, busyness for its own sake, pediatric Judaism... Can they become communities of meaning?"

Canada, Rabbi Hoffman argues, may find its own answers. It could follow the path of Europe or of the United States, or perhaps, in our climate of multiculturalism, find "a distinctly Canadian model."

Two local rabbis carried on the discussion. Rabbi Aaron Levy, of Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism, spoke about how his organization is reaching younger Jews unaffiliated or disinterested in Jewish life through "unabashed Jewish spirituality."

He says some strategies are no longer effective. Programs centred around "the Holocaust and Israel... while understandable... don't appeal to young adults today. Many Jews are now less or not at all concerned with the perpetuation of the Jewish people in and of itself."

Rabbi Levy added: "Judaism predates modern political Zionism and the Shoah by millennia."

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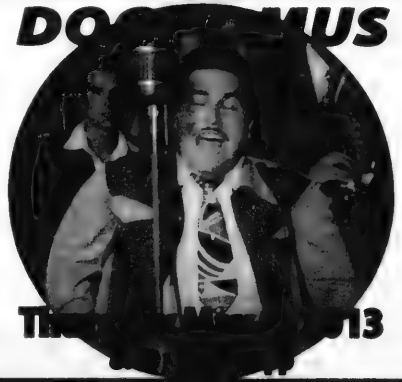

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Israel remains a beacon of stability in region

As Israel celebrated its 65th anniversary last week, the world's attention was focused, appropriately, on the horrors of the terrorist attack in Boston. The events in Boston caused even the worrying developments in North Korea – and its threats against South Korea and the United States to fade from media view.

Meanwhile in the Middle East, with a great many Arab countries from Libya to Yemen in one state or another of crisis or instability, Israel remains a beacon of stability and a model for the region.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

A good news story in the April 15 *Times of Israel* reported on an Independence Day party that Israel Advanced Technologies Industry (IATI), a high-tech umbrella group, threw in Tel Aviv.

The celebration showcased Israeli innovations and contributions to multinational technology companies before a gathering of ambassadors and diplomatic staff from over 40 countries. According to the *Times*, many of the world's top tech companies with research and development branches in Israel – including Microsoft, Google, Oracle, IBM and Yahoo – spoke about "how Israeli technology contributes to the bottom line of both their parent corporations and the state."

Drawing on data provided by IATI, the *Times* reported that "[o]ver 250 multinationals have research and development centers in Israel, 80 of them Fortune 500 companies, with a majority (66 per cent) belonging to U.S. companies. During 2011, international tech companies bought out 83 Israeli start-ups (many of which were either converted into or merged into existing R & D centers), with the buyouts amounting to $5 billion."

This is just a small part of a much larger story of great importance to Israel's well-being, even if it is usually overshadowed by less promising political developments involving Israel's neighbours.

• • •

Looking around the region, no country remotely compares to Israel's hard-earned reputation as a "start-up nation" – although Turkey remains the only other country with a fairly healthy economy. Despite hostility from Turkey's prime minister, the state maintains surprisingly solid trade relations with Israel.

Last week, however, Turkey made news for quite a different reason.

The April 16 *Globe and Mail* carried a *Wall Street Journal* story from Istanbul that described the suspended jail sentence handed to Fazil Say, a famous Turkish concert pianist, composer and cultural ambassador. His crime? Insulting Islam in some of his Twitter posts.

Fazil Say

According to the Turkish courts, Say's 10-month suspended sentence remains in effect for five years as long as he doesn't re-offend by "explicitly insulting religious values," as the law reads.

In response, Say released the following statement: "On behalf of my country, I'm sorry about the decision reached at the end of the trial. I'm disappointed in terms of free speech. That I have been punished despite an absence of guilt is disconcerting not so much for me, but for freedom of speech and belief in Turkey."

Indeed, with the threat of incarceration hanging over his head, Say will either remain defiant or decide to self-censor. In any case, the effect of his sentence is to inhibit others who dare to speak freely.

In the past few years alone under the Islamic-oriented but "democratic" government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey has jailed more journalists than either Iran or China.

Say is neither the first nor most famous cultural figure to incur the wrath of Turkey's very limited tolerance of free speech.

In 2005, Orhan Pamuk, the country's most famous writer (and a 2006 Nobel laureate), faced up to three years in jail on charges of "insulting Turkishness" for telling a Swiss newspaper that "30,000 Kurds and one million Armenians were killed in these [Turkish] lands, and nobody but me dares talk about it".

Only under an international barrage of criticism did Turkey drop the charges. Still, Pamuk felt compelled to flee his native country temporarily. And although the law was amended in 2009, Pamuk was ordered in 2011 to financially compensate six people who brought the original complaint over his comment for offending their "honour and self-respect, as well as the feelings of belonging to a nation."

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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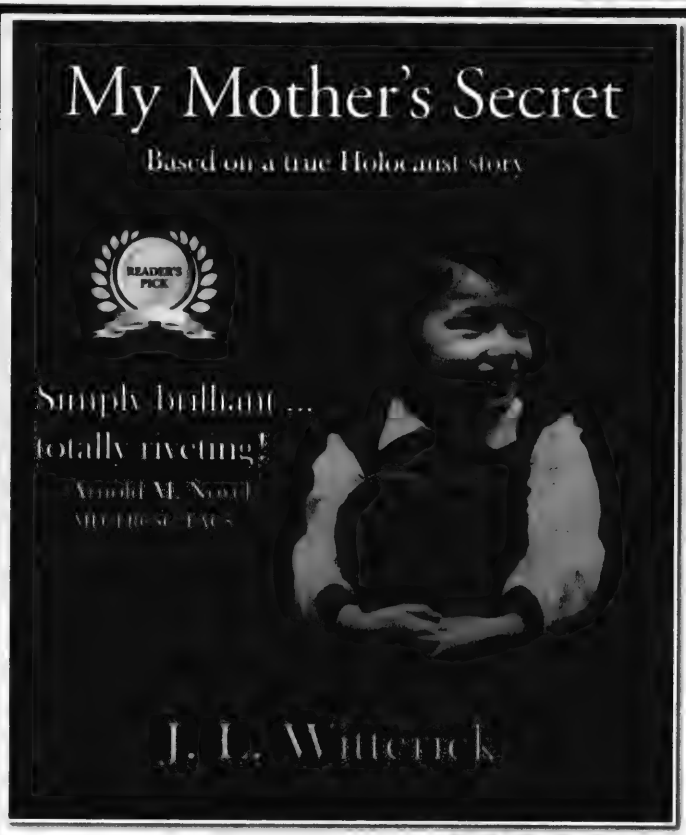

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COTLER VISITS CHAT: Students at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy's Kimel Centre campus in Vaughan recently hosted Liberal MP and former justice minister and attorney general Irwin Cotler, centre. He spoke to Grade 12 students on the topic of "Jewish Values and the Pursuit of Justice." Pictured with Cotler, from left, are Benji Fages, Lexi Brenner, Josh Eisen and Ezra Tanen.

Toronto-area teens get set to perform community service

Compiled by CJN Staff

Five hundred Toronto-area teens will participate in a day of community service and improvement projects when they take part in J–Serve, the Global Day of Jewish Youth Service, on April 28.

They will join some 10,000 Jewish teens from across North America, Europe and Israel, who will all be doing community service on the same day.

J–Serve is the Jewish component of Youth Service America's annual Global Youth Service Day and also coincides with the sixth annual ChangeTheWorld-Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge. The province's three-week challenge kicked off April 21 in partnership with Volunteer Canada's National Volunteer Week, Canada's largest celebration of volunteers, volunteerism, and civic participation.

J-Serve Toronto, co-ordinated by BBYO in partnership with dozens of youth movements, synagogues and social service agencies from across the city, is one of over 100 international projects in which youth in grades 6 through 12 will participate as they explore the Jewish values of gemilut chasadim (acts of loving kindness), tzedakah (charitable giving) and tikkun olam (the responsibility to repair the world).

This is the fourth year that Jewish teens from across the GTA will have the opportunity to participate in the international initiative, with funding from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the BBYO Panim Institute.

Participants can choose from more than a dozen project options, including planting trees and shrubs at city parks, assembling education kits for families in need or playing games and hosting a sing-along for young adults with physical and cognitive challenges.

For more information or to register as a teen participant or adult chaperone for the event please visit www.jserve.ca .

Correction

The article, "Shuls celebrate special anniversaries" (CJN, April 18) included incorrect information about Beth Torah Congregation's 50th-anniversary celebration. The April 28 event will be held at the shul, 47 Glenbrook Ave., and will be catered by the Park Hyatt.

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Page blogs experience

Continued from page 3

In August 2011, Mikanovsky received the good news. "My sister woke me up at around 9 a.m., an early time for me to be awake during summer break. She gave me the phone, and the woman on the other side explained to me that I had been accepted to the page program. At first I didn't believe her and thought I was still asleep and dreaming. But after the second time she told me this, I was ecstatic. I was literally running around the house smiling. I even woke up the next day still happy."

Her term of duty was set to begin on Nov. 13, 2011, but when former Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty prorogued the legislature's session, the program's start date was moved to February 2013.

To prepare for the page program, Mikanovsky had to memorize the names, faces and ridings of all 107 MPPs, as well as where they sit in the chamber. On her orientation day, she was told she had to learn how to get around in the legislative building, and, more importantly, how to deliver four key documents.

"These documents are reports by committees, bills, motions and petitions. Pages take these documents from the MPPs to either the Speaker [of the Legislative Assembly] or the clerks. Of these things, the most difficult task was memorizing all the MPPs."

During a typical day in the program, pages arrive at Queen's Park at 8 a.m. dressed in their uniforms. They deliver messages and water to the MPPs in the legislative chamber, take classes in legislative process and mathematics, and meet with key legislative players, such as the party leaders and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Mikanovsky decided to document her experiences in an online blog that she titled The Perks of Being a Legislative Page (http://legislativepage.blogspot.ca). She wrote of her responsibilities, being page captain and meeting many important figures.

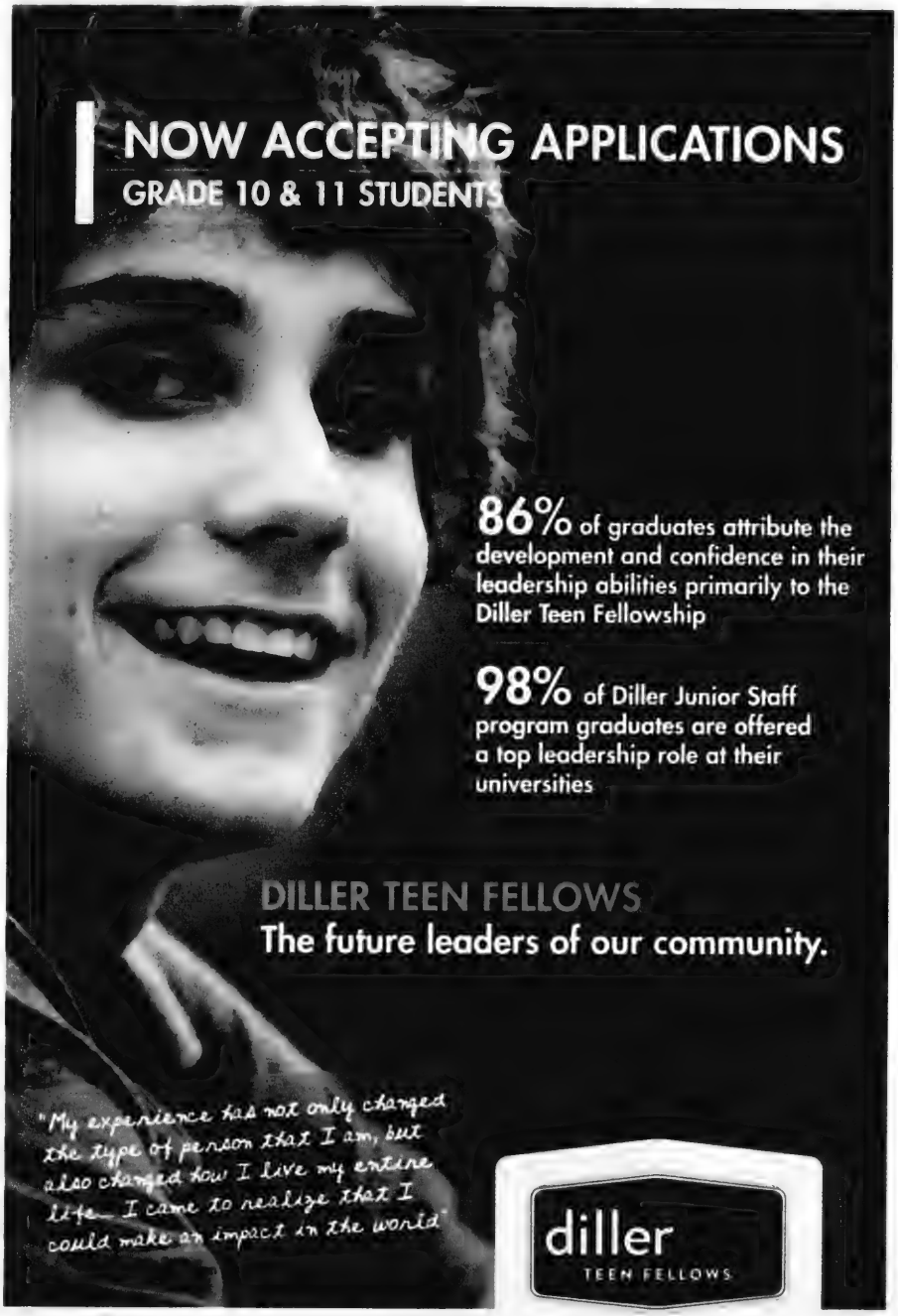
"I got to have lunch with Mr. Dave Levac, Speaker of the House, and with Deborah Deller, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I also really enjoyed meeting with the honourable David C. Onley, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's representative in Ontario (the lieutenant governor), and Ms. Kathleen Wynne, the newly appointed premier of Ontario."

Mikanovsky said she created her blog because she wants to be a writer when she is older. "I want to write books or perhaps be a journalist. Writing a blog would help me enhance my writing skills. Also, when I was researching about the Legislative Page Program, I noticed that there weren't any blogs that were written by pages about their experiences. If I were to write one, other kids can be inspired to embark on the same amazing journey that I did."

While Mikanovsky enjoyed every aspect of being a page, she said the biggest highlight from her time at Queen's Park was making amazing friendships. "All the kids I met there were so nice, so funny, so talented, so great to be around every day. We spent over 40 hours together every week."

She said the most important thing she learned is how Ontario runs. "It may not seem this way when one looks at the chamber during Orders of the Day, but the MPPs are always busy, always working. Also, there are so many things that the parliament needs to keep track of! I found it almost surprising just how much the people there knew about our large province."

Through her blog, Mikanovsky said she hopes to encourage other students to become a page. "The three weeks I spent at the legislature have been some of the best weeks of my life."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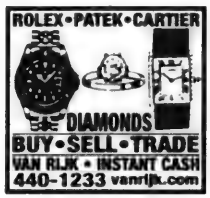
Calgary police decline to lay hate crime charges

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Calgary police will not lay hate promotion charges for materials posted on a Muslim website that attack Jews and cite the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Const. Eric Levesque, co-ordinator for hate crimes for the Calgary police, said the materials posted on the website, though offensive, do not cross the threshold into actionable hate speech. "Offensive language in terms of referring to Jews leading lives of debauchery may be offensive, but it is not a violation of the law," he said.

Levesque was referring to an excerpt from the website operated by the Muslim Council of Calgary (MCC), which was the subject of a complaint by B'nai Brith Canada. A second excerpt investigated by police originated in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a Czarist antisemitic forgery that accused Jews of conspiring to dominate the world. Levesque said the MCC pulled the reference "once they realized what it was. It's my understanding that as soon as they were made aware of it, once they learned about it, they pulled it."



The materials in question had been removed from the site when *The CJN* attempted to access them, but copies could still be found online via the blog site, Blazing Cat Fur.

Among the materials downloaded from the MCC site, one section accused Jews of being eternal "enemies of the Islamic ummah [nation] since…Mohammad… began his call to Allah." The site also states it is unlawful to end war or jihad between unbelievers, including Jews and Muslims, until the day of resurrection.

Another quote attributes all internal Muslim problems to Jews' "artful plotting."

In a section on the hijab, the site stated: "Jews have an important role in the destruction of nations through the Fitna (seduction temptation) of women."

Another excerpt stated, "The Jews strive their utmost to corrupt the beliefs, morals and manners of Muslims. The Jews scheme and crave after possessing the Muslim lands, as well as the lands of others." It blames Jews for "spreading destructive thoughts, beliefs and ideologies, such as Freemasonry, Qadiaanism, Bahaaism, Teejaanism and others."

Levesque said the material in question had been posted to the website by a third party, though "it went through a moderator.

"I'm sure they've got a lot of postings coming through and this one got through."

Levesque called the website "legitimate…Hate websites are usually in your face. This is a legitimate website that any religion…would have to give information about their faith."

He was critical of B'nai Brith for asking for a hate crime investigation before contacting the MCC.

"Is it in the interests of harmonious community relations? Do we need to go from zero to 100 and put out a national press release?," he asked.

"Ultimately, what we want is harmonious relationships between these communities…I didn't want to see a legitimate Muslim website being impugned in the media as being antisemitic, because that is not the case."

Jeffrey Smith, chair of community relations for the Calgary Jewish Federation, said the postings were "clearly offensive and clearly antisemitic."

He said the community had been informed about the problematic nature of the website by CIJA, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, and later learned the postings had been there from July 2012. The federation emailed the MCC asking that the postings be removed. "They took it off when it came to the [their] attention.

"It is their position that it's a third party. They have a disclaimer that the views are not the views of the MCC," he said.

In a statement published on the MCC website, the organization's chair, Abraham Ayache said:

"Information about controversial articles placed on our affiliate website, muslimsofcalgary.ca, was recently brought to our attention…We do not condone and fully reject the promotion of intolerance and hate. Having investigated this matter without delay, we promptly removed the impugned material as being inconsistent with MCC's views."

"For any unintentional offence that may have been caused by this material to fellow Canadians and our friends in the Calgary Jewish community, we sincerely apologize."

Smith said he's accepting the MCC's explanation that the material was posted by third parties and that the organization did not know their nature.

He said Jewish community does not have much of a relationship with the Sunni MCC. "We have better relations with the [Shiite] Ismaili Muslims." However, in light of the incident, the federation is asking the MCC for one-on-one meetings. "Our mandate is for interfaith dialogue…We would like to see not just the apology we've seen, but something posted with an educational piece on the Protocols."

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Mormon ban on 'baptizing' Shoah victims upheld

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The lay leader of Montreal's Mormons sought to allay any concern that his church is lax in preventing posthumous "baptisms" by its members of Holocaust victims.

Eric Jarvis, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Mount Royal Stake, as the region is known, reaffirmed the church's official policy since 1995 and its commitment to enforce it.

Last year, the church's world leadership, faced with evidence that violations continue, issued a statement reiterating that safeguards are in place and sanctions will be imposed on members who submit the names of those who died in the Holocaust for proxy baptism.

Jarvis, a psychiatrist at the Jewish General Hospital (JGH), was speaking at a Yom Hashoah commemoration at the Mormon church in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce on the evening of April 14. This was the first time that a Mormon church in Montreal hosted a Christian commemoration of the Holocaust in the 34 years that the event has been organized by the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal.

This commemoration is believed to have been the first of its kind at any Mormon congregation in Canada.

Jarvis said he was grateful to be given the opportunity to "feel less of an outsider" to the sorrow of the Jewish people, with whom he has enjoyed professional and personal relationships.

Jarvis read two statements issued by the church's highest leadership in February 2012 that "strictly prohibit" any member from entering any name other than those of known ancestors for this symbolic conversion to the faith. This is a common practice among Mormons, who maintain one of the largest genealogical databases in the world at their Salt Lake City, Utah headquarters.

"While no system is foolproof in preventing the handful of individuals who are determined to falsify submissions, we are committed to taking action against individual abusers by suspending the submitter's access privileges [to the church's genealogical database]. We will consider whether other church disciplinary action should be taken," the statement reads.

Jarvis said that, as per a follow-up statement, notice of this prohibition was sent to all Mormon congregations to be read out and posted on bulletin boards, as it has been in Quebec churches.

There are about 10,000 Mormons in Quebec in about 30 congregations.

DANI employees aid autistic boy

Compiled by CJN Staff

A boy with autism was returned safely to his family thanks to efforts of employees of DANI (Developing and Nurturing Independence), a Jewish organization that supports teenagers and young adults with special needs, according to an email from Toronto Police Service's Const. Rui Simoes.

In the email, Simoes wrote that DANI employees Sarah Levinson and Ashley Orrett found the boy running in and out of traffic near Davenport and Walmer roads.

The two women, who were in the area with a group of DANI participants, called the police, and while responding officers were on the phone, Levinson headed to the boy to try to calm him down and help him, the email stated. She brought him to safety inside a nearby Tim Hortons while waiting for the police to arrive.

The boy was unable to tell them where he lived, and the police had not received a call regarding a missing boy, but Levinson and Orrett determined he was able to direct them to his house.

When police arrived, Orrett stayed with the DANI participants, while Levinson went with the boy to keep him calm as the police drove him home to reunite him with his father.

"It is without hesitation that I could say both Sarah and Ashley definitely made our job easier because of their willingness and desire to help people," Simoes wrote.

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Camp Massad hosts 'shtick and song' fundraiser

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A fundraising evening next month continues Camp Massad's 60th anniversary celebration, which began last August with an alumni reunion.

"Massad Live @ 60 – An Evening of Shtick, Song and Celebration" takes place May 26 at the MTC Warehouse Theatre.

The camp's executive director, Daniel Sprintz, said that the director of the evening program is Steven Schipper, the artistic director of the Manitoba Theatre Centre. He will be assisted by up-and-coming young Winnipeg singer Elliot Lazar. Toronto actor David Gale – a former Winnipegger and former Massad camper and counsellor – is the host.

Also performing at the event are the sketch comedian Alan Kliffer, the Alumni Accapella in Action Group and the Camp Massad Alumni Choir. Local musicians Kinzey Posen and Shayla Fink – members of the klezmer group, Finjan – will lead the house band.

"Shtick," one of Camp Massad's programs, consists of satirical plays and songs that campers make up as part of the camp experience – along with the traditional camping activities such as swimming, hiking and sports.

Camp Massad is the only Hebrew-immersion camp in North America. Massad grew out of the Talmud Torah Hebrew School and Zionist youth groups. The campsite at Winnipeg Beach was originally a Habonim camp. With the founding of the State of Israel, most of the Habonim leadership was anticipating making aliyah.

One of the Habonim youths, Soody Kleiman, had spent nine months in Israel. In Israel, he had learned about two Hebrew-speaking camps – both Camp Massads – in Pennsylvania, and he felt that a similar camp could work for Winnipeg as well. On his return to Winnipeg in 1952 (prior to his making aliyah), Kleiman and some friends were able to drum up support for Camp Massad from the leadership of the Karen Hatarbut organization (Labour Zionists). Among their most important supporters was Rabbi Abraham Kravetz, the principal of Talmud Torah, who promoted the new camp to his students.

"Our Habonim camp had always kept kosher," Kleiman said. "And we had a Shabbat service."

Kleiman became the new camp's first senior counsellor and program director. Ed Yuditsky, the principal of the Talmud Torah in Regina, became the camp's first director. Leona Billinkoff was recruited to be the first administrator. Billinkoff had been a volunteer at Talmud Torah and had impressed Rabbi Kravitz with her abilities. She served as the camp's administrator for 25 years and left her stamp on Massad. Billinkoff's late husband, Alec, a builder by profession, helped build the camp's physical infrastructure.

"The programs we set up are little changed to this day," said Kleiman, still vigorous as he nears 80. "I am delighted that the camp has succeeded so well."

One of the Camp Massad board's goals over the 60th anniversary year has been to raise $1 million to revitalize the campsite – located about a 45-minute drive north of Winnipeg.

"We are planning on moving the cabins closer to the surrounding forest and planting trees around them," Sprintz said. "We want to build a new soccer field and a new bus loop. We also want to level the site to improve drainage and install a new irrigation system to keep the grounds green throughout the summer.

Massad and Sprintz also have another reason to celebrate. Sprintz has been chosen to participate in the Foundation for Jewish Camps' Lekhu Lakhem Jewish Camp Directors program. This is a two-year professional development program designed to enhance the skills and success of North America's leading Jewish camp directors.

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DEBATE TOURNAMENT WINNERS: Robbins Hebrew Academy Grade 8 students Sophie Sklar, front row, left, and Aviva Ripstein comprised the winning team at the third annual Jewish Middle School Debate Tournament, held at the south campus of the Leo Baeck Day School on April 17. Behind them are tournament judges Elaine Steiner, left; Seymour Epstein and Eli Savage, a Leo Baeck middle-school teacher and initiator of the tournament. With six schools, the debating competition saw its largest participation yet, including Associated Hebrew Schools, Danilack campus; Bialik Hebrew Day School; Toronto Heschel School; both campuses of Leo Baeck and Robbins Hebrew Academy, Bathurst campus. *[David Bale photo]*

Jewish gay/lesbian conference slated for Winnipeg

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Arthur Blankstein and Paula Parks, co-chairs of the 21st World Conference of GLBT Jews, believe it was bashert that Winnipeg would be the first Canadian city to host the world's largest regular event for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered Jews.

Parks and Blankstein attended the 2010 conference in Los Angeles. "We thought that some day, it would be great to bring this international gathering to Winnipeg. Well, that 'some day' is here," Parks said.

Arthur Blankstein and Paula Parks

"With the [expected opening] of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights here next year, we thought that this conference would be a great way to promote Winnipeg as the place to celebrate diversity."

Organizers expect some 250 people to attend the event, which runs July 5 to 7 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

""We have people coming from England, South America, Europe and Israel in addition to Canada and the United States," Blankstein said.

"We are excited to show off Winnipeg's famous hospitality and demonstrate our world-renowned reputation as a first-class host for international conferences and events."

Event partners include the World Congress of GLBT Jews (also known as Keshet Ga'avah), Winnipeg's Anakhnu Jewish GLBT Group, the Rady Jewish Community Centre, Congregation Shaarey Zedek and Temple Shalom (Winnipeg's Reform congregation), with funding provided by the Asper Foundation, the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Foundation and the City of Winnipeg.

The Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, Gray Academy of Jewish Education, Hillel Winnipeg, Jewish Child and Family Service, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Tourism Winnipeg and Keshet have also signed on as community partners.

The first gay and lesbian Jewish organization in the world was the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group, formed in London, England, in 1972, Blankstein said. It was quickly followed by the first gay and lesbian synagogues in Los Angeles and New York's Congregation, and by 1975, gay and lesbian Jewish groups were active in San Francisco, Boston, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Miami.

The first International Conference of Gay Jews took place in August of 1976, and in 1980 in San Francisco, the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Organizations was officially born. Since then, it has changed its name several times and is now known as the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Jews.

Its Hebrew name – Keshet Ga'avah – means "rainbow of pride" and reflects the importance of Israel to the organization. It has member groups worldwide, and holds annual board meetings, as well as regional and world conferences.

Its goal is to "nurture an environment where gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Jews worldwide can enjoy free and fulfilling lives," Blankstein said.

"The level of acceptance is much greater now for GLBT people than it was 40 years ago," he said.

"In the '70s, we were still considered pariahs by many people. That is still the case in some circles."

Among the high-profile speakers to be featured at the conference is Joy Ladin, author of *Through the Door of Life*, in which the Yeshiva University professor, formerly known as Jay Ladin, takes readers inside her transition as she changed genders and, in the process, created a new self.

Also speaking will be former Winnipegger Rokie Bernstein, a rabbi, maggid and spiritual counsellor, as well as Joel Kushner, founding director of the Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation (IJSO) at Hebrew Union College-JIR; social worker and Jewish community worker Michael Waxman, and Chicago-area community worker and community leader Carol Goldbaum, who will be speaking about aging.

The latter issue is a serious concern for GLBT Jews, Blankstein said. "It's hard enough getting older when you have a family support group," he said. "Most GLBT people don't have children to look after them in their old age, and many of us who were born more than 30 years ago were cut off by our siblings."

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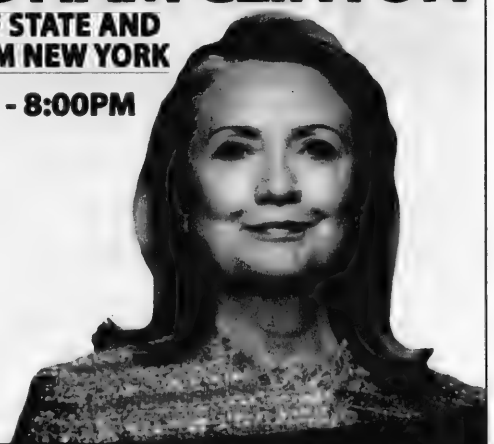

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A reluctant goodbye

It was more than 10 years ago that Mordechai Ben-Dat invited me to begin writing for *The CJN*. My challenges ever since then have been to meet my monthly deadlines and, with each succeeding column, to not only find something current and relevant to write about, but also to tightly frame each piece within a requisite word limit.

None of this has been easy. When the inevitable vicissitudes of life get in the way, writing deadlines get all the more daunting, and I can well remember those occasions when I've come within a whisker of missing those all-important timelines. Nonetheless, for the 124 consecutive months that I've had my articles published in *The CJN*, I've failed to file on time only once.

Were I a journalist by training, or an author by reputation, I could probably wax poetic about the lonely craft of cobbling words together to create tone and content that is both informative and inspiring. Since I am neither, I can only but attest to the grind of crafting sentences that convey precisely what's intended and selecting just the right words to make sense of a particular construct.

It's therefore amusing, though perhaps backhandedly complimentary, to have someone express admiration for the way I must obviously be able to "churn out" my articles. Nothing could be further from a writer's reality, at least not mine. The effort that goes into structuring each piece is enormous, often involving many hours of research and fact checking even before the laborious process of the actual writing begins.

Yet despite one's best efforts to provide specific context, there are, and

My View

Lawrence Hart

likely always will be, those who choose to fish for any nuance, any perceived hint of affront, that can be finagled into a cause celebre to hit back at the writer, not with a reasoned response, but with a vindictive personal attack. Being on the receiving end of such foolish rants – as rarely as they have occurred – has been especially unpleasant.

On the flip side, my role as a *CJN* columnist has been immensely positive. It has been at once a welcome distraction from, and a valuable enrichment of, my "day job" as a physician and educator. It has given me the opportunity not only to explore my passion for writing, but more importantly, it has allowed me to engage in the crucial discourse that underpins my core values as a Jew and a Zionist.

When reflecting on the scope and content of what I've written about over the years, I am somewhat reassured, based on what feedback I've had, that my topic choices have usually hit the mark. I have tried often to push the envelope, at least a little, to maybe provide fresh insights, to maybe offer contrarian perspectives, or to maybe just rankle the establishment, with a view to "making the comfortable feel uncomfortable," which is, after all, the very essence of effective advocacy.

In signing off, I would like to thank, so very much, all of those who've read and appreciated – and at times even enjoyed - my articles. I've always found the last paragraph of each column to be the most difficult to write. This one is no exception.

Choosing the right Jewish name

Last week we looked at the significance of Jewish names. Today, choosing them. If you happen to be in the market for a name – or if you want to lend some advice to someone who is – a wealth of suggestions is waiting for you online.

Many Ashkenazim start their quest by considering naming after a family member. Rabbi Paysach Krohn quotes one of the founders of Chassidut in Galicia, Poland, Rabbi Elimelech of Lyzhansk, who said that there is a profound connection between the soul of an infant and the soul of the person for whom he or she is named. "When a child is named after the deceased, the latter's soul is elevated to a higher realm in heaven and a spiritual connection is created between the soul of the departed and the soul of the newborn child." **[http://bit.ly/jname12]**

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

As for guidelines, the Naming a Jewish Baby site addresses such questions as how to honour, whom to honour, how to spell the name and whether you can change your name. **[http://bit.ly/jname13]** Remember: get your info from a website but before you choose, consult with your rabbi.

Now to get started. First stop: the Bible. As Lisa Katz points out, there are about 2,800 names mentioned in the Bible, but only about five per cent of those names are used today. (Think of how many Davids and Esthers you've met compared to Arpachshads and Maacahs.) **[http://bit.ly/jname14]**

There are several excellent sites where you can look up names including JewishBabyNames **[http://bit.ly/jname15]** BabyNameWorld **[http://bit.ly/jname16]** and the Hebrew site Zooloo. **[http://bit.ly/jname17]** If you are looking for a Hebrew equivalent to a secular name, type it in at this site and see what you get. **[http://bit.ly/jname18]** Babynamer.com isn't a Jewish site, but it does index over 700 Hebrew names. You can even specify the first letter of the name and how many syllables you are looking for. With most names, you are given a definition. For example, Liora is "God's gift of light to me."

When selecting a name, parents walk a tightrope between choosing a unique moniker and one that's become too popular. The U.S. Social Security Administration keeps tracks of baby-naming trends. For example, in 2011, "Chaya" was the 715th most popular girl's name and "Chaim" ranked 782nd for boys. (For the record, "Jacob" has been No. 1 since 1999. "Emily" reigned until 2007, followed by "Emma," "Isabella" and, most recently, "Sophia.") **[http://bit.ly/jname21]**

Of course, Jewish names aren't just for newborns. Rabbi Maurice Lamm has advice for converts who want to choose the right name. **[http://bit.ly/jname20]**

As many sites point out, your name signals your identity and heritage. That was certainly the case when Stretch Cunningham passed away. Stretch was the pal of Archie Bunker on television's *All in the Family*. Archie and his wife, Edith, were shocked to discover their friend's actual name and religion when they showed up for the funeral. **[http://bit.ly/jname22]**

Edith: I guess Stretch must have been Jewish.

Archie: Stretch, Jewish! With a name like Cunningham.

Edith: Oh well, Archie. What's in a name?

Archie: A Jewish name's ain't supposed to have no "ham" in it!

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שישאר בינינו

גידי קורן וחברים

הרמטכ"ל והדיגלון-או: ארץ אוכלת יושביה

לפני מספר שבועות עבר הרמטכ"ל בין קברי חיילים שנפלו לאחרונה ושם עליהן דיגלון. הוא פסח על קבר אחד משום ש"יהודתו של החייל הנופל לא היתה ברורה". קראתי את הדברים והרגשתי שמישהו נתן לי בוקס אדיר בנשמה. חייל יהודי! ואם איננו יהודי-הוא לא מסר את חייו לארץ הזאת! ואם איננו יהודי- הוא עדיין היה טוב מספיק כדי להתגיס ולסכן את חייו. גם בארץ הקשה הזאת-קשה לי להיזכר בחזירות מסדר גדול כזה. ותארו לכם מה הרגישה משפחת הנופל. איך בכלל מתנצלים על בהמיות כזאת!

למרבה המזל- הזעקה שהתעוררה בציבור היתה חזקה מספיק כדי שהרמטכ"ל ישנה את ההחלטה. הוא הלך לבית המשפחה, התנצל בפניה והחזיר שהנוהל המגעיל הזה, שהיה נהוג בעבר, ישונה.

המקרה המטריד הזה מצביע בצורה מאוד בוטה כמה הפכה הדת היהודית המימסדית לגזענית, ואיך הגזענות הזו מדביקה גם את הצבא. ומעניין- רבים מהגזענים הללו מסרבים לשרת בצה"ל, ופה היכתה הגזענות דווקא בחור שעלה מחבר העמים ונתן את חייו.

עידן רייכל- מתעלה על עצמו

מזה שתים עשרה שנה מפתיע עידן רייכל אחת לכמה שנים בתקליטור חדש של מוסיקה ישראלית ייחודית שמחוברת לעולם הגדול. בהתחלה הוא הוציא תקליט שהביא מוזיקה והווי של הקהילה האתיופית, אחר כך הפזורה התימנית כשהוא מקליט את שושנה דמארי האגדית.

הפעם נסע רייכל למקומות שונים בעולם ויצר מוסיקה מדהימה בפורטוגזית,ספרדית, ערבית ושפות אחרות. אולי משהו הנועז ביותר היה להקליט זמר קונטרה טנור גרמני ששר בגרמנית שיר יפיפה. דבר כזה עד לא היה במקומותינו והוא מעיד על רוח חדשה של פתיחות והשתייכות גאה לעולם הגדול.

אותי שבה כליל השיר הפורטוגזי אותו שרה זמרת מדהימה מפורטוגל בעברית ובפורטוגזית כשרייכל מלווה אותה. התקליט הזה הפך לתקליט פלאטינה בישראל תוך שלושה ימים ולטעמי זוהי חוויה שתישאר איתכם לשנים רבות. עשר בסולם קורן.

עצמאות

יום העצמאות רק עבר, ואין ספק שחגיגת העצמאות האמיתית השנה היא עצמאות האנרגיה של ישראל, שבפעם הראשונה בהיסטוריה מפיקה לבד את כל האנרגיה הדרושה לה ליצירת חשמל, ואיננה תלויה בשכנותיה הקרובות והרחוקות. אם מישהו היה אומר לנו לפני עשרים שנה שישראל תהיה מעצמת אנרגיה- היינו שולחים אותו להסתכלות. והינה- "אין זו אגדה".

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikoren.com

The finish line and the bimah

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow

Rabbinic Reflections

As I write this, the horror of the Boston Marathon bombing is fresh in my mind. I am haunted by the images of runners who trained for years, only to lose their legs in an act of brutal terror. How difficult, then, to turn to the Torah and find this passage in Parshat Emor:

"The Eternal spoke further to Moses: Speak to Aaron and say: No man of your offspring throughout the ages who has a defect shall be qualified to offer the food of his God… He shall not profane these places sacred to Me, for I the Eternal have sanctified them." (Leviticus 21:16-17, 23)

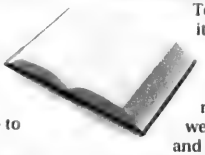
These verses pertain to the Temple service and the role of the ancient priesthood, not the present day. But even for liberal Jews who no longer follow the categories of Kohen, Levi and Israel, we read these words and search for meaning.

What are we to make of this teaching, that the presence of someone who is disabled would profane God's sacred place? We aspire to a world in which people are not defined by their abilities or disabilities, in which blindness or a broken leg would not keep someone from serving God.

Rabbi Jack Riemer challenges us to ask whether our synagogues live up to our best values.

If Yitzchak Avinu, our forefather Isaac, who became legally blind in his old age, were to come into our synagogue and want to daven with us, would we have a large print prayer book available for him?

If Yaakov Avinu, our forefather Jacob, who was injured in an encounter with a mysterious stranger and limped for the rest of his life as a result, were to come into our synagogue and want an aliyah, would he be able to get up to the bimah?



If Moshe Rabbeinu, Moses our teacher, who had a speech defect, were to come into our shul and want to read from the Torah that he gave us, could we handle it without becoming embarrassed if he were to stutter?

And, I would add (inspired by Ora Horn Prouser, author of *Esau's Blessing*): if Esau came into our synagogue, with a classic case of ADHD, would anyone take time to understand him or train him to become a bar mitzvah?

Maimonides, in explaining Emor, writes: "Most people do not estimate a person by his true form, but by his limbs and his clothing, and the Temple was to be held in great reverence by all" (*Guide for the Perplexed* 3:45). In other words, if people saw someone disabled serving in the Temple, it would decrease their respect for the community and its institutions.

Today, I would suggest it is the opposite. Many of us have old buildings, and to renovate them is neither easy nor inexpensive. But we too are getting older, and none of us know what life may bring. Today's runner may be in a wheelchair tomorrow, and it is our responsibility to make sure he or she can reach the bimah. Our spiritual homes will be truly holy when everyone can come in.

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow is senior rabbi of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Montreal.

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Be open to life's possibilities

Bookmarks

Bernard Baskin

Despondency is a normal reaction to life. Who can live in our society without moments of despair and frustration?

Every morning, the headlines scream of scandal and chicanery. Television relentlessly drags crime, violence and inhumanity into our living rooms. Indeed, the person who does not, from time to time, experience feelings of pessimism must be considered abnormal.

In addition, our own life experiences often lead to disappointment. Our careers are thwarted, our expectations blunted. Sickness attacks us and our loved ones. Pain and insecurity are unwelcome but inevitable callers. There is the tragedy of final parting and death. Is there any wonder that depression is a common experience?

How can we face up to our moods of despondency? In the first place, we should try to achieve a sense of proportion. Why do we so often select the dark and unhappy experiences of our lives and make them represent the whole of it?

Life presents an uneven pattern of health and sickness, love and hate, success and failure. There are times when we reach the apex of the mountain, and there are moments when we languish in the valley. We are born into all of it. There is no cure for life and death, save to enjoy the interval. If we are unwilling to accept life as it is, then we are in the wrong place.

In the second place, we must avoid the temptation of blaming others for our inadequacies and failures. This is not the road to equanimity. A man whose business is failing suddenly decides that his wife is the cause of the downfall. The annoyed citizen finds temporary delight in flaying the bureaucrats. This kind of gratification is understandable, but short-lived.

Blaming ourselves or others is an unworkable escape mechanism. It nurtures the dark side of our nature and blinds us to the possibilities of affirmative and fruitful action.

We are not only shaped by our environment; we shape it. We are not only the creatures of circumstance; we are also the creators of circumstance.

In the third place, although there is no way to deny the tragic sense of life, depression can be lessened if we realize that most situations are not as desperate as they seem. It's not simply a matter of picking ourselves up by our own willpower and moving ahead. It is rather a matter of insight into a dark situation and becoming aware of possibilities.

Life is full of coercions. Indeed, life itself is coercion. And the young never tire of reminding their parents: "I didn't ask to be born." One of Sholom Aleichem's characters makes this wry observation: "The way life is, you're better off not to be born. But who can be so lucky? Maybe one in 10,000." Life is indeed a matter of coercion, but we must accept it gladly and use it wisely.

How can anyone nurture feelings or defeat pessimism in the face of the mammoth tasks that lie before us? We cannot prevent the birds of depression from flying over our heads, but we can prevent them from building nests in our hair.

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Longtime volunteer celebrates her 100th birthday

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Last fall, Sophie Shinewald became the oldest recipient in Canada of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for volunteerism.

Now, having just celebrated her 100th birthday on the weekend of April 12 to 14, the still-active senior is looking forward to returning to her normal routine, including serving as one of the volunteers at the front desk at the Gwen Secter Creative Retirement Centre, a program largely for Jewish seniors.

About 120 members of the extended Shinewald family came to Winnipeg from across Canada and from Los Angeles to celebrate Shinewald's birthday.

"We combined it with a family reunion," she said.

The weekend began with Friday night supper in the party room of the Rosh Pina Co-op, the largely Jewish seniors housing complex (affiliated with the nearby Congregation Etz Chayim) where the new centenarian has lived for the past 13 years.

Saturday lunch for out-of-town guests was at the south Winnipeg home of her son, Ed. The weekend concluded with a birthday party for family at Gwen Secter.

Sophie Shinewald is a lifelong Winnipegger who has lived most of her life in roughly the same north Winnipeg neighbourhood.

She said her first volunteering experience came when she was 12 and her older sister volunteered her to teach sewing to students at the Peretz School.

Shinewald is a trained teacher who worked in her early years in the fur business. After marriage, when her two children started school, she began a 16-year career as a substitute teacher in north Winnipeg. She also served as a member of the school board at Luxton School while her children were students there.

After her husband died 26 years ago, Shinewald began volunteering in earnest at Gwen Secter.

"For many years, I used to go in early on Tuesdays and put up the tables for bridge," she said. "I have really enjoyed all the people I have gotten to know at the Gwen Secter."

After Shinewald sold her house and moved into the Rosh Pina Co-op, she organized movie nights on Saturday evenings for residents and some outside visitors.

"Every week, I would take the bus to the local library and select a DVD to show," she said. "A lot of people over the years enjoyed the evening."

Sophie Shinewald
(Myron Love photo)

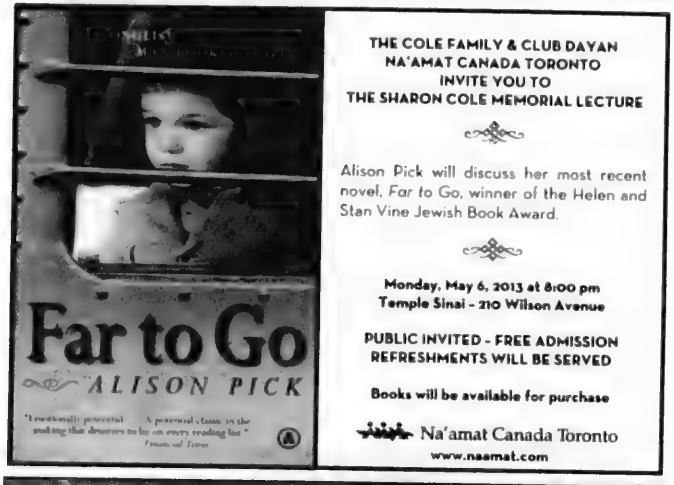
The movie nights came to an end about two years ago, when the number of people attending the evenings had dwindled to a very few, and Shinewald decided to "retire" from the project.

She noted in an interview last fall that she was recommended for the Queen's Jubilee Medal by her grandson, Benjamin Shinewald, a lawyer in Toronto who served as national executive director and general counsel of Canadian Jewish Congress from 2008 to 2011.

Shinewald attributes her good health and energy to good genes.

"I intend to continue doing what I have been doing for as long as I can," she said.

She's also looking forward to going to Calgary next month for her great-grandson's bar mitzvah.



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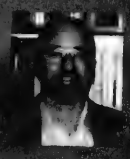

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106 year-old survived Shoah

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Chana Wallace says her 106th birthday on April 10 was a double celebration.

"It is the same week as Yom Ha'atzmaut. That's why I'm wearing blue and white today," she said in an interview at her North York retirement home.

Chana Wallace

Born in Poland in 1907, Wallace married at 19 years old, but lost her husband and son in the Holocaust.

"I was in Auschwitz for four years, and was then sent to Bergen-Belsen. Only God knows how I survived. What we went through is impossible, but [this week] is Yom Ha'atzmaut, and we are free. I can never forgive them, but I took my life back."

When the war ended she said, she made a vow to herself that "Hitler couldn't defeat us. Jews will live forever."

She came to Canada alone, and went to work at a factory on Spadina Avenue. "I didn't know how to sew, but I convinced them to let me try. It didn't take long and I was the best in the factory."

She lived with her brother, Leo Spellman, and did remarry, but "even after my husband became sick and died, I never gave up. I made my brother's family my family and helped to raise his children. They call me bubbie, not auntie. I'm that special to them. They need me and they love me. I couldn't think of going anywhere."

At 104, she was given a pacemaker, and "I had to talk the doctor into doing it. He was afraid but I insisted. Afterwards, he sent me a card to say thank you."

Canada is the best country in the world, she said. "If people talk against Canada, I don't listen. Everybody here is a person. Everybody is free. When I grew up in Poland it wasn't like that. Some people here may not be educated, but we're all equal."

She can't believe she's 106, she said. "I amaze myself that I've lived so long. I'm very tired, but I still know what I'm talking about and my hearing is 100 per cent. I can't complain. God is going to have a hard time taking me.

"Yes, after what I went through, I still believe in God. I've always kept kosher, except in the camps, and I made yom tovs until I was 104."

She loves where she lives now, she said. "I eat my meals in the main dining room, and I go downstairs to socialize. I love to be with people. I love people. One woman didn't want to talk, but I tried and tried to be friendly. Eventually we found out we were in the same camp. Imagine."

It is important to keep her mind active, she said, and every night before she goes to sleep, she counts. "I count from one to 100, and then I count backwards from 100 to one."

Find out more at two events:
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Mazel Tov
מזל טוב

Wow!! Clare Berman is turning 108 years young. Happy birthday from your children, the Carrs, Goulds, Soils, Turks and Youngs.

For our dear mother and bubbie, Rose Lerner, looking forward to celebrating 95 years! With love, Jay, Kathy, Carly, Philip, Jeff, Nina and Shayla.

Sherri & Sandy Brenzel and Michal Shenkar announce the engagement of Jason Brenzel & Natalie Shenkar. Mazel tov and lots of love from the extended family.

It is with great pride that we announce that on June 23, 2012, our daughter, Rebekah, had her bat mitzvah. Mom, Dad and Josh.

Mazel tov to Maya Har Lavan, who celebrated her bat mitzvah in Beit Shemesh Israel. Siblings, Nitzvan, Dafna, Dvir and Noga. Love from Bubbie Gloria Wiseberg.

Laura, Jamie and the Klauber and Roter families are delighted to welcome Chloe Izzy to the mishpachah. She is a true joy to us all.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

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YT

What's New

If you're reading this ADVERTISING WORKS!
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Deadline reminder: Due to upcoming holidays, deadlines will change. April 29 is the deadline for the issue of May 9. May 2 is the deadline for the issue of May 17. May 6 is the deadline for the issue of May 23. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 25

ETGAR KERET REVIEWED
Harriet Morris reviews *Suddenly a Knock on the Door*, by **Etgar Keret**, Temple Emanu-El. Dessert, 1 p.m.; review, 1:30 p.m.

DISARRAY IN THE MIDEAST
Emanuel Ottolenghi discusses "A Sea of Troubles: The Current Disarray in the Middle East," Sheppard Grande Cineplex, 4861 Yonge St. 7:30 p.m. For tickets, 1-800-838-3006.

ISRAEL'S SECURITY
Lt.-Col. Jonathan Dahoah-Halevi discusses "The Changing Strategic Environment: Implications for Israel's Security and Peace," Beth David Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 27

PARASHAH EMOR
Hana Werner is the guest speaker at Beth David Synagogue, 9 a.m. Luncheon following, $20. 416-635-8910.

Judge Irv Sherman discusses the parashah at Beth Tikvah.

Sunday, April 28

CONTENTS SALE
Ve'ahavta holds a contents sale, 8 a.m.-noon, 200 Bridgeland Ave., Unit D.

JEWISH IDENTITY IN ISRAEL
Moti Zeira discusses "Why Is It So challenging To Be Jewish in Israel?" Congregation Darchei Noam, 7:30 p.m.

INTERFAITH PLANTING
Kavanah Garden invites Jews and Muslims aged 15-30 to an afternoon of indoor planting and text study, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., University of Toronto Multifaith Centre, 569 Spadina Ave. 416-805-8382.

CANADIAN JEWISH EDITION
MPP Mike Colle is the guest on *Canadian Jewish Edition*, on Rogers Cable, today at 8 a.m. and May 2 at 6:30 p.m.

SHAAR SHALOM SINGLES
Rita and Erik perform at Shaar Shalom Singles (50+), 7:30 p.m. $10. Call **David** 416-224-9494.

MAHJ MADNESS
JF&CS holds a mah-jong afternoon with silent auction and raffle. $85. To reserve, email: mahjmadness@jfandcs.com or 416-638-7800, ext. 6999.

OPEN HOUSE
Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a school open house, 10 a.m. 131 Fenn Ave. 416-385-3910.

NEWS AND THE MEDIA
Lorrie Goldstein leads a discussion on the media industry, 10:15 a.m., Temple Sinai. $5 (includes breakfast).

TOUCH OF KLEZ
Touch of Klez performs at Beth Jacob Synagogue, 375 Aberdeen Ave., Hamilton, 2 p.m. $15/$20. For tickets, call 905-522-1351.

LAG B'OMER
Chabad Lubavitch celebrates Lag b'Omer at Earl Bales Park. Eighth Day performs at noon. Rides and bonfire 2-6 p.m.

Continued on page 27

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BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION AND THE NATIONAL POST PRESENT

MORE THAN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE:
MEDIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

with Felice and Michael Friedson, principals of The Media Line™
www.themedialine.org

Tuesday, April 30, 7:30 PM

Media typically portrays the Middle East as a clichéd series of "crises", more in the form of conventional wisdom than fact. The Israel-Palestine conflict is not the "mother of all Mideast conflicts" nor is Arab Spring a series of isolated events exclusive of Israel. The perceptions and realities of these issues will be addressed.

TML is recognized by readers and the industry—both locally and abroad as "The Mid East News Source™". It is a unique non-profit news organization established to enhance and balance media coverage in the Middle East, promote independent reporting in the region and break down barriers to understanding in the Arab and Israeli journalism communities.

NATIONAL POST
Right to the point.

בית צדק
Beth Tzedec Congregation

Continued from page 26

BALLROOM DANCING

Latin/Ballroom dance lessons, 1:30 and 2:45 p.m., Stash-over-Slipia Congregation, 11 Sultana Ave. Email: romancing.the.dance@gmail.com. First class free.

Monday, April 29

'SCIENCE AND JUSTICE'

Jill Lazenby discusses "Science, Controversy and Social Justice," Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. 416-449-3880.

SPIRITUALITY OF GIVING

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "The Spirituality of Giving," 8:35 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah. 416-789-0020; toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

MODERN JEWISH ICONS

Hana Werner discusses modern icons of Jewish thought and culture, Mondays, 7 p.m. Beth David Synagogue.

TREATING DEPRESSION

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner discusses "Treating Medical Depression," Shaarei Shomayim, 8 p.m. Email info@torontotorah.com or 647-234-7299.

Tuesday, April 30

MEDIA AND THE MIDEAST

Felice and **Michael Friedson** discusses "Media and the Middle East," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW

Yael Lev teaches conversational Hebrew, beginners level, 7:30 p.m. Pride of Israel Synagogue. Intermediate class, 1:30 p.m. Thursdays. Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

CHUG HA-TANACH

Laura Wiseman discusses the Book of Psalms, Chapter 45, Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m.

JEWISH FILMS

Larry Anklewicz discusses "The Evolution of Jewish Films," Lunch at 12:15; program at 12:45, Beth Tikvah. Must RSVP 416-221-3433, ext. 352; helen@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

Wednesday, May 1

THE TEDDY BEAR PROJECT

Henry and **Pearl Silver** discuss their Teddy Bear Project, 2 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue.

GOLF DEADLINE

Today is the deadline to register for Temple Har Zion's golf tourney on June 3. Email: grimmgroup@rogers.com.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Rabbi Michael Skobac presents a counter-missionary survival seminar for deaf Jews, "Deconstructing Missionary Prooftexts," 8 p.m., Toronto Zionist Council, 788 Marlee Ave. 416-789-0020; toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, May 2

NEW NOVELIST

Samantha Stroh Bailey discusses her new novel, *Finding Lucas*, Temple Har Zion, 8:15 p.m.

OTHER NEWS

KIDS BASEBALL LEAGUE

Clanton Park Shul Youth Baseball League for boys and girls (separate leagues) from SK to Grade 6 begins May 5. www.ClantonPark.com/baseball.

ENGLISH CLASSES

Free English classes (beginner and advanced) are offered at Lebovic JCC. Call 905-761-5116 or email juliag@jiastoronto.org.

CELEBRATE MOTHERS

For a minimum of $25, you can send cards to honour the women in your life, while helping women in shelters on Mother's Day. Funds raised will also support Act to End Violence Against Women. 905-695-5372 or www.canadahelps.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness, meditation. Starts April 27, 35 Madison Ave, 3 p.m.; April 25, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Adult Children Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts April 30, 7:30 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women. Starts May 1, 7:30 p.m.

Living With Teens: A 6-session group for parents. Starts May 1, 7:30 p.m.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women. Starts May 2, 7 p.m.

Parenting the Child with ADHD: A 4-week group for parents. Starts May 2, 7 p.m. Call for pre-group assessment.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 11. Starts May 22.

When You're About to Separate, What to tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. May 23, 6:30 p.m., Lebovic JCC.

Supporting Self-Reliance in Teens with ADHD: A workshop for parents. May 28, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays at 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

Hadar Senior Citizens Social Club is looking for new members. The club meets Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet A. Williams Community Centre. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

Circle of Care. Support group for caregivers over 55 caring for a spouse with dementia or disability, starts April 29, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call 905-738-1128, ext. 323, or 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Crawford Lake, May 14; Casino Rama, May 15; Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. April 30, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses "Assassination of Simon Petlurya," 10 a.m.; May 2, **Dr. Sean Eastman** discusses "Stretching to Improve Quality of Life," 1:30 p.m.

Baycrest offers a 5-part class on insights into aging, starts May. To register, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2363, or visit www.baycrest.org/insights.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Jewish archives presents early Toronto collections. Bring photos/memorabilia. May 9, 1:30 p.m.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

One Step Ahead offers a Nordic Pole Mobility program, May 14, 10:30 a.m.

April 25, **Osnat Lippa** discusses influential Jewish artists, 1 p.m. Yiddish conversation, Mondays, 1:30 p.m.; Duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; Shalom Singers are looking for new members, Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Mah-jong tournament, May 6. Call ext. 4235 to register.

Rabbi Wayne Allen holds a pre-Shavuot Torah Roll program, May 13, 10 a.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

YiddishTog. A day of Yiddish-language celebration April 28, starts at 11 a.m. Evening concert with **Lenka Lichtenberg**.

Adam Nayman discusses the films of the Coen brothers. April 29, "Twin Cities," 7 p.m.

Toronto Jewish Film Society shows *A Serious Man*, May 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Ext. 0

Adam Nayman discusses four controversial film directors, Mondays 7-9 p.m. May 6, **David Cronenberg**.

Music at the MNJCC. Women's Chorus, Mondays, 7:30 p.m.; Daytime choir, Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Klezmer Ensemble, Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. Jewish chanting circle, May 8, 7:30 p.m.

Structure and Photo by **David Trautrimas** is in the gallery until May 21.

Downtown Tikkun Leil Shavuot, May 14, 8 p.m.-6 a.m. Ext. 154.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Audiologists discuss hearing loss and hearing devices, May 7, 7:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 35

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

Regina students back repeal of BDS support

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

One year after passing a motion to support the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel, the University of Regina Students' Union (URSU) repealed its support at a general meeting on April 10.

The motion, backed by representative Sean Wilson, who is not Jewish and describes himself as Christian, said the initial endorsement of the BDS movement "resulted in students feeling unrepresented, alienated and treated unequally."

Although there was no official vote, Wilson said about 130 people in attendance were in favour of the motion to repeal URSU's support, while around 70 were against it.

When the pro-BDS motion passed initially last year, roughly the same number of people supported it as voted to repeal it this year. But because the original vote came at the end of the meeting's agenda, and most of the people in attendance had left, there was no one to argue against it, and it passed almost unanimously, Wilson said.

From left, Nathan Sgrazzutti, president of the University of Regina Students' Union, and Sean Wilson, who led the motion to repeal anti-Israel position.
[Neil Petrich photo]

He said he was upset when the original motion passed and contacted the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, "and we started working together." The vote is also what spurred him to become active in student politics, he added.

In order for a URSU general meeting to begin, there must be 150 members present, explained Mike Young, URSU's vice-president of student affairs. However, the meeting can continue even if students leave, as long as there was quorum at the beginning.

The fact the original motion was repealed shows that students want their representatives to focus on student issues rather than get involved in international politics, Young said.

"There's lots of issues that affect students, like tax rates, the conditions of the roads... but I wouldn't call those student issues, because those are issues for everyone," he said.

During the 14 months that the student union was officially in support of the BDS campaign, there wasn't any noticeable change on campus, said Samantha Michaels, a Jewish master's student at the university.

"I think it was more that a few radical students put a huge influence on this and made it their cause," she said, adding that the vast majority of students at the university seem to have little interest in the Middle East.

"It's out of mind here."

She said she never worried about her safety on campus, but URSU president Nathan Sgrazzutti said he did hear concerns from Jewish and Israeli students.

"It almost marginalized a group of our students, because those students felt the motion was against them," Sgrazzutti said.

"There were students who were worried this would escalate to hate crimes. They were worried this would be the first step down that path."

A statement released by Students Against Israeli Apartheid after the BDS endorsement passed last year said the group would work with URSU to investigate its "portfolio for companies that support or profit from Israeli war crimes."

However, Sgrazzutti said URSU has no investments in any of the specified companies, so no changes were needed.

Members of SAIA Regina did not return *The CJN*'s request for comment.

Although there's no official count of Jewish students on campus, Sgrazzutti said the number is irrelevant.

"If there's even a single Jewish student on campus, we need to make sure they feel they are not separate from the rest of the group," he said.

"I would strongly suggest to any other universities considering to adopt the motion to take a step back and think about who they're hurting on campus."

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Vosberg, Herman	April 2/13	
Dayan, Jacob	April 3/13	483 Conley St
Natanson,Muriel	March 30/13	170 Red Maple Rd
Strom, Walter	March 30/13	Private
Shapiro, Maya	April 3/13	7 Michael Dr
Hershkop, Steve	April 4/13	98 Charlton Blvd
Zibenberg, Josef	April 5/13	485 Patricia Ave
Saskin, Bennie	April 6/13	10 Prue Ave
Laufer, Jerry	April 8/13	10 Baintree Crt
Bitton, Samuel	April 10/13	114 Delaney Dr
Ziger, Arthur	April 8/13	
Jakubowicz, Nathan	April 8/13	
Cohen, Arthur	April 3/13	
Frohlich, Gustawa	April 3/13	306 Finch Ave. E
Kopmar, Yochim	April 12/13	33 Wilmington Ave
Zvonkina, Bronia	April 11/13	Private
Gayne, Shirley	April 11/13	207 Searle Ave
Cohen, Rita	April 11/13	Private
Windman, Mary (Malka)	April 13/13	285 Winding Lane
Oiffer, Mitchell	April 14/13	44 Valleywoods Rd
Lazar, Zili	April 12/13	187 Lyndhurst Ave

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Norma Schechter	Apr 5/13	6200 Bathurst Street
Bessie Grossman	Apr 5/13	128 Ava Road
Ida Goldberg	Apr 5/13	22 Turner Road
Edna Sharer	Apr 6/13	23 King High Avenue
Harvey Taub	Apr 5/13	7601 Bathurst Street
Ida Fox	Apr 5/13	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Moshe Flichtentraj	Apr 5/13	730 Ontario Street
Louise Zarnett	Apr 6/13	1 Glen Park Avenue
Boris Strasberg	Apr 8/13	17 Peterborough Ave.
David Goldberg	Apr 8/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Frank Faron	Apr 5/13	1337 Tower Lawn Drive
Pearl Wexler	Apr 9/13	20 Burkebrook Place
Frank Cadesky	Apr 9/13	767 Spadina Road
Sidney Bergstein	Apr 9/13	240 Heath Street West
Aliza Lustig	Apr 9/13	33 Delisle Avenue
Joey Rotman	Apr 9/13	25 Bevshire Circle
Hilda Stulberg	Apr 8/13	7 Alminton Street
Nachum Margaliot	Apr 10/13	1627 Stoney Brook Cres.
Joy Gillman	Apr 9/13	1000 Ellesmere Road
Edward Dobbs	Apr 9/13	253 Morningside Road
Pessie Gwartz	Apr 10/13	866 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Sol Margel	Apr 10/13	7300 Yonge Street
Edward Lawrence Finkelst	Apr 10/13	66 Collier Street
L. David Roebuck	Apr 11/13	33 Glenrose Avenue
Alan White	Apr 12/13	139 Corstate Avenue
Iris Burnard	Apr 13/13	130 Carlton St.

HEBREW BASIC

Stephen Waldman	Apr 10/13	5 Brahms Avenue

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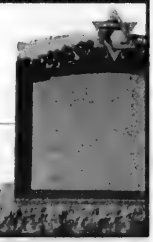

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North side Line 4 lot #2 Shidlover Section #103
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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FURRY CELEBRATION: Students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut with food, art, music, special programs and the opportunity to get up close and personal with a camel. Pictured with their dromedary friend are, front from left, students Liam Mechaly, Gaby Shubat, Jacob Ziegler and Alex Weiss along with shinshinim (Israeli emissaries) Noa and Shani. *(Rebecca Ansel photo)*

CELEBRATING ISRAEL: Students and staff at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School danced with their counterparts from the Miles Nadal JCC nursery to kick off a day of Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations that included a Tour of Israel obstacle course, a Dead Sea salt mini spa, drumming circles, Israeli Jeopardy and a falafel café.

BOOK FUN: As part of a tikkun olam initiative, Robbins Hebrew Academy senior kindergarten students collected 100 books to donate to Driftwood Public School. Two classes from Driftwood came to spend the morning at RHA. Together the students played games, enjoyed a snack and had a visit from children's author (and Robbins alumna) Gillian Lazanik. The students enjoyed a live presentation of Gillian's book, *Climbing Kate*, and the author gave each student a copy of her book. Pictured, foreground from left, are Ahmed Hussein, Wendy To, Lauren Silber and Jordan Shapiro.

How does one define a "high conflict" divorce?

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL. B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 31 years

1. Your spouse calls to say Nehama has the flu and for the first time will miss an access visit. You demand a doctor's note at 8 p.m. on a Saturday night or else a Police Officer will be coming to grab the kid to enforce the Court's order, snowstorm or not.
2. Your spouse calls for the 15th week in a row to say that Shaindy either has a cold or she has a special assignment in school or she doesn't "feel" like going with you — or your ex simply doesn't answer the phone again. Your sympathetic lawyer will help but he costs $575 per hour.
3. Your husband has paid his child and spousal support on time to the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) for three years without once missing a payment. Now he's two days late and you phone your MPP asking "Where's Justice?" and demand the resignation of the Director of the FRO.
4. You've paid a lawyer $15,000 to chase after monthly support payments of $2,500 each for several years and successfully obtained Court orders for $140,000 in arrears owing to you. Meanwhile your ex goes on vacations, buys new cars and a new house — in someone else's name. So you ask the FRO to enforce the Orders. And then they make a deal behind your back in which he only has to pay you $150 per month to pay off the $140,000.
5. You have planned a trip to go shopping with your children in Buffalo for the day and you need your husband's notarized letter of travel consent to cross the border, but he refuses. Why? Because in 2003 six Yemeni-Americans living in Lackawanna/Buffalo were convicted of belonging to an Afghani terrorist cell trained in 2001.
6. You spend $17,000 on a parenting assessment, during which your husband suddenly starts diapering and playing with the kids for the very first time. Several months later the assessor confirms that as stay-at-home mother you really are the primary caregiver and your husband consents to an Order agreeing to a parenting schedule giving him loads of time with the kids. Having secured that Order, he then proceeds to exercise only 20% of it.
7. As Dad, you are charged with several counts of assault and battery, of which you are guilty. As Mom, you take him back anyway. One year later, you kick him out when he assaults you all over again, and the kids are a mess.
8. As Dad, you are wrongfully charged with several charges of assault and battery, and are either acquitted or sign a peace bond. But after several months or a year — and by the time the criminal court proceedings are over — you've been out of your own house, forced to relocate further from your place of employment, and estranged from your kids so they may not want much to do with you.
9. Your spouse takes up with another. He/she asks for your forgiveness. You both go to counselling. You reconcile, but the mistrust lingers. One day you discover a sexy message on his/her smart phone. You deny it's "anything." Next day when you come home, your partner is gone, the kids are gone, and all the furniture has vanished. In their place you find a three-word note: *"Call my lawyer."*

What distinguishes all these cases from those in which the conflict is not so intense? Is it the ability to look the other way, or to forgive when forgiveness is out of the question?

Absolutely not. One should run from violence for example. For the vast majority of couples who don't react in such a manner, it's the ability to "take it down a notch" before falling off the precipice. It's the ability to pull back. To lower your tone of voice; to tell a joke well before disagreements get out of hand; to forego one's ego a bit. To love the other more.

You don't need to *be* right to *make it* right. Sometimes the former precludes the latter. On occasion, the continually "righteous" person has even found loneliness to be poor company.

Those of you who have successful partnerships or amicable separations know exactly what I mean, since in the bigger scheme of life these sad conflicts become self-defeating and meaningless. You are the ones who truly understand the meaning of the poet Francois Villon's famous line: *"Ou sont les neiges d'antan"* (Where are the snows of yesteryear?)

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzdlegal.com*** *Visit www.freamychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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Sponsored by the Community for Jewish Culture of B'Nai Brith Canada.

Fundraiser for melanoma features mystical magic

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Into the Mystic, a fundraiser to kick off Melanoma Awareness Month, will feature food, drinks and entertainment that are magical and whimsical.

The event hosted by the David Cornfield Melanoma Fund (DCMF) will be held May 1 at Six Degrees in midtown Toronto.

The DCMF was established in 2007 in memory of David Cornfield, who lost his battle to melanoma at age 32. The fund is devoted to saving lives by promoting awareness of this potentially deadly disease.

Its award-winning YouTube video, *Dear 16-year-old Me*, is an example of the organization's efforts.

"*Dear 16-year-old Me* was made to create awareness about the disease and, in particular, prevention targeted at young people," said Sari Cornfield, David's wife and one of the founding members of the DCMF.

"The people in the video are all real people whose lives have been touched by melanoma, and it is a real and honest look at the devastation of the disease. Melanoma is not a disease that there is a lot known about and there was a real lack of education surrounding it."

Melanoma is the most common cancer in the 25 to 29 age group and the second-most common in the 15 to 29 age group. Reducing exposure to UV radiation can significantly decrease the risk, and the prognosis for melanoma patients is excellent if the disease is detected in its earliest stage.

The DCMF has focused its attention on these facts, using funds raised through their events to educate others about the disease.

This year, the organization ran a winter awareness campaign at Blue Mountain and made a donation to Princess Margaret Hospital for melanoma research. Cornfield said the funds raised at the May 1 event will help support the hospital's further research into melanoma treatments and trials.

David Cornfield and his son Noah

When speaking of her husband, Cornfield said, "David was an amazing individual whose life inspired those who knew him to keep his legacy alive through the DCMF. He was a role model and mentor to many and was a positive and influential force in the lives of his family, friends and colleagues."

She said David's "enthusiasm for life, selflessness and generosity will always be remembered. His integrity, passion and desire to make a difference in the lives of others are the essence of the fund."

David was diagnosed with melanoma at age 29. He was in remission for two years, and he and his wife had their son, Noah, during that period. Just after Noah's first birthday, David's melanoma came back and spread quickly. He died shortly afterward.

"During the last few months of David's life, we had the opportunity to have many conversations about the future. David was very clear about his wishes to help make a difference in the fight against melanoma," Cornfield said.

To learn more about the DCMF, visit www.dcmf.ca.

Tickets to the upcoming event are $100 and can be purchased on the DCMF website or by calling 647-393-DCMF (3263).

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Reena in the News

Reena

Canadian Soil, Jewish Roots

By: Ellen Rajzman, Manager
Reena Community Residence.

The opening of the Reena Community Residence in September 2012 on the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus has increased the number and type of programs Reena offers. The location of the Residence has also provided numerous opportunities to create partnerships with other agencies in the neighbourhood.

One such partnership is with Shoresh, an environmental agency that serves 2400 people annually through workshops, school and synagogue visits, and community partnerships. In 2009, Shoresh opened the Kavanah Garden on the Lebovic Campus. The Garden features over 100 varieties of organic vegetables, herbs, fruits and wildflowers. It also features a havdallah spice garden and raised wheelchair accessible garden beds. Within this partnership, Shoresh staff and volunteers work with Reena's Pathways North Program participants to plant and nurture their seedlings in our Greenhouse until planting time. Shoresh provided the trays, seeds and lamps, and Pathways is in charge of watering and daily care. Pathways/Channels participants are also welcome to volunteer at the Kavanah Garden over the summer and help harvest the fall crop at the community garden.

At the end of May, Shoresh will leave behind some of the seedlings for program participants to take care of as the plants flourish over the summer and are harvested in the fall. The herbs and vegetables will then be enjoyed as fresh ingredients in cooking lessons at the Pathways program. We are delighted with the bounty from our wonderful partnership with Shoresh, and look forward to many 'fruitful' years of planting, growing and harvesting food, flowers and friendships.

For more information about Shoresh or the Kavanah Garden, visit www.shoresh.ca

www.reena.org

Spirituelle Divas to meet at JCC

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

A new program at the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre is intended to teach women new ways of connecting spiritually.

Spirituelle Divas, which will meet monthly at the JCC, has women sharing spiritual discussions and uplifting spiritual experiences, and taking part in a variety of programs.

The Spirituelle Divas, a not-for-profit organization started up in 2002 by three women, now has about 250 members in local chapters around the Greater Toronto Area.

Janet Klein Slavin, in the JCC's department of adults, boomers and beyond, said that the goal of the program is to "inspire, support and come together in a warm and welcoming place, where we can explore our inner worlds, develop new perspectives and greater flexibility, and open ourselves up to spiritual growth."

She said that in recent years, she has sensed an openness to alternative practices, and she wanted to bring a course to the JCC.

"I believe [these practices can lead to] a fulfilling life, and can positively impact emotional and medicinal health."

Through networking, she said, she was connected to Rosalind Smith, a transformational life coach and certified master hypnotherapist, who is one of the founders of Spirituelle Divas.

"I thought that it was a great idea to carry on at the JCC what Roz had started. Why should we start from scratch when something out there exists?"

Smith said their original intent was to give women the opportunity of exploring topics such as healing modalities, "which are not considered conventional. We wanted them to share with each other in a loving and caring atmosphere. We're looking for ways for women to increase the spark they already have."

Klein Slavin said that their focus is to embrace and empower women, and allow them to share and feel comfortable. "We are passionate about teaching women to positively channel their energy."

She said that women are not connected to each other in the same way as they were in the past. "In [generations past] women got together to reconnect. Women need other women. They can help each other find a balance between body, mind and spirit. When a person is balanced, everything flows the way it should."

An information meeting on Spirituelle Divas will be held at the Prosserman JCC on May 9, 7:30 p.m. in Room 123. Men are welcome to attend the information session and create their own chapter.

Pre-registration is required at 416-638-1881, ext. 4235.

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International

CANADIAN GENERAL VISITS ISRAEL

The chief of staff of the Canadian Armed Forces, Gen. Thomas Lawson, left, arrived in Israel April 21 for his first visit in his current role. Israel Defence Forces Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Benny Gantz, right, hosted him. Lawson was greeted at IDF headquarters by an IDF honour guard. According to the IDF press office, Lawson held a work meeting with Gantz and was "briefed on defence issues by senior IDF personnel." The visit focused on the "common regional challenges the armies face and the advancement of military cooperation matters. This visit... exemplifies the sturdy and deepening bonds between the respective defence establishments," the IDF said.

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Dates: Tuesday, July 30- Tuesday, August 13

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ORTHODOX UNION

Hagel confirms unprecedented arms sales to Israel

Aaron Kalman
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — The United States will provide Israel with a long list of advanced weapons, guaranteeing it a technological edge and superiority over any enemy.

U.S. Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel made the announcement Monday during a Tel Aviv press conference with his Israeli counterpart.

The Israeli Air Force will receive advanced radar systems, missiles, refuelling planes and V-22 planes, Hagel told reporters after a meeting with Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon.

The V-22 planes, which can take off vertically, are something no country outside the United States has, Hagel noted, adding that the aid package would give Israel "military superiority over any enemy state, non-state or coalition," and expand its ability to operate far from the country.

"Israel is a sovereign nation. Every sovereign nation has the right to defend itself," Hagel said, calling Iran's drive for nuclear weapons "a top priority" of the administration in Washington.

"Our countries share values, common interests and a permanent bond that grows stronger over time," said the defence secretary, who has faced criticism over past comments regarding Israeli and Jewish influence in Washington.

Standing alongside Hagel, Ya'alon said a nuclear-armed Iran would threaten not only threaten Israel but "it would be a nightmare... for the entire globe."

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon, left, and U.S. Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel share a light moment during the latter's visit in Israel. ***[Flash90 photo]***

He said that despite its readiness to deploy military force, Jerusalem would prefer to resolve the Iranian nuclear threat via diplomatic channels.

While sanctions "were causing enormous difficulty for Iran," Hagel said he supports U.S. President Barack Obama's approach and echoed Washington's refrain that "all options are on the table."

The two men also discussed the ongoing civil war in Syria, reiterating that a deployment of chemical weapons there would not be tolerated.

If President Bashar Assad uses chemical weapons in Syria, "it would be a game changer," Hagel said.

"We are ready to act if chemical weapons are transferred. We proved it when they crossed this red line," Ya'alon said, a clear allusion to a February strike against Syrian targets – some reports said they were chemical weapons – allegedly carried out by IAF jets.

Upon his arrival in Israel on Sunday, Hagel told reporters the United States and Israel see "exactly the same" threat from Iran, which he described as a toxic combination of nuclear ambition and support for terrorism.

But he acknowledged differences on when it may reach the point of requiring U.S. or Israeli military action.

Hagel stressed repeatedly that Israel has a sovereign right to decide for itself whether it must attack Iran. "Israel will make the decision that Israel must make to protect itself, to defend itself," Hagel said as he began a weeklong tour of the Middle East.

Timesofisrael.com

Israeli expertise helping heal Boston's wounded

The Times of Israel

A decade of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and years of terror on Israel's streets, have sharpened skills and scalpels, leading to dramatic advances that are now being used to treat the 13 amputees and nearly a dozen other patients still fighting to keep damaged limbs after the April 15 Boston attack.

"The only field or occupation that benefits from war is medicine," said Dr. David Cifu, rehabilitation medicine chief at the Veterans Health Administration.

One place help has come from is Israel, which for decades has dealt with the aftermath of Palestinian bombs, like the ones in Boston, often laden with nails, ball bearings and other metals.

The finish line of the Boston Marathon after the first bomb exploded. ***[Wikimedia photo]***

In the immediate aftermath of the attack, Massachusetts General Hospital director Dr. Alasdair Conn said the hospital's triage knowledge had come from Israel.

"About two years ago... we asked the Israelis to come across, and they helped us set up our disaster team so that we could respond in this kind of manner," he told reporters on Monday.

Dr. Pinchas Halpern, director of emergency medicine at Tel Aviv's Sourasky Medical Center, was in contact with doctors in Boston last week.

"Unfortunately, we have great expertise," he said.

Halpern gave lectures in 2005 at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General about responding to attacks.

Among the topics he covered in his lectures were how to co-ordinate ambulances to distribute the wounded to area hospitals according to their type of injury, performing more CT scans than usual to locate deep shrapnel wounds and ways to identify and classify wounds.

Dr. Paul Biddinger of Mass General's emergency department said the hospital took much of Halpern's advice.

"We improved our plans for triage, site security, reassessment and inter-specialty co-ordination" following Halpern's visit, Biddinger said.

Many of the first responders on the scene and surgeons at Boston's hospitals served in Iraq and Afghanistan and were able to use their battlefield expertise in the moments and hours after the blasts.

Nearly 2,000 U.S. troops have lost a leg, arm, foot or hand in Iraq or Afghanistan, and their sacrifices have led to advances in the immediate and long-term care of survivors, as well as in the quality of prosthetics that are now so good that surgeons often choose them over trying to save a badly mangled leg.

Tourniquets, shunned during the Vietnam War, made a comeback in Iraq as medical personnel learned to use them properly and studies proved that they saved lives. In Boston, as on the battlefield, they did just that by preventing people from bleeding to death.

Military doctors passed on to their civilian counterparts a surgical strategy of a minimal initial operation to stabilize the patient, followed by more definitive ones days later, an approach that offered the best chance to preserve tissue from large and complex leg wounds.

Nine of the 17 Israelis who registered to run finished the Boston Marathon.

"I finished the marathon, and on my way back to the hotel I heard the blast," runner Tzvika Bronstein said. "At first I didn't make the connection to terrorism, and I ignored it. I even sent a text message to my wife that I had finished, without even telling her about the explosion."

Orit Trumper-Sela, the director of human resources for EMC in Israel, flew to participate in the race after winning a raffle at work. She was already at the final kilometer mark when everything came to a halt. "I didn't understand what was happening," she recalled. "I thought something had happened to one of the runners. It's unbelievable that I came from 'dangerous' Israel to a marathon that ended in such a way. It's incomprehensible."

Yaron Tubin, on sabbatical in Boston with his wife, stopped running 200 meters from the finish line. "The explosion was really right in front of me," he said. "It feels inconceivable that it could be a terrorist attack, but the Israeli head takes over. The Americans around me didn't understand what it was and were wandering around aimlessly, but as an Israeli you understand."

Timesofisrael.com

With files from JNS.org

Large crowd protests antisemitism in Budapest

JTA

BUDAPEST — Tens of thousands of protesters marched in Budapest against antisemitism, as Hungarian police prevented a neo-Nazi demonstration for the third time in two weeks.

The march Sunday against antisemitism was part of the annual March of the Living, which usually draws a few thousand people who commemorate the victims of the Holocaust with a solemn walk along the Danube.

This year, however, tens of thousands showed up with Israeli and European Union flags in what many said was a tour de force against the ideas promoted by the ultra-nationalist Jobbik Party and neo-Nazi fringe groups, *Reuters* reported.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, police banned a group of extreme-rightist bikers from holding a rally in front of the city's main synagogue during the March of the Living event. The biker group already applied for a permit earlier this month and was refused. They rallied under the slogan "give gas," a possible reference to the extermination of Jews during the Holocaust.

Over the past few weeks, several fringe groups have requested permission to hold a protest against the planned gathering next month of the World Jewish Congress plenary meeting in Budapest.

On Saturday, police officers in Pecs in southern Hungary detained 18 people who police said belonged to the Pax Hungarica movement and who participated in a rally in honour of Adolf Hitler's 124th birthday on April 20. They were charged with disturbing public order, according to a report by the *MTI* Hungarian news service.

Israel Briefs

Rockets fired at the south

Two mortar shells fired from the Gaza Strip struck southern Israel on April 18, causing no damage or injuries. The mortar shells were fired a day after two long-range rockets fired from the Sinai Desert struck Eilat. The rockets launched April 17 fell in open areas in the southernmost Israeli city, according to the Israel Defence Forces. One landed in a construction site in south Eilat. An Iron Dome missile-defence-system battery deployed in the Eilat area tracked the rockets but did not operate to shoot them down, according to reports. A rocket last landed in Eilat in April 2012. A report issued by the Israel Security Agency indicates that since the start of 2013, Palestinian terror organizations in Gaza have fired a total of 15 rockets into Israel. In 2012, 2,157 rockets and 175 mortar shells were fired from Gaza into Israel, most of them during the eight-day Operation Pillar of Defence in November.

Israel opens Nazareth industrial park

Israel has opened a new groundbreaking industrial park in Nazareth to promote economic co-operation between the region's diverse Jewish, Christian and Muslim citizens. Nazareth, located in the Galilee region of Israel, is an ancient city that according to Christian scriptures was the childhood home of Jesus. Modern Nazareth has a predominately Arab-Israeli population, with a sizable Arab Christian minority. The park is funded by Israeli industrialist Stef Wertheimer, who has built several successful industrial parks in Israel and even Turkey. Like the other parks, the Nazareth Industrial Park will be modelled on Wertheimer's innovative Tefen Industrial Park, which is designed to bring together industrial, educational and cultural facilities all in one space to foster innovation, growth and peace.

Gantz reaffirms Israel's Iran options

Israel maintains the capability to strike Iran's nuclear sites on its own, Israel's military chief said. Lt.-Gen. Benny Gantz, speaking to multiple media outlets on April 16, said Israel could handle Iran on its own. "We have the ability to deal with the dangers Iran presents to us," he told the *Ynet* news site. Gantz said Israel still favours sanctions and pressure on Iran, as well as "operational capabilities," which he would not specify to *Ynet*. They could be a euphemism for reports of Israel's responsibility for cyberattacks on Iran, and for bombings aimed at its nuclear facilities and its scientists. He also told *Ynet*, "Iran can achieve nuclear capabilities by the end of this year, but that does not mean it will." Gantz told *Israel Radio* that there were "extensive discussions" between Israel's military and political establishments about Iran, but he would not describe them as "disagreement."

With files from JTA and JNS.org

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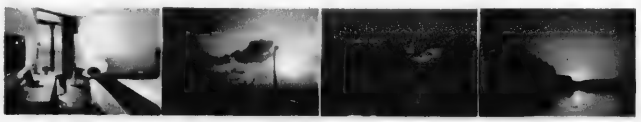

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Israeli business school opening real estate institute

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

If you were to ask anyone, from sophisticated investors to amateurs who like to dabble which capital asset is least portable, you'd likely get a universal consensus that it's real estate.

That may be true enough, but knowledge about real estate – how to finance acquisitions, hire and supervise contractors, market it, manage it – those are skills that are transportable everywhere.

The Recanati Business School of Tel Aviv University recognizes that, so in a bid to boost its profile and create a broader learning environment for its students, it is establishing the Alfred Akirov Real Estate Center. Not too long ago, Asher Tishler, dean of the Recanati business school, was in Toronto to meet business people, entrepreneurs, investors and academics as he "tried to forge co-operation with this school in the local community here."

Speaking to *The CJN* before jetting off to Montreal, Tishler said the new real estate centre is a response to the growing importance of real estate in the Israeli economy. The school believes, "a healthy and vibrant real estate sector is essential for economic growth, productivity, employment and social justice. As globalization reshapes the international economic landscape, and technological change creates greater uncertainty in the world economy, entrepreneurship in the real estate sector has become critical in helping Israel meet its new economic, social and environmental challenges."

Tishler said he hopes to create mutually advantageous learning experiences for Israeli and Canadian students, as well as academics and others with practical knowledge of real estate development.

Israel has had an active real estate market for some time, along with courses to prepare students to participate in it. "What we want to do is go one level up," he said.

One of the proposals he is bringing to his Canadian counterparts is to have mutual internships to permit students to travel abroad and meet successful developers, and acquire the skills that can be applied back home.

"It's learning by doing," he said.

Likewise, Canadians can travel to Israel and absorb some of that country's best business practices, he suggested. Israel is known for its high levels of entrepreneurship and high tech industry, while Canada is well advanced in areas of planning, finance, marketing and construction. There's a lot to learn for both sides, he suggested.

As for Toronto itself, "It is a very nice market." Lots of Israelis have made a home here and make a living from the real estate market.

"It looks like it's a vibrant real estate community here and Israelis are doing well in it," so bringing a successful businessman back to Israel to lecture on best practices is one element of his proposed plan, Tishler said.

Asher Tishler

Other aspects of the Alfred Akirov Real Estate Institute include: offering a learning program within the Recanati school's MBA program; teaching courses on real estate issues; offering programs in real estate for Israeli executives; conducting research in real estate issues; sponsoring conferences on the Israeli and foreign real estate markets; and co-operating with universities abroad.

Tishler said he plans to return to Toronto in the summer to meet with representatives of local university business schools.

The Akirov Institute is named for the founder of Alrov Properties and Lodging, one of Israel's largest real estate firms. It is expected to attract 50 to 60 students a year. Tishler said donors in the private sector have already pledged $250,000 (US) per year for the next 10 years to fund the program.

HEAD OF SCHOOL POSITION

Founded in 1968 and located in Montreal, The Akiva School is a leading Canadian Jewish elementary school. The Akiva School's core values are rooted in Jewish tradition, serving all denominations of the Montreal Jewish community. The Board is currently seeking a dynamic, visionary educator to serve as its Head of School. The appointment will be effective July, 2013. The incumbent will serve as its academic leader as well as its role model of Akiva's Jewish values and practices.

Accredited by CAIS, The Akiva School provides innovative education from Kindergarten through grade 6 in a dual stream, state of the art environment. The school offers a rich and rigorous academic program that seamlessly incorporates English, French and Hebrew studies. The Akiva School possesses a unique partnership between school staff, administration and a committed parent body that plays an active role in day-to-day school life. All school activities are conducted according to Halachah. For further information please visit the school website at www.akivaschool.com.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Head of School ensures that the school meets and exceeds its standards of academic excellence. The ideal candidate will provide instructional and religious leadership, team leadership as well as administrative leadership. S/he will serve as the face of the school to the community at large, be responsible for overall recruitment, enrolment and institutional advancement. Strong educational credentials and leadership experience are required. Bilingualism/trilingualism is a definite asset.

This is an excellent opportunity to lead the school forward, building on a solid strategic foundation in terms of school culture and direction.

Please apply in the strictest of confidence to: **akivasearch2013@gmail.com**. All applications must be received **by May 10, 2013.**

The Akiva School is a coeducational school with English and French language of instruction for Kindergarten and Elementary.

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CAIS

Umoove operates mobile devices through head movements

Abigail Klein Leichman
Israel 21c

TEL AVIV — What the Kinect motion-sensing device did for the Xbox game console, Israeli startup Umoove proposes to do for your mobile. You won't have to move your whole body – only the parts from the chin up – to play games, scroll down a page or dial your mother.

"Kinect holds a Guinness record for being the fastest-selling consumer electronics device because it was much more immersive and engaging than other ways to play," said Moti Krispil, one of the company's founders.

"We are following that paradigm in the mobile space, where the only thing visible is your head and eyes. You are constantly looking at the screen, so why shouldn't they become the interface?"

Krispil, 34, co-founded Umoove in 2010 along with Yitzi Kempinski, Nir Blaustein and Tuvia Elbaum, who is still a student at the Jerusalem College of Technology-Machon Lev. Based in Jerusalem, the company now employs 13, including four additional Machon Lev students or graduates.

"Many companies are trying to decipher the DNA of how to do this, but most probably we are the first to achieve consumer-grade performance using no special hardware at all – just your phone," Krispil told *Israel21c*.

"Everyone wants to deliver something robust enough to work, and that can be scaled down to performance on a mobile phone. That's the reason for our existence."

While Kinect's sophisticated hardware setup – built on the 3D sensing technology of the Israeli company PrimeSense – has the operational advantage of being fixed below the TV or PC, that also limits its distance-to-user range. A mobile device offers different possibilities and challenges.

Umoove is based on technology pioneered by Kempinski, now chief technology officer of the company. Originally searching for an affordable solution to allow paralyzed people to read content or browse the web using only their face muscles, Kempinski found that existing technologies failed to deliver under extreme conditions – aside from pricey setups involving multiple hardware devices.

"So he built an intelligent solution from scratch that contradicts any known algorithm out there," said Krispil. "Once we delved into this challenge, we discovered what we want is much, much bigger – extremely disruptive in potential."

Umoove began with $850,000 (all figures US) and got another $2 million from a strategic investor in April 2012.

The head-tracking technology is already being integrated on some games, and is available to third-party partners and developers for gaming, commerce, security and entertainment on all mobile platforms.

Krispil recently demonstrated Umoove at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, Spain, and is in talks with potential corporate prospects.

"It's easy to show customers how the quality of life of a typical user can dramatically improve when browsing the web, watching a video, playing a game. Head and eye tracking simplifies everyday tasks – not just games and not just for people with disabilities. Daily functionality becomes hands-free."

Imagine a video player that automatically pauses when you raise your head to look at someone calling you, and then continues playing when you look back at the screen.

"Once you get used to the concept, it becomes a language to use in many other places," says Krispil, whose four-year-old daughter uses Umoove to play game apps as she's moving from room to room and even outdoors.

"The application possibilities are endless," says Krispil. "Our strategy is driven by the vision to be the de facto standard for natural user interface on mobile devices. We're not just delivering technology, but actually suggesting a new language."

Author records what he sees from a café table

Publishers and readers transform a writer's reputation over time, sometimes without meaning to. A writer may take such liberties himself, by seizing his own career in order to send it someplace new.

Recent reviews of the first novel in more than 30 years by the American writer James Salter provide excellent evidence of this: while in the U.S. Army during World War II, Salter, born James Horowitz, decided that he didn't want to be thought of as another Jewish writer from New York. In renaming himself he became a different kind of New York writer; someone, one imagines, he could live with more easily as he created the persona his readers and the writers influenced by him came to know and revere.

Publishers take similar liberties, leaving readers to either accept a writer as presented or to undertake a kind of literary sleuthing, to confirm who the author once was, and still might be, regardless of what the biographical materials on a book flap might say.

Reviewed by

Norman Ravvin

A recent translation of the major French Jewish author Georges Perec contributes to an ongoing renewal and revision of Perec's legacy. *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris* (Wakefield Press), a minor work Perec completed before embarking on his 1978 masterpiece, known in English as *Life: A User's Manual*. *An Attempt* is a tiny thing, really a reproduction of a note-taking process Perec embarked on in the Paris neighbourhood of Saint-Sulpice, which begins: "Outline of an inventory of some strictly visible things."

The U.S. publisher of *An Attempt* suggests that the author's goal was to record "everything to pass through his field of vision" as he sat at a succession of café tables in the venerable Parisian neighbourhood. But this is a far-fetched claim. To do this, Perec would have had to produce a 70-page book like *Life: A User's Manual*. He would have had to sit at his post at Tabac Saint-Sulpice for many days. He would have had to supply an intensely detailed wash of daily and nightly events, a kind of screenplay, full of long shots, close-ups and deep atmospheric detailing, not the sketch of passing traffic, pedestrians and weather that makes up his "attempt" to exhaust his neighbourhood.

What passes under the eye of the author in the fall of 1974, some two years before he began the book that would make him a postmodern icon in Europe and North America? Japanese tourists; schoolgirls with bags on their back; men with baguettes; many, many "apple-green" Citroën 2CV's; the 96 bus to Montparnasse; the 86 to Saint-Germain-des-Prés; pigeons travelling from ground to building cornice and back again; a "sort of double of Peter Sellers, with a very pleased expression on his face"; "grannies wearing gloves"; "a priest in a beret"; meter maids; "Four children. A dog. A little ray of sun. The 96. It is two o'clock."

This phrase concludes *An Attempt*, and the very particularity of the book's final anecdote is telling. The anonymous bus; the suggestion of sunlight; the meagerness of the details on offer; these things are, by no means, a catalogue of "everything to pass through" Perec's "field of vision."

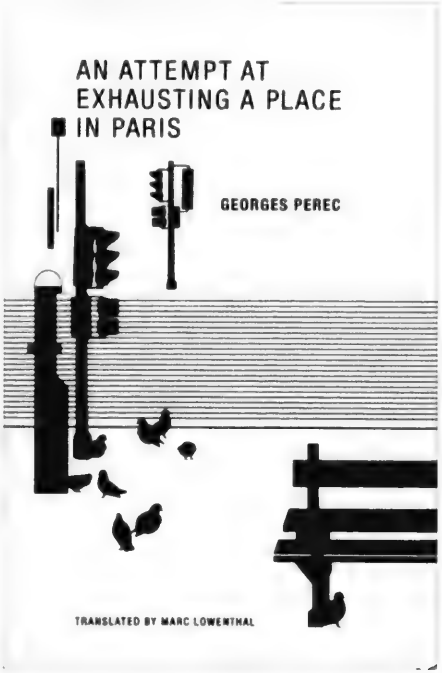
And who is the author of these sketches? According to the American publishers of *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris*, Perec is: "(1936-1982)... a French novelist, essayist and filmmaker whose linguistic talents ranged from fiction to crossword puzzles... Winner of the the prix Renaudot in 1965 for his first novel *Things*, and the prix Médicis in 1978 for his most acclaimed novel, *Life: A User's Manual*, Perec was also a member of Oulipo, a group of writers and mathematicians devoted to the discovery and use of constraints to encourage literary inspiration. One of their most famous products was Perec's own novel, *A Void*, written entirely without the letter "e."

Sounds like fun. But this is not the whole story. Perec's parents were Polish-born Jews who arrived in France in the 1920s. They traced their ancestry to I. L. Peretz, whose connection to them was hidden by the erasure of a "z" in favour of a "c" ("z" might stand for Zamosc, Peretz's Polish hometown). When the war broke out, Perec's father was killed early, as a combatant on the French side facing German invasion. Perec was sent to be hidden near Grenoble in the French Alps, where his mother meant to join him, but she was arrested and deported to Auschwitz where she was murdered.

Knowing these details changes our picture of the man in the window, watching Paris in the fall of 1974. Knowing the difference a "c" makes in a name helps us think about the novelist who chose to write a book without "e's."

When Perec returned to Paris after the war, his parents dead, he found his neighbourhood in ruins. These facts do not mean that Jewishness underwrites everything Perec did; nor do they necessarily demand that a publisher of a work like *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris* dwell on what, to Perec's readers, may be well-known facts. But one wants some inkling of the texture of an author's self-image, his formative years, his place in European literature and culture, when opening his book. Early in *An Attempt* Perec notes that there are a great many things in Saint-Sulpice that are well-known – a church built by famous craftsmen, a fountain decorated with statues of Christian orators – but his intention is, he says, to describe "the rest... that which is not noticed."

In this new incarnation Perec is as historyless as the pigeons and the schoolgirls, the grannies in gloves and the apple-green 2CV's. The writer, against the backdrop of a square full of church statuary, becomes another native ornament, a passive cataloguer of Frenchness and weather patterns.



Norman Ravvin's recent novel is The Joyful Child *(Gaspereau Press). He is at work on a novel,* The Typewriter Girl, *set in Poland and in Vancouver.*

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Jays' reliever starts season on disabled list

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

If you're a Major League ball player, the last place you want to be is on the disabled list.

Yet, as the season kicked off, that's exactly where Blue Jays' reliever Michael Schwimer found himself. While his teammates started the season with expectations of a playoff position in mind, if not a berth in the World Series, Schwimer found himself back in Florida, rehabbing, building up strength and slowly getting some pitches in.

Schwimer missed the opening two weeks of the season with a shoulder injury; that was the bad news. The good news is that it isn't the same injury that plagued him last year as a member of the Philadelphia Phillies. That was a biceps injury, but when he spoke to *The CJN* on the telephone from Florida, he proclaimed himself healed and raring to go.

"Right now, I'm getting better every day," he said. "There's no real timetable. I'm healthy, with no pain in my arm.

"I need to build up my arm strength. I'm hopeful to be out of here shortly, but I don't know."

"Every day is better than the next. It shouldn't be long."

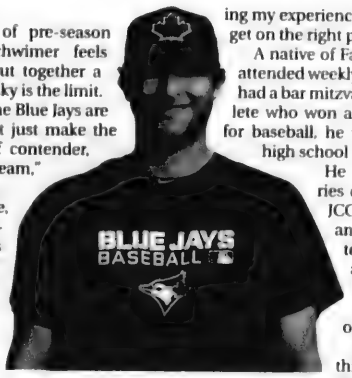
Schwimer is one of the new crop of players management hopes turns the team into a contender. He was acquired during spring training from the Philadelphia Phillies for minor-league player Art Charles. A right-handed reliever, Schwimer stands six-foot-eight and weights 246 pounds. According to *NBC Sports*, "Schwimer was given away to the Blue Jays because he threatened a grievance over how the Phillies handled an injury last year."

Playing in his rookie season with the Phillies last year, the Virginia-born athlete came out of the bullpen 47 times and fashioned a 2-1 record with a 4.46 ERA. He threw strikes with regularity. In 34.1 innings he fanned 36.

For Schwimer, the Phillies was the only Major League organization he knew, but "going to a new organization was exciting." His experience with the Blue Jays has been positive. "It's a good team, a good clubhouse," he said.

And like a lot of pre-season prognosticators, Schwimer feels management has put together a team for whom the sky is the limit. "You can see what the Blue Jays are doing brilliantly, not just make the team into a playoff contender, but a World Series team," he said.

With that attitude, Schwimer is not worried about the team's slow start. From the time he spoke to *The CJN* to the time this story appears in print, the team made strides. At press time, The Blue Jays were only 2.5 games back of Boston in the American League East.



Michael Schwimer

For the worrywarts among us, Schwimer said that there are 162 games in the season. "The slow start, that's for people and fans to get worried about. Among the players, I assume, there's no worry, no panic. Every loss, the fans and media tend to freak out. As a player… you don't press the panic button."

As for his role on the team, management indicated they expect him to come in as a late inning reliever. "But, I'll have to prove it," he said.

When he does finally get to Toronto, Schwimer hopes to add one other element to his role as a Blue Jay. It was something he had hoped to do in Philly, but it just didn't work out. He had approached Jewish organizations, indicating he was available to speak to young people and "help out in any way I can. I love speaking to kids and sharing my experiences and helping them get on the right path."

A native of Fairfax, Va., Schwimer attended weekly Hebrew school and had a bar mitzvah. An all-round athlete who won all sorts of accolades for baseball, he was also an all-star high school basketball player.

He has great memories of competing in the JCC Maccabi Games, an event that attracts top high school-aged players from Canada, the United States, Israel and other nations.

He participated in three of the summer games, winning two gold medals in basketball.

"It was an absolute blast," he recalled. "We had so much fun."

In his senior year in high school, he averaged 21 points, eight rebounds, and six assists per game. He was such an accomplished athlete, he was offered Division 1 scholarships to play football, basketball, and baseball. Duke and Louisville offered him full basketball scholarships.

Instead he chose baseball and was drafted in the 14th round in 2008 by the Phillies. He toiled in the minor leagues until 2011, when he made his Major League debut.

When it comes to pitching, he can't be pigeonholed. "No one pitches like me," he said. "I have an unorthodox, unique motion that helps me hide the ball better. I have better deception and create better angles so I can drive the ball downhill."

His best pitches are the fastball, change up, sinker and slider.

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Vaughan relay event to fight cancer

Compiled by CJN Staff

Thornhill resident Vicky Wylson-Sher has started the first-ever Vaughan Relay for Life, taking place June 14 and 15 on the Woodbridge Fairgrounds at 100 Porter St.

Along with co-chair Gloria Mantini-Cappello, Wylson-Sher is reaching out to all residents of Vaughan, including Thornhill, Woodbridge, Maple, Concord and Kleinburg, to help make the inaugural event a success. Funds raised at the relay will benefit the Canadian Cancer Society.

Wylson-Sher lost her husband to cancer in February, and it is in his memory that she's named her relay team, Eye on Jeff. The Relay for Life involves teams of 10 people who participate in an overnight, non-competitive relay. Participants take turns walking around a track. Teams pitch tents in a "Tent City," where team members can relax when they are not walking. The event takes place overnight because cancer never sleeps.

Participants will be treated to dinner, snacks, breakfast and entertainment provided by live bands. There will be activities for the whole family including arts and crafts, trampoline and a mini horse show for the kids, as well as kickboxing, Zumba, massages, manicures, karaoke, board games, trivia contests and a middle of the night, open air movie on a giant screen.

Wylson-Sher said the event was inspired by a quote from Anne Frank: "How wonderful that no one need wait a single moment to improve the world."

Participants can register at: http://convio.cancer.ca/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFL_ON_odd_?team_id=284191&pg=team&fr_id=13002.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

YIDDISH CELEBRATED AT DAYLONG EVENT

Someone once asked the legendary writer **Isaac Bashevis Singer** to comment on the fact that Yiddish was a dying language. "Yes, it's been dying for the past 300 years," he replied.

This week a group of mainstream Jewish organizations present Yidishtog, a celebration of Yiddish-language lectures and musical and family programming highlighting contemporary directions in Yiddish studies. (Not bad for a dying language.)

Speakers at Yidishtog include professors **Rebecca Margolis, Anna Shternshis, Kalman Weiser** and **Sholem Berger**. For the "*kinder*" there are readings of **Dr. Seuss** and *Curious George* in Yiddish. The MNJCC Klezmer Music Ensemble and **Lenka Lichtenberg** and her **Fray** ensemble will each perform their contemporary Yiddish songs with world-music influences.

The kids' reading and klezmer performance are free; access to all lectures is $10; and the Lichtenberg concert (at which she releases her new CD, *Embrace*) is $25 and $15. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Sunday, April 28, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Lichtenberg concert at the Glenn Gould Studio, 8 p.m. Presented by Ashkenaz Foundation, Miles Nadal JCC, Committee for Yiddish, Workmen's Circle, Friends of Yiddish and others. www.ashkenazfestival.com, 416-924-6211, ext. 154.

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Arts in Brief

• The Motek Cultural Initiative presents the Isrock Festival featuring **Hadag Nahash**, **Mashina** and **Yael Deckelbaum** in celebration of Israel's 65th Independence Day. "Dance, mix, mingle and celebrate Israel!" Sound Academy, 11 Polson St. Sunday, April 28, doors open 7 p.m. $65, $55, $180 (VIP) www.motekToronto.com

• **Adam Nayman** continues his series on the American filmmakers **Joel** and **Ethan Coen** with a discussion of "Twin Cities: *A Serious Man* and *Fargo*." Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, April 29, $12 drop-in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents the Coen brothers' *A Serious Man*, with guest speaker Nayman. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday, May 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15, $10. Tickets available at the door shortly before screenings.

• The Miles Nadal JCC invites the public to "do music with us!" Choose from the Women's Chorus on Mondays, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., the Daytime Choir on Tuesday, 1 to 2:30 p.m., the Klezmer Ensemble, Tuesdays 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. or the Jewish Chanting Circle on Wednesday, May 8, 7:30 to 9 p.m. music@mnjcc.org

• Israeli-born multi-instrumentalist **Koby Israelite** mixes his Balkan background with roots, rock and eastern European blues on his latest album, *Blues from Elsewhere*, which was released in March. His cover of **Bob Dylan**'s *Subterranean Homesick Blues* is available for viewing on YouTube.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *A Different Take*, an exhibit of photographs by **Marvin Cooper**, offers a "unique photographic perspectives of Israel." On view in the hallway outside the Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum, Beth Tzedec synagogue, until the end of May. The curator is **Dorion Liebgott**. Email: museum@beth-tzedec.org, call 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

• *Early Sunday Morning* is an exhibit of new urban photographs by **David Kaufman** that illuminate the rich visual texture of Toronto's disappearing heritage streetscapes. On view at Twist Gallery, 1100 Queen St. W., May 1 to 26. Public reception, Thursday, May 2, 6 to 9:30 p.m. as part of the annual Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival. www.davidkaufmanphotography.com

•Toronto artist **Corwyn Lund** has written a proposal for a video documenting a skater on a tiny frozen pond in an excavation pit where a building once stood at 48 Abell St. But the impromptu ice rink existed for only one week. Lund's proposal has become a site-specific installation that covers the hoarding of a construction site. Koffler Gallery Off-Site presents Lund's *Word Count* at 48 Abell St., along the south side of the construction site, April 25 to June 30. Opening reception, Thursday, April 25, 6 to 9 p.m. Artscape Triangle Gallery, 38 Abell St.

• • •

A photograph of Baldwin Street from David Kaufman's exhibition.

A Note to Readers: I am delighted to invite you to a book launch for *Only Yesterday: Collected Pieces on the Jews of Toronto*, by **Benjamin Kayfetz** and **Stephen Speisman**, hosted by Toronto Workmen's Circle and Now and Then Books. As the book's editor and publisher, I will be giving a presentation at the launch.

Many of us have warm memories of **Ben Kayfetz** and **Stephen Speisman**. Kayfetz was a long-serving community relations officer for Canadian Jewish Congress and Speisman the founding director of the Ontario Jewish Archives and author of *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937*.

Only Yesterday features 18 of their best short pieces on the Jews of Toronto, along with many previously unpublished photographs of old synagogues and other subjects taken by Speisman. The launch takes place at the Workmen's Circle Building, 471 Lawrence Ave. W., Thursday, May 9, 7:30 p.m. Admission is free and everyone is invited. www.nowandthenbookstoronto.com

Film charts Israel's relations with Iran before revolution

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Israel's military attaché in Iran hugs an Iranian general and plants a kiss on his cheek.

The director as a baby with his mother in Tehran in 1978.

This is an image from Dan Shadur's *Before the Revolution*, one of the documentaries due to be screened at this month's Hot Docs film festival in Toronto.

The picture, taken in the late 1970s, is surreal in light of Iran's visceral hostility to Israel since the Islamic revolution in 1979. Prior to this political upheaval, Israel had diplomatic relations with Iran, a key Middle Eastern nation. But in its wake, Iran has turned into one of Israel's most bitter enemies.

Before the Revolution revisits the bygone era when Iran was Israel's closest ally in the Middle East. The 56-minute movie will be screened April 26 at 5 p.m. and April 27 at 6 p.m. at the TIFF Bell Lightbox theatre, and May 2 at 10:30 a.m. at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Shadur has a special interest in the topic because his Israeli parents lived in Iran during this period. In those days, thousands of Israelis were posted in Iran as diplomats, military attaches and trainers, businessmen and contractors.

To Israel, a nation fighting to break its regional isolation, Iran was of vital importance both strategically and economically.

In the film, Israelis who once resided in Iran recall their time there. Their memories are mostly positive, only turning sour when the revolution upends everything.

A security guard who worked at the Israeli Embassy fondly remembers when Israelis and Iranians showed up for a screening of *Operation Entebbe* on Israel's 30th anniversary in May 1978.

A businessman recalls when Israeli companies were very active in Iran, and

Continued on page 38

Israeli performer presents Yiddish concert

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Mendy Cahan, an Israeli performer, will be singing a program of Yiddish songs at his first-ever performance in Toronto, May 5.

The one-man show, *For the Love of Yiddish*, is dedicated to the memory of Gloria Morris, a former president of Friends of Yiddish and a member of Temple Sinai Congregation, two of the sponsors of the event.

Other sponsors include the committee for Yiddish of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, the ShaRna Foundation and the Morris family.

Cahan, a child of Holocaust survivors, is a multilingual singer, actor, writer, lecturer and storyteller, who was born and raised in Belgium.

He made aliyah as a young man and after graduating from Hebrew University, founded Yung Yiddish in 1993, a cultural organization initially dedicated to saving Yiddish books, but now pursues many additional forms of Yiddish cultural activism in Israel.

As well, Cahan lectures on Yiddish literature; performs with his band, Yiddish Express; and is founding director of the Vilnius Yiddish Institute in Vilnius, Lithuania.

In an interview from Israel, he described Yiddish as an amazing kaleidoscope of our development as a people during the last 1,000 years.

"The Yiddish language, as opposed to our Hebrew and Aramaic traditions, has created space for common people to express their own Jewish identity.

"That is how the incomparable Jewish humour, irony and drama have developed. Yiddish jokes, parables, songs and idioms are now an integral part of our Jewish heritage."

One learns much, he said, "by watching how a culture with no central body, and without ministries of education or culture, managed to survive, bloom and create – sometimes under extremely hard conditions – fuelled by an unequalled conviction of the need to transmit and educate. This could be the most powerful lesson of Yiddish sustainability."

He added, however, that the preservation of Yiddish in Israel is a difficult task. "For many years, Yiddish had the burden of keeping our Jewish memory and identity intact, and for keeping the longing for Israel alive.

"It is painful, then, to see that when we finally reached our homeland, Yiddish was discarded and nearly pushed in to the realm of forgetfulness."

But in the past 10 years, this has been changing, he said, "thanks in part to the incessant work of our Yung Yiddish volunteers. More and more youngsters are turning to us to learn.

"We are in dire need of support, though, and the Israeli government is slow in responding. We are supported mainly by private donors."

On the other hand, he said, Yiddish does have an active component of speakers and readers of the language. "So we have a lively public that seeks and enjoys our Yiddish events. The constant influx of immigrants and tourists keeps our work relevant and meaningful."

Cahan said performing here is special, "because Canada safeguarded a unique Yiddish tradition after the Holocaust. Peretz Miransky, Melekh Raviatch, Dora Wasserman, Y.Y. Segal, Rokhl Korn are just a few names that highlight the unique Canadian-Yiddish heritage. It is an honour to come and sing Yiddish."

For the Love of Yiddish, also with pianist Nina Shapilsky, will take place at Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. on May 5. For information or to purchase tickets, go to templesinai.net or call Marcie at 416-487-3281.

Mendy Cahan *[Philippe Szpirglas photo]*

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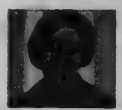
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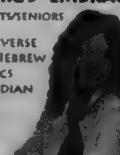

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A co-dependent relationship

Continued from page 37

a woman sheepishly says that Israelis discovered disposable diapers there. Still another Israeli remembers when virtually every Israeli household in Tehran, even those of kibbutzniks, enjoyed the services of live-in maids.

Israelis earned good salaries in Iran, and when they returned to Israel, they were able to buy apartments without taking out mortgages.

The Shah, Iran's supreme ruler, respected Israel's military prowess, particularly after the Six Day War, and that was one of the reasons he cozied up to Israel.

It was a co-dependent relationship. The Israeli government bought Iranian oil, while Iran purchased Israeli weapons and munitions. Meanwhile, Israeli construction companies won myriad contracts to build dams, housing projects and so on.

"There was no problem being an Israeli in Iran," a woman says. But her husband infers that Israelis may not have been popular outside Tehran.

Israelis knew that the shah's regime was brutal, but they accepted the status quo. As one Israeli puts it, "We lived on a different planet [in Iran]."

The majority of Israelis believed that the Iranian army would put down the Islamic revolt, but many left Iran as anti-shah street demonstrations escalated. Some Israelis, however, remained optimistic, hoping against hope that the shah would prevail.

These hopes were dashed with the departure of the shah and the arrival in Iran of Ayatollah Khomeini, the spiritual leader of the Islamic revolution and an ardent opponent of Israel's existence.

In a final indignity, the PLO was handed the keys to the Israeli Embassy, ending a special era in Israeli-Iranian relations. Israelis left Iran with their tails between their legs, an Israeli observes in a telling comment.

Shadur's film, supplemented by file footage, tells this story skilfully and empathetically.

Dance company's new works explore ranges of intimacy

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Kaeja d'Dance – the Toronto-based contemporary dance company under the direction of husband and wife team Allen and Karen Kaeja – is premièring two new works next month.

A double bill, the show delivers two takes on intimacy. They are *X-ODUS*, choreographed by Allen and performed by an ensemble of five dancers, and *Crave*, a duet choreographed by Karen.

"Both pieces focus on... what intimacy means to us, for us and around us," Allen Kaeja says. "Karen is creating an incredibly poignant duet, very personal and depth driven. My piece is highly kinetic and very explosive.

"People are used to dance taking place on a stage in a very confined environment, and I'm breaking frame and leaving that space."

These cutting-edge works are both rooted in their take on solitude and the attempt to connect.

Kaeja says that as choreographers and artists it's important for them to know how to push boundaries, and to take themselves, as well as their audiences, to significant places that broaden the base of understanding.

Allen and Karen Kaeja *[Zhenya Cerneacov photo]*

"We are propelling dance forward in many different ways. For me, there are a number of different levels – the whole kinetic level, which is my 'elevation' work. It is highly dangerous.

"Whereas much of the risk in Karen's, it's not only her physical vocabulary, which is highly unique and original, but also the range of intimacy both physically and emotionally," he continues. "Karen's piece is about getting into the porous nature of the world inside the cell of a moment."

Kaeja says his catch phrase is, "To arrive, one has to leave," which he equates with the Jews leaving Egypt. His piece, *X-ODUS*, examines if leaving is an overriding command, forced expulsion, overwhelming desire, choice or happenstance, and how we leave in order to arrive where we are now. He says *X-ODUS* is ultimately about arriving, adding that the State of Israel wouldn't exist if the Jews hadn't left so many years ago.

He wants audiences to come away from the show with a deep experience of the multiple ranges of what intimacy means and what it can exude.

"So often if we ask someone what is intimacy to you... it would be holding hands, a hug or a deep conversation. But we are looking at intimacy within the framework of the concert, with a thousand definitions that the audience will reflect upon," Kaeja says. "In a sense it deepens their intimacy with their significant others."

Kaeja says the depth and range of intimacy in his own marriage has grown and evolved, so it is both a personal and universal experience, the couple feels.

Allen married Karen in 1989, and they founded the dance company in 1991. The couple has two daughters, Aniya, 19, and Mika, 14.

The Kaejas have created more than 140 stage works and 26 films, received commissions worldwide and toured more than 20 countries. They have published two books, and their films are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and Yad Vashem in Israel, and in a number of university libraries.

They will be touring their new works throughout North America.

X-ODUS and Crave *run May 7 to 11 at Enwave Theatre as part of Harbourfront Centre's NextSteps dance series. For tickets, contact the Harbourfront Centre box office: 416-973-4000 or online at www.kaeja.org.*

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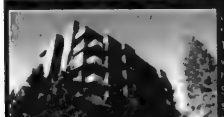

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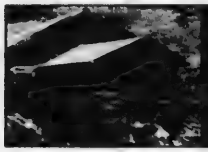

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Musician records European-infused American folk music

Stan Simon

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Stan Simon is revisiting his younger self in the music on his first solo album, *Escaping the Madhouse.*

The 27-year-old Thornhill, Ont., native, who spent years performing with hard rock bands like Courtesy Blush, is recording his first solo album, which has him performing a different style: American folk sprinkled with the sounds of European folk.

"When I was in the other bands, I was always writing my own music," he said. "I always had ideas, and all these songs coming out."

Now, he's taking those songs, many of which he wrote when he was 18, and revisiting them.

Many of the feelings he wrote about at that age still apply, although he had to update some of them. "I'm much older now and not as filled with angst," he joked. "I made some revisions, but it's refreshing, like having a whole new repertoire of music."

Simon's music features him on the vocals, guitar and harmonica, as well as other musicians playing the clarinet, upright bass and drums. He's also working on a song that would incorporate an organ and a strings portion.

Hiring session musicians can get expensive, he said, so he improvised the drum sound on one track called the *Firing Line* by toe-tapping onto a guitar case with a microphone inside, while playing a shoebox with a drum-brush.

Once the album is done, he'll be heading out to the East Coast for a two-week tour, during which he'll also stop in Ottawa and Montreal. Simon described his past touring experience, including performing around Europe with Courtesy Blush, as a "whole bunch of guys in a hot van in the French Alps." This time, it's just him, his girlfriend, a guitar and a rental car.

"We're going to see a bunch of sights, probably stop in the highway at any cool sights," he said, "and I'm hoping to meet a lot of people."

He's already been networking with East Coast artists to find out the best venues for his type of music, although he said it's been hard for him as a Toronto artist with no fan base in the areas he's approaching.

But he's planning to make it happen, since he has heard that the East Coast is a friendly area for folk artists.

"Folk music on the East Coast of Canada is a really big thing," he said, adding that he's not going for the sake of making money – in fact, he may not even break even. "It's more to expose what I'm doing to people out there."

He's hoping he'll come back from the tour not only with experience performing his new music outside of Toronto, but also with inspiration for new songs. He said in the past, travel has always sparked his creativity.

He recalled spending a month and a half alone in Europe, visiting places all over the continent, but especially focusing on finding his roots through staying in cities like Warsaw, where his parents were born.

His family has played a big role in developing his musical style. Growing up, he said klezmer music would regularly fill his home, and during the High Holidays, his cousins would often introduce him to different musicians, and that helped fuel his love of European folk music from a young age.

He described European folk music as more instrumental than the American kind. "But American folk music, like Bob Dylan, teaches me to put a story to the music," he said, adding that his current sound focuses more on the American music, but some songs do have European influence.

Working as an independent artist, he's learned that there's a huge community of folk-music fans in Toronto, and using social media has also helped in promoting himself. He said the trick is to give consistent updates but not constant ones.

"If I have a show, I'll promote it, but I won't necessarily be doing it every day and making people feel like they're forced to see it," he said. "You'd be surprised how people react to that kind of thing."

When the album is released in June, listeners can pick it up in either CD or vinyl. Simon said he hopes people who hear the music will understand what he means by the title *Escaping the Madhouse.*

It's about finding something in your life you feel free doing and not always feeling trapped by expenses and work, he said. "If you have something that can free you from those things, even for a few moments, that's true freedom."

For more information about Simon, visit stansimonmusic.com

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Life-altering decision

Dear Ella,

I've been seeing Mark for the last nine months and have fallen in love with him and his little boy. Mark is a little older than me, but we're on the same level in so many ways. Things are getting serious. We've talked about marriage, and his son Justin and I get along wonderfully. The three of us make a special family unit, and I would love to be Justin's step-mom.

One day, I mentioned something about how wonderful it will be when we can give Justin a little brother or sister. Mark sat back in his chair and stared at me. He took my hand and said, "I don't want any more children." It was like I was punched in the gut. I'm only 27 and I've always dreamed of having a child of my own. I want to be pregnant and feel a life growing inside me. I never imagined not having my own baby. Mark is 36 and he said now that Justin is in kindergarten, he can finally enjoy him. When Justin was a baby, he was always fighting with his ex and the baby was one of the reasons they divorced, and now he's quite content only seeing Justin every other weekend.

Ask Ella

By Ella Burakowski

I can't leave the two of them, I love them so much, but am I making a huge mistake making Mark's family my own?

Life-altering decision

Dear Life-altering decision,

This is not the kind of question you're going to find an answer to in an advice column. Life doesn't come with guarantees, and whatever your decision, you will have to live with it and hope to not have regrets.

Giving up the chance of having your own baby is life-altering. Have you thought of what would happen if you and Mark split in 10 years. I'm sorry to be negative, but given the statistics for divorce and Mark's track record, this isn't something to overlook. Chances are, to Justin you will always be his part-time step-mom. You don't see him enough to create the kind of bond you're looking for. Your relationship could change as he grows, but are you prepared to take that gamble? Although Justin and Mark are a huge part of your life, are they enough to fill the void of not having your own baby? Will you one day regret making the decision to not have a a baby of your own? When Justin says in anger, "You can't make me. You're not my real mother," will you be able to handle it? Will you mourn when you watch a mother in the park cradle or breast feed her infant? Fast forward 25 years, when all your friends are planning their kids' weddings, or 30 years when your friends are showing you pictures of their grandchildren. Will you regret your decision then?

You have a lot of soul-searching to do before you can make a pivotal decision like this. Think this through very carefully, and don't choose the easier answer. One road represents short-term pain, while the other may be forever pain. Don't talk Mark into a decision he will resent you for, and don't trick him in any way. (I'm sorry I'm even mentioning this, but it has been done before.)

At least you have the sense to be thinking this through. That's a huge step in the right direction. Talk to a counsellor, or maybe other childless step-moms. Whatever you decide, don't look back. You will not going in that direction any longer.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: ellacjn@gmail.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

ASIAN CHICKEN

6 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
Vegetable oil for brushing • Salt and pepper to taste

Marinade

2 lemon grass stalks, skinned & chopped
• 3 green onions chopped • 1/2 tsp cumin
• 1/2 tsp turmeric • 1 tsp ground coriander
• Zest of 1 lime • 3 tbls lime juice • 2 tsp sugar
• 2 tsp grated fresh ginger • 1 tbl fish sauce

Blend marinade ingredients in food processor until smooth. Place chicken in a large plastic sealable bag. Pour marinade over chicken, coating evenly. Place bag in refrigerator for 1 hr. Preheat BBQ to medium high. Grease grill to prevent sticking. Remove chicken from marinade and place on plate; drizzle with vegetable oil; season with salt and pepper. Place chicken on grill and cook 5 min. per side with lid of BBQ open or until flesh is opaque and juices run clear.

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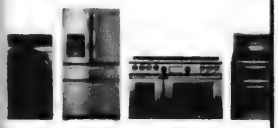

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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Michel Amar, left, general manager of Montreal's Mount Sinai Hospital, talks about the hospital's future goals and priorities as outlined in its new five-year plan.

Centre d'Art et Loisirs, where artist Hervé Teboul offers the opportunity to create your own paintings, as well as to view his works on exhibit there.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

In his Hebrew web column, Yossi Tastassa says that the price of our freedom is high.

The first annual Jewish Montreal Heritage Week, from May 5 to 12, aims to raise awareness of the treasures the community holds and that modern technology is making them accessible like never before.

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising commemorated at Polish consulate in Montreal.

Yves Michaud, who was denounced more than 12 years ago by the National Assembly for his comments about Jews, is now in trouble with Quebec's director-general of elections (DGE).

End-of-life care options

A recent conversation I had with a geriatrician practising in Israel turned to national differences in end-of-life care. She confirmed something I knew: how difficult it is in Israel to discontinue a feeding tube, even if the substitute decision-maker felt it was indicated and it was supported by a living will.

Most Canadian health professionals realize that our laws allow for such a move but also recognize its emotional impact: it results in more personal and professional conflicts than a decision to not insert a tube at the outset.

Senior Side of Life

Michael Gordon

A *National Post* article, "New Brunswick hospitals latest to offer patients expanded end-of-life care options" (Nov. 8, 2012), focuses on an initiative to offer patients more choices about their end-of life-care, beyond the standard "do or do not resuscitate" policies that often don't address other important issues such as artificial nutrition and hydration (feeding tubes).

A *New York Times* editorial, "Care at the end of life (Nov. 24, 2012), said that with good advance care, "there is good evidence that... it can greatly increase the likelihood that patients will get the care they really want. And, as a secondary benefit, their choices may help reduce the cost of health care as well."

Advance-care planning is not new. There have been strong Canadian proponents of the "living will," a written document used for stating one's wishes and values for end-of-life care. Verbal instructions are also legally valid but harder to "prove." In Ontario, living wills are supported legislatively through the Health Care Consent Act, 1996.

According to the *Times* editorial, "many people sign living wills that specify the care they want as death nears, and powers of attorney that authorize relatives or trusted surrogates to make decisions if they become incapacitated."

A nationwide American project, Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment endeavours to ensure patients' wishes are followed and are not too vague for family members so that they are sure what a comatose patient would want.

The *Times* article states: "With these physician orders, the doctor, or in some states, a nurse practitioner or physician assistant, leads conversations with patients, family members and surrogates to determine whether a patient with advanced illness wants aggressive life-sustaining treatment, a limited intervention or simply palliative or hospice care."

With the transition toward more patient choices about end-of-life care beyond "do or do not rescuitate," a cautionary note must be raised. One has to avoid the risk of developing a "quick and cheap fix" – that is, relying on simple forms in which people select from a menu of categories of choices for their final phase of care. This process is likely to be too minimalist to capture the nuances and emotional complexities of expressing end-of-life wishes. My sense, after many years of such involvement, is that the most important part of the process is not a "form" that is filled out, but *having the conversation* in a robust manner with those who will be responsible for respecting your values and wishes and interpreting the potential treatments offered when you cannot.

Pre-planning one's future is never easy and can lead to unexpected and unwanted consequences if not done carefully. This personal responsibility must be supported by strong commitment through public policy that promotes education and training of those who ultimately will be responsible for this very human undertaking.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest. His latest book is Late-Stage Dementia, Promoting Comfort, Compassion and Care. His previous book, Moments that Matter: Cases in Ethical Eldercare, follows his memoir, Brooklyn Beginnings: A Geriatrician's Odyssey. All can be researched at his website: http://www.drmichaelgordon.com.

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This Week

National

Holocaust monument will be erected in downtown Ottawa. *Page 3*

Edmonton's Jewish history comes back to life. *Page 23*

Health

Group helps couples with fertility problems. *Page 31*

Arts & Travel

Montreal writer discovers shocking truth of her past. *Page 41*

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News of CJN's closure evokes outcry

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

There has been a community outcry over last week's surprise announcement of *The CJN*'s impending closure, much of it online and from the young.

With a rallying cry of "Save the Canadian Jewish News!" a group calling itself "The Brain Trust" launched an Internet-based support site on April 24 – two days after *CJN* president Donald Carr announced that the print edition of the paper would cease June 20 – that has since garnered more than 3,000 digital signatures and 45,000 page views.

The site also asks readers for their ideas and opinions on the best ways to develop a viable plan to save the paper. As of Monday, the site had recorded "thousands" of suggestions from supporters, members of the group say.

"Save *The CJN* is a grassroots movement with a plan to keep the legacy of Canada's only independent Jewish newspaper publishing for many years to come. We are your voice and you are ours," reads the "about" blurb on the petition's website, which can be found at www.savethecjn.com.

Co-founded by two young professionals in Toronto – Rachel Singer, 29, a digital media specialist and journalist who started her photo-journalism career with *The CJN*, and Alana Kayfetz, director of strategic planning at the Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP)

Continued on page 14

To our readers

The outpouring of concern and the expressions of "support" that have arisen since our announcement of the closing of the print edition of *The Canadian Jewish News* are appreciated by the board of directors.

Notwithstanding that announcement, the board has continued to seek a way to produce a viable and sustainable print edition, as well as an enhanced Internet presence. What we have been doing has been validated substantially by the widespread public reaction.

We assure our readers, our advertisers and the community at large that we are continuing to work assiduously to find a way to preserve a print edition. The circumstances that drove our decision and our announcement remain unchanged. Therefore, we cannot yet know if our hopes and intentions will be fulfilled. However, among many other things, we intend to organize and mobilize those expressions of "support" into sufficient, actual and tangible assistance.

We will continue to strive for the desired result and we will report to you, our readers, on our progress.

Donald Carr, President
The Canadian Jewish News

Better late than never

A group of Holocaust survivors belatedly celebrated their bar mitzvahs at the Kotel this week. ***[Flash90 photo]***

Behar-Bechukotai
Candlelighting: 8:03
Havdalah: 9:08
Greater Toronto Area

Israel says Assad used chemical weapons – please see page 33

CANADA

Judge Fish Retires

OTTAWA — Morris Fish announced his retirement last week after more than 10 years on the Supreme Court of Canada. The Montreal-born Fish, 74, was a judge on the Quebec Court of Appeal for 14 years before he was named to the high court in 2003. He also spent 11 years as an editorial writer and staff reporter for the now-defunct *Montreal Star* before becoming a criminal lawyer. His retirement, effective Aug. 31, came as he approached the mandatory retirement age of 75 on Nov. 16.

WORLD

Rail Line Is Legal

PARIS — A French court ruled that Israel did not violate international law by building a light rail line in eastern Jerusalem. The March 22 ruling by the Versailles Court of Appeals came in response to a lawsuit filed in 2007 by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the France-Palestine Solaridité association against three French firms that took part in constructing the line. The plaintiffs claimed the firms were responsible for human rights and international law violations. The ruling said international treaties applied to Israel's occupation of lands captured in 1967 and that those conventions state that "the occupying power can and even must establish normal, public activity in the occupied territory." The judges ordered the plaintiffs pay a total of $117,000 in legal costs to the three firms: Veolia Transport, Alstom and Alstom Transport.

Dresden Gets Rabbi

BERLIN — The Jewish community of Dresden installed its first hometown rabbi since 1938. Rabbi Alexander Nachama, 29, was formally inaugurated last Shabbat by the new synagogue in Dresden, which is in eastern Germany. Dresden's Semper-Synagogue was destroyed during the Kristallnacht pogrom in 1938. The new synagogue was dedicated at the original site in 2001. Previously, Dresden was served by Rabbi Salomon Almekias-Siegl, who rotated between three communities before retiring in 2011. Rabbi Nachama, who also is a cantor, was ordained earlier this month in Erfurt after completing rabbinical studies at the Abraham Geiger College in Potsdam. His late paternal grandfather, Estrongo Nachama, survived Auschwitz and became chief cantor for Berlin's Jewish community. The rabbi's father, Andreas Nachama, is also a rabbi and serves as spiritual leader of Berlin's Hüttenweg synagogue.

Chaplaincy Services To Be Contracted Out

OTTAWA — The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is looking to contract out chaplaincy services for inmates of all faiths across the country.

After cuts to the federal chaplaincy program were announced by Public Safety Minister Vic Toews last year, Jewish leaders joined members of other faith groups to denounce Ottawa's plan to cancel funding for non-Christian prison chaplains in federal jails, after it decided not to renew the contracts of all part-time chaplains.

Vic Toews

The cuts took effect in March.

Out of 15,023 federal prisoners, 133 identified themselves as Jewish, according to 2012 statistics provided to *The CJN* by Toews' ministry. The CSC doesn't track Jewish inmates' requests for chaplaincy services.

Three of the part-time chaplains last year were Jewish. The ministry would not release their names.

However, the CSC recently said it sent out a request for proposals from private contractors to provide chaplaincy support to inmates as needed.

Lori Pothier, a spokesperson for CSC, said it's expected a contractor will be engaged sometime in the fall. "The request for proposal will be posted on the government electronic tendering site... www.merx.com," she added.

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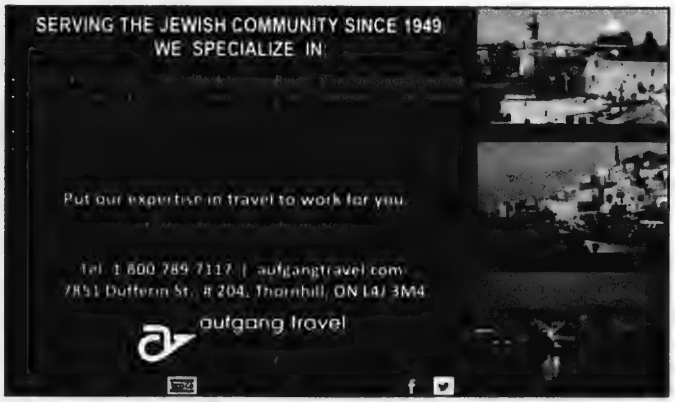
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Site chosen for Ottawa Holocaust monument

Minister Jason Kenney lights a candle at the National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony.

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — A new national Holocaust monument will be erected in front of the National War Museum in downtown Ottawa.

Tim Uppal, the minister of State for Democratic Reform, made the announcement at this year's National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony, held April 23 at the Canadian War Museum

"It will face the War Museum and will be a focal point along the capital's ceremonial route," Uppal said of the monument, planned for the corner of Booth and Wellington streets, down the road from Parliament Hill.

"It will encourage people to reflect upon the events of the Holocaust... it will be a monument of hope, a lasting tribute to the victims of the Holocaust," Uppal said.

This year's ceremony commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The monument is scheduled to be completed in 2015. No details of its design have been released.

Speaking on behalf of the government, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney addressed the hundreds of Holocaust survivors and their families, diplomats, dignitaries and representatives of both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations in attendance.

All Canadians have a duty to remember those who perished in the Shoah and honour the survivors who are still living, Kenney said.

Continued on page 24

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THOMAS (MINUK) ALI

Deeply heartening

From the editor's desk...

I had intended to use this space to call to readers' attention what I believe to be one of the most important books of the last many years: *Moynihan's Moment*, by Gil Troy. That discussion will be temporarily deferred.

In light of the announcement last week concerning *The CJN*, it would seem an odd omission, and rightly so, were I to avoid the subject.

There is no sugarcoating the announcement in any way. The atmosphere in the Toronto and Montreal offices last week was one of shivah.

The respective staffs in Toronto and Montreal were assembled last Monday morning. The president of *The CJN*, Don Carr, personally delivered the shocking news to the Toronto staff. Typical of Mr. Carr, it was the *menschlich*, honourable, courageous way to impart such bitter news. After he spoke with the Toronto staff, he spoke by telephone with the Montreal employees. One of the senior Toronto managers was with the Montreal team to answer their questions. It was a very difficult assignment for her, too.

Members of the board of directors made their melancholy decision based upon what they perceived to be compelling evidence that there was no financially viable way to sustain a print edition of *The CJN*. Thus, before all the assets were dissipated in vain efforts to make the paper financially viable, they decided to use the remaining assets to provide severance to the staff and wind up business affairs properly. This decision stands to the great credit of the directors. They acted in consort with *hakarat hatov*, acknowledging the good that others have done for you, one of the high values of our tradition.

But once the decision was made public, it quickly became apparent that the directors might not have had all the evidence before them.

Like a small fire carried by wind across parched timber, a veritable conflagration of distress and concern erupted across the territory of the paper's readership.

Telephones rang unceasingly each day of the week. Emails zipped through cyberspace with seemingly only one address: *The CJN*. It was impossible to quit the office each day without leaving behind a backlog of unopened emails.

Thousands of people communicated their upset and, it must be said, even their anger at the decision.

Each day, the swell of reaction combining lament and indignation rose to a higher level.

The reaction of our readers was deeply heartening and humbling. Especially gratifying, especially moving, was the response of younger readers. It had always been assumed that *The CJN* counted for very little among young adult readers.

Studies have shown that the under-40 age group is unwilling to pay for news. Thus, the logic flowed, they would also be unwilling to pay for *The CJN*. And thus, it was further assumed, this cohort of young adults cares very little for *The CJN*.

It appears, however, that the leap of logic connecting young adults' news buying habits to their news reading habits is flawed, at least as they relate to *The CJN*.

Of their own initiative, a group of young adults has gathered together and, using the instruments of their generation, i.e., social media, started a campaign to save *The CJN*.

They created the website: savethecjn.com

The words they posted on the site brought fresh, happier tears to the eyes of many of us at the paper.

"We refuse to give up on Canada's largest national Jewish independent news source. SAVE THE CJN is a grassroots young adult effort to save the Canadian Jewish News... We believe in this media brand and know in our hearts that a viable, multi-platform and kick-ass solution exists."

As of this writing, nearly 2,000 individuals had joined their campaign.

Some influential individuals in the community have doubted and even derided the reach and impact of *The CJN*. The grassroots and "ordinary" folk of Canadian Jewry, however, seem to hold a different view.

DJ Schneeweis, Israel's consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, has referred to *The CJN* as the "communal town square.

"*The CJN*," Schneeweis wrote, "has always served as a shared space for the Jewish community of Canada to express and enrich itself and also to express and enrich its ties and connections to Israel."

With young adults in the vanguard, an appeal by *CJN* readers of all generations from places across Canada, and even from across the Jewish world, appears to have caught the ear and the heart of the directors. (*See Don Carr's statement on page 1.*)

There is a case to be made, our readers are clearly saying, for the continued presence of the print edition of *The CJN* that far outweighs the financial one alone. It emphasizes the importance of the paper in helping create, nurture and maintain a feeling of community. Our readers' outcry is truly compelling evidence of that, evidence that might have been missed before.

And we are so very moved and heartened by them.

Thank you. –***MBD***

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WHEN CHEDER WAS SCHOOL

Education and learning has been the cornerstone of Jewish life in Ontario for more than a century. In the beginning, one-room cheders and Talmud Torahs provided the only formal instruction for Jewish youths. Pictured here is a cheder class in Oshawa, Ont., from 1925. This photograph and others like it from the collection of the Ontario Jewish Archives are on view in Being Jewish in Ontario: A Pictorial Exhibition at Barbara Frum Public Library in Toronto as part of Jewish Heritage Month. For information about other venues, visit www.ontariojewisharchives.org.

[Ontario Jewish Archives photo]

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B'nai Brith audit finds antisemitism up

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The number of antisemitic incidents in Canada rose by 3.7 per cent in 2012, continuing a long-term trend beginning in 2003 and running with only small decreases ever since.

The finding was reported in the 2012 *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents*, released last week by the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada. According to the report, 1,345 instances of harassment, vandalism and violence were recorded by the league.

In 2003, only 584 incidents were recorded. "Since 2008, incidents have increased by 19 per cent," the audit reported.

Despite the overall surge in reported incidents, Canada remains relatively safe for Jews: only 13 of the 1,345 incidents were classified as violent in nature.

That contrasts with broader international developments in which Jews have experienced violent – even lethal – attacks. The 2012 audit is dedicated to the victims of the Toulouse school massacre in France last year. In that incident, an Islamic radical murdered a rabbi, his three- and six-year-old children and another eight-year-old.

"Over the last decade alone, Jewish Diaspora communities have been targeted by entities and individuals aligned with international terrorism in such places a Mumbai, Istanbul, Casablanca, Mombassa and Djerba, underlying a vulnerability that has forced synagogues and schools around the world, including Canada, to add special security arrangements to their list of communal obligations," the audit stated.

"It does not inspire confidence in the Canadian Jewish community to know that Tahawwur Hussain Rana – recently sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment by a U.S. court for providing material support to the terrorists who launched the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks – was a Canadian citizen from Montreal," the audit added.

The audit reported "an unprecedented increase in incidents by perpetrators self-identifying as Muslims supportive of Islamist anti-Jewish sentiments – up from 16 in 2011 to 87 in 2012. No other ethnic or religious group came anywhere near this number in the lineup of perpetrators identified by religious or ethnic group."

Referring to these developments, B'nai Brith Canada CEO Frank Dimant said, "We are particularly concerned about this year's findings of increased participation in these incidents by perpetrators self-identifying as Muslims who are apparently supportive of Islamist ideologies of hate and violence. But we are encouraged by the many Muslims with whom we work closely, who are prepared to expose antisemitism in their community."

"The audit shows an overall decrease in vandalism and violence, but an increase of 10.6 per cent in incidents of harassment. Jews were targeted in their homes and at their workplaces, on their way to synagogue or returning from school. The language has moved from 'F…k the Jews' to 'Kill the Jews,' with Holocaust denial cases soaring by 77 per cent and threats becoming more ugly, explicit and open.

"The league is also warning that youth culture is being infiltrated by the lyrics of hate, extremism from abroad through online propaganda, and cyber-bullying directed to a victim's smartphone," he stated.

One piece of good news in the report: incidents of antisemitism on university campuses dropped by 30 per cent in 2012 from the year before, from 113 cases to 79. Only one of the incidents was categorized as violent.

B'nai Brith called for an action plan to address growing antisemitism, suggesting reform of the Criminal Code's anti-hate sections to compensate for the expected repeal of a section of the Canadian Human Rights Act that addresses Internet hate.

COLD CASH: Jerry Grammer, left, treasurer of the Beth Tzedec Men's Club, presents a cheque for $1,000 to support the Out Of the Cold program to Randy Spiegel, executive director of Beth Tzedec Congregation. In the joint program of Beth Tzedec and Beth Sholom Synagogue, every Tuesday night during the winter, more than 175 guests receive a hot dinner, a warm place to sleep and a hot breakfast.

Bone marrow drive planned for Birthright guide

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Canadian alumni of Birthright Israel may have an especially personal reason to take part in bone marrow registries being held in the Toronto area April 28 and May 5.

Guy Bar Yosef – a 39-year-old Israeli husband and father of five young children, who served as a guide to many Canadian Birthright participants – is suffering from lymphoma, and needs a bone marrow transplant.

The drive for him will also help others like Jayden Roll, 4, Sarah Watkin, 5, and Idan Goldshmid, 18 months, who, like Bar Yosef, are waiting for life-saving transplants, said Nathaniel Haeems, a Birthright alumnus and one of the organizers of the drive.

Guy Bar Yosef and three of his five children

Anyone from 18 to 60 can register as a donor. Testing involves only a cheek swab.

Bar Yosef's best chance of finding a match lies with donors of similar genetic ancestry, particularly those of eastern European descent, according to a Facebook event page.

The organizing team includes Haeems and fellow volunteers Ryan Levey and Marla Pilpel, Marla's brother Shayne Pilpel, who works for Gift of Life Bone Marrow Foundation in Florida, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto.

Haeems, an Oakville-based management consultant who led seven Birthright trips, told *The CJN* April 24 that Bar Yosef was in hospital recovering from pneumonia, but that his spirits were high and he was "thankful for all the support… He has asked us to pray for him."

He added, "Guy's such a wonderful person… He's got a can-do attitude, he's always happy, always smiling."

Bar Yosef, the son of an American mother who (himself) became more religious over the years, connected to participants in part because of his background and resulting understanding of the North American Jewish community, including its broad spectrum of observance, Haeems said.

Other drives have taken place in Baltimore and California, he added.

The first drive will take place April 28 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, 9600 Bathurst St. in Vaughan, Ont., in conjunction with the 7th Annual Hoops 4 Israel basketball tournament.

The second will be held May 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Prosserman JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

Donations to fund cheek swab testing can be sent to Gift of Life Bone Marrow Foundation, 800 Yamato Road, Ste. 101, Boca Raton, Fla. 33431. The foundation can be reached by phone at 1-800-9MARROW.

For further information, call 647-782-9800 or email BeGuysHero@gmail.com.

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Funds raised from this concert will help renovate schoolyards of the Ilanot Special Needs School in Jerusalem.

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More Syrian inhumanity

The Israeli military last week stated that Syria's brutish president, Bashar Assad, used chemical weapons against his own people on March 19 (*Please see According to Reports, page 19*).

"To the best of our understanding, the [Syrian] regime used lethal chemical weapons," Brig.-Gen. Itai Brun, head of the research and analysis division at the IDF Military Intelligence Directorate, told a security conference April 20. Brun believes Assad's troops had used sarin gas, a nerve agent that cripples the respiratory system. It is vastly more toxic than cyanide, which international convention considers a weapon of mass destruction.

According to Brun, there are more than 1,000 tons of chemical weapons in Syria, some of which, such as sarin, can be deployed from artillery rounds and long-range ballistic missiles.

The images of Assad's victims from the sarin gas attack in Khan el Asal in the province of Aleppo last March were especially horrific (as if other scenes of mass or single killing are somehow less). Their pupils were enlarged, their mouths disgorging foam. The pictures showed the monstrous agony of their excruciatingly painful last moments of life, gasping for breath they could not find.

Thus, to the grotesque heap of the dead and slaughtered in Syria's civil war, said to total more than 70,000, Assad has added a layer of inhumanity that was not so long ago thought by most experts to be even too much for him.

How wrong those experts were.

Last Friday, U.S. President Barack Obama reiterated American policy regarding the use of chemical weapons in Syria's war.

"For the Syrian government to utilize chemical weapons on its people crosses a line that will change my calculus and how the United States approaches these issues," the president said. His defence secretary, Chuck Hagel, said much the same thing four days earlier while visiting Israel.

But it appears that Washington wants to study the situation at greater length before it decides whether Assad has indeed crossed that line. The administration is worried that it might be compelled to match deed to rhetoric. The concern was made more acute by the assessment on the weekend by Britain's chief of defence staff, Gen. David Richards, who warned that a full-scale military response would be required to protect Syria's people from Syria's ruler.

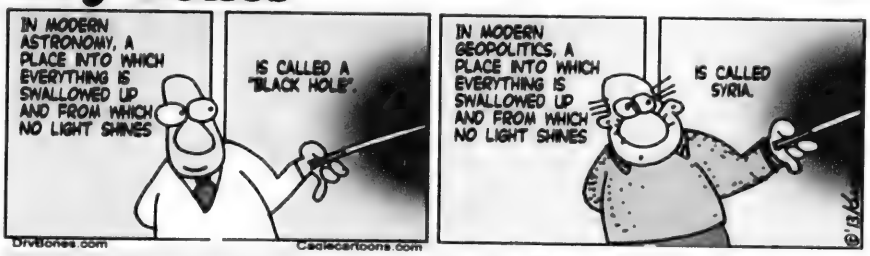
Israel, however, does not need more time to draw the appropriate conclusions about Assad's use of chemical weapons.

If, in the multi-party fighting and chaos that now is Syria, chemical weapons find their way to any forces hostile to Israel, the Jewish state will act. The entire West, not just Israel, should try to prevent these weapons from falling into the wrong hands.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israeli president Chaim Herzog told Palestinian Arabs that their opposition to Israel over the previous 40 years had brought them nothing but bloodshed, misery and frustration. He made the remarks on Israel Radio's Arabic service ahead of Israel's 40th birthday.

Dry Bones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Closure announcement saddens readers

News of the closing of *The CJN* is very sad, indeed! My parents were avid readers of *The CJN* when I was growing up in London, Ont., and I have carried on the tradition for many years. The paper has been a fixture in our home and we came to look forward to delivery every Wednesday to allow us to catch up with local and national Jewish news. It will be missed greatly!

Fred Leitner
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

I just found out that *The CJN* print edition will soon come to an end. How sad that a community newspaper that mirrors the opinions of everyone in the Jewish community will be no more. I felt you were always fair and balanced toward the Orthodox community. Being Jewish Canadians, our perspective is different than Americans (we are not as strident), and that was reflected in your paper. That tone will be missed. I hope to see you in a reconstituted digital format.

Rabbi Mordechai Bulua
Montreal

• • •

It was with great sadness that I read *CJN* president Donald Carr's message to your readers that *The CJN* would cease publishing a printed edition as of June 20. Your paper has been an important and valuable source of information to the Jewish community about local and international events. In particular, your coverage of the State of Israel usually offered stories that were lacking in the daily press.

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

I was saddened to read that *The CJN* has been discontinued. I looked forward to receiving it every week and being kept up to date on events in the Jewish community at home and abroad. I was impressed by the quality of the reporting and the diversity of the articles, especially in the last year.

Herb Lukofsky
Saint-Lambert, Que.

• • •

I am shocked and saddened at the recent announcement of *The CJN*'s decision to close. As a Jewish professional who has worked with congregations across Canada for the last 15 years, *The CJN* has been an essential resource for me. As a member of the Toronto Jewish community, I rely on *The CJN* to provide me with current happenings in the city, across the country and in Israel. Having access to articles written by some of the most articulate and knowledgeable rabbis and teachers in our community has enlightened and inspired me on a weekly basis.

At a recent meeting of the adult education committee at Temple Emanu-El in Toronto, we began to plan the adult education programs for 2013-14. Several committee members brought clippings from *The CJN* that provided us with vital information about possible programs and speakers. There is no other publication that meets the needs of the Canadian Jewish community.

Marlene Myerson
Toronto

• • •

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

As a 45-year-old Jewish business owner in Montreal, I understand your decision to close if there are no other options. In fact, I am on the board of Jewish People's and Peretz Schools and its Bialik High School (JPPS/Bialik), which is also facing the trend of many Jewish institutions with declining enrolment, or in your case, ad sales. This is a horrible trend, and it scares me for the future. Your paper is a link to the Jewish community of Canada. It is through you that we see what is happening in other cities, not to mention our own! We need that link to continue, and it should be supported by the tens of millions of dollars that are donated annually to the various federations. Their main goal is to promote Judaism, but they have clearly failed here. Many of my friends would gladly pay to continue receiving your paper!

Lee Wise
Montreal

• • •

I want to express my sadness at the news that *The CJN* is ceasing to operate. I always looked forward to my paper and loved going through its pages. I especially loved all the holiday editions, with their lovely stories and mouth-watering recipes. I hope *The CJN* will find its way into the digital age (although, in my humble opinion, nothing replaces the feel of paper) and that I will be able to once again read its pages.

Debbie Davis
Thornhill, Ont.

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Letters are welcome if they are brief, in English or French, typewritten with lines double spaced, and of interest to our reading public. Readers are cautioned not to make sweeping claims against persons or institutions which they cannot verify, as libel laws are very stringent. We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's address, phone number and both handwritten and typed signatures. Letters sent by e-mail must also include the sender's municipal address.

cjninfo@gmail.com

Just how antisemitic are British politicians?

Miriam Shaviv
The Times of Israel

Cruising down the highway in his Jaguar on Christmas day 2007, Nazir Ahmed was distracted. He had just read and sent a couple of text messages, and did not notice another car parked on the shoulder of the road. Crashing into it, he killed 28-year-old Martyn Gombar, who was reportedly drunk inside.

Some might say that Ahmed, who had been made a member of the House of Lords by then-prime minister Tony Blair in 1998, got off lightly, sentenced to just 12 weeks in jail for dangerous driving, and serving just 16 days. Not him. Last month, the *Times* of London uncovered a television interview he gave in his native Pakistan, in which he blamed his imprisonment on "my Jewish friends who own newspapers and TV channels."

The exposé hit the Jewish community at a particularly sensitive time. Since early 2013, not a month had gone by without an elected politician – or, in Ahmed's case, an appointed member of the House of Lords – making offensive remarks about Jews or Israelis.

So does the British political system have a problem with antisemitism? And if so, what can be done?

The recent spate of incidents began in January when Liberal Democrat MP David Ward, whose party is currently in government with the Conservatives, wrote on his website that he was "saddened that the Jews, who suffered unbelievable levels of persecution during the Holocaust... could be inflicting atrocities on Palestinians." The following month, Respect Party leader George Galloway walked out of a university debate when he discovered his opponent held Israeli citizenship.

Already in the pantheon were Labour MP Paul Flynn, who in late 2011 suggested that Matthew Gould, the United Kingdom's first Jewish ambassador to Israel, had "divided loyalties," and Aidan Burley, a Conservative MP who attended a Nazi-themed stag party. For years, the Jewish community has had a strained relationship with Baroness Jenny Tonge, another member of the House of Lords, who was censured by the Liberal Democrats after she suggested the Israel Defence Forces investigate allegations it harvested organs in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.

But while British experts do not deny there is a problem, they urge a nuanced response.

"The tendency is to throw all these incidents together as if they are all the same," says Antony Lerman, the former director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research. "The immediate response is that they are antisemitic, but I question that. Some of them may be, but we can't link them so easily."

Mark Gardner, director of communications at the Community Security Trust, which monitors British antisemitism and provides security services for Anglo-Jewry, agrees.

"The headlines make it look bad, but we have to take each one on its individual merits," he says. "Some are motivated by anti-Israel hatred, others by anti-Israel criticism. Some have been dealt with properly, others have not."

While everyone accepts that Ahmed's comments were antisemitic, for example, Lerman considers Ward "ignorant about how to express his concerns about the Palestinians." Nazi stag-party guest Aidan Burley, meanwhile, who apologized to the Jewish community "for the offence that has been caused," did not make any anti-Jewish statements.

Both Lerman and Gardner agree that two points do broadly apply. The first is that almost all the figures are marginal, and do not represent the mainstreams of their parties. Even Galloway, who routinely grabs headlines, was expelled from Labour and had to set up his own tiny party, and none of the others are rising stars.

Nazir Ahmed

George Galloway

The second is that the political system as a whole takes Jewish concerns very seriously.

This is largely thanks to the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Anti-Semitism, which includes MPs from across the political spectrum. In 2006, it conducted a major inquiry into the escalation in antisemitism in the United Kingdom since the second intifadah, producing 35 recommendations on how government, parliament and civil society could improve the reporting of antisemitic incidents, tackle antisemitism on campus and create better interfaith and inter-community relations.

According to Gardner, the report – which was later treated as a model by Canada – actually made a serious difference, giving the government a way to understand what was going on on the ground and support the Jewish community.

"It marked a real improvement from the previous scenario in which government departments lacked a coherent framework within which to hear, understand and cope with what was then a quite new phenomenon – the reality of which was still contested by some in the media and elsewhere," he says.

Both the Labour and Conservative governments produced responses, in 2007, 2008 and 2010, outlining their action plan and achievements, and the All-Parliamentary Group is currently following up with an inquiry into how political candidates address racism during election campaigns.

Many senior politicians, including ministers and the leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband, who is Jewish, are also frequent guests at Jewish organizations' events, pledging support for the community.

Given this context, is the rambling of a few minor figures without much power or influence actually important?

There seems to be a consensus that it is, if only because their rhetoric on Israel – which seems to be the focus of most of the controversy – normalizes extreme positions and encourages irresponsible discourse. "It's less a systemic problem of antisemitism among political leaders, more about the debate around the Middle East and how this plays out," says Danny Stone, director of the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Anti-Semitism.

He says that on the far left, the debate has already been radicalized by the availability of Middle Eastern channels on satellite television, which broadcast harsh rhetoric about the Jews from the Arab world to the West.

"If you don't like Israel or have a problem with Israeli policies, you start to get interested in that debate, and pick up and involve yourself in discourse where the language comes from a different context," he says. "I am wary of how that plays in civil society."

Jews in the constituencies of the offending MPs also have a problem, he adds.

"If your MP is saying things that are questionable, for example if you are a Jew in Galloway's constituency, it could be very worrying and unsettling."

But the parties have a mixed record when it comes to reacting to their own members' inflammatory behaviour. When Ahmed's Pakistani interview was exposed, the Labour Party suspended him the very same day. Prime Minister David Cameron fired Burley as an aide to the transport minister when it emerged that he had hired the Nazi costumes for the stag party, although he will still be allowed to stand for the Conservatives in the next election. The Liberal Democrats, meanwhile, reprimanded Ward when he accused "the Jews" of atrocities, but adjourned the disciplinary process against him even though he had gone on to suggest it was "the Jewish community" instead.

While the Liberal Democrats' reaction was "not the right way to deal with things," Stone says, he urges patience.

"It's a learning process," he says. "Not every party will get it right, and there have been senior members in the [Liberal Democrat] party who have spoken out."

The parties have come a long way in understanding the issues since the All-Party report in 2006, he adds – the key is to support and encourage those who do take action against offending MPs.

Whether the United Kingdom can ever rid itself entirely of such parliamentarians is doubtful. Their opinions reflect a strain of thought in wider society that is unlikely to disappear soon. In addition, their views on Jews and the Middle East may not become clear until long after they have joined Parliament.

It is hard to tackle antisemitism, in the political system and elsewhere, when what constitutes antisemitism is unclear. The fuzziness is around Israel: at what point does political condemnation of Zionism turn into something more sinister? Are attacks on the Jewish state the same as attacks on the Jewish People?

Sarah Cardaun, a teaching fellow at the Middle East program at King's College, London, says that "tolerance, multiculturalism and respect for different minorities is deeply ingrained" in British society, which will immediately pounce on anything perceived as classically antisemitic, that is to do with race or religion. That is why, she says, Galloway was so roundly condemned for walking out on his Israeli counterpart during a debate.

"It was seen as racism, which is a key word. Everyone is uncomfortable with racism, there's no controversy."

By contrast the "new antisemitism," which manifests as opposition to Israel, is difficult to tackle without being accused of trying to shut down debate on the conflict.

How then should the Jewish community react when a politician makes comments about Israel or Jews some find offensive? Firmly, everyone seems to agree – if the case is proven.

"Calling someone an antisemite is the political and legal point of no return, and is not something we do often at all," says Gardner. "We must use it with great care and be able to fiercely defend each occasion we've actually used it."

Times of Israel.com

Be wary of Christians wearing kippahs

According to the March 24 issue of the *New York Times Magazine*, in the article titled "Oy Vey, Christian Soldiers," Christian bar mitzvah ceremonies and seders are taking hold in fundamentalist evangelical circles.

It just goes to show that even at my age, I have not heard it all. But Christian bar mitzvahs? They outshine (if that is the right word) even Christian seders.

According to a Pastor Brian Lewis and his wife – both charismatic, speaking-in-tongues Christians – this is a trend that harkens back to biblical times. Hence they use the ceremonies to mimic their attachment to a Jewish rite. They also note that Jews who are saved will be resurrected to eternal life. The rest of us? Not so much. See *Dante's Inferno*.

Another pastoral family had their son study Hebrew with a "Messianic friend of the family," and at his "bar mitzvah" the boy wore a tallit and recited the Shema. What's next? Chopped liver statues of the bar mitzvah boy?

Of course the ultimate goal of all of this flurry of Jewish copy-cat behaviour is the deeply held belief that Israel is the beginning of the redemption – theirs, not ours – and that when Jews all return to Israel, the end of days will be at hand. Oh, and we will have to become practising Christians.

This is not dialogue. This is Christian triumphalism.

Also cited in the article, a rabbi notes that Christians are not only holding seders but are being married under a chupah, and some are wearing tallits over their clothes. Christians are buying kippot and shofarot in Israel, and generally building on the exterior trappings of Judaism. Pastor John Hagee, for example, offeres a CD sermon "The Mystery of the Prayer Shawl." For $49 you can purchase your very own. Made in Israel!

Jean M. Gerber
in Vancouver

Years ago, as program director at our local Hillel I was asked by the Christian chaplaincy on the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus to assist in their planning of a seder just before Good Friday and Easter. I refused. They were confused. Was I not honoured to be asked to recreate Jesus' last Jewish ritual – aside, I guess, from being crucified, an honour later shared by Jewish rebels against Rome?

No, I was not. The seder, I replied nicely (I hope), is a ceremony commemorating the foundation story of Judaism. It's not up for appropriation into Christianity.

A member of "Rabbis Without Borders" – whatever that is – believes this takeover isn't a problem.

"It bothers me in my gut" another rabbi says, "but I have to take a step back." Back into a deep pit, maybe.

No, the seder's not for the taking, nor are bar and bat mitzvahs or the wearing of a tallit or a kippah – unless it's in a synagogue – nor any other part of Jewish ritual or ceremony.

The new fundamentalism in Christianity wants to hug us till we all go to Israel or convert and bring about the second coming. This is so scary that I cannot believe any observant Jew, rabbi, or even the biggest atheist at Yom Kippur services would agree to this creeping assimilation of our religion into a Judaic Christian mind-meld.

Yes, these earnest people are great supporters of Israel. Yes, they send money and lobby on behalf of the state. But what happens when, in a few years, Jews consistently and stubbornly refuse to cluster in Israel, but continue to live in Diaspora? What happens when we continue to say "No thanks" when pressed to convert?

I have for a long time maintained that we can say nicely "Thanks for your support, but we will remain who we are." Period. We should view with distrust the embrace of apocalyptic Christianity as it applies to Jews and Judaism.

One final story: Years ago during a recrudescence of Jews for Jesus, a speaker at UBC invited Jews to hear his pitch. He started out very empathetic. As we began to take issue with him, he dropped his guard. In an instant he fell back on all the old canards about our refusal to recognize the truth. It took less than one hour.

Let's stay out of Christianity's theology. Let them leave our ceremonies – for us.

If pressed, let's explain carefully what is ours and why. That will be a dialogue that really counts.

Compromise or sellout at the Kotel?

I respect Natan Sharansky. How could anyone not? He represents a generation of freedom seekers, of those who fought for their religious and ethnic freedom in the Soviet Union. He and Ida Nudel were our heroes. It seems perfectly appropriate for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to call on him to settle the longstanding confrontation between diverse groups at the Western Wall.

Sharansky, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, proposed a compromise, not all the details of which are known, but there are many factors and stakeholders involved. The initial reaction is positive; it is even being hailed as a "Solomonic solution."

To me, it feels like a sellout.

The plan calls for a third section of the Western Wall to be opened where egalitarian prayer groups might function. It would be located at the archeological site called Robinson's Arch. Within this new section, all pluralist forms of Jewish religious expression could be practised. The plaza area of the Kotel would be reassigned so that army ceremonies might again be held there.

The Women of the Wall (WOW) seem pleased by certain provisions of the plan. Finally someone in the government is taking their distress seriously. After many years of quiet monthly services, the situation deteriorated, and women were hassled and arrested. Anat Hoffman was strip-searched. A Jewish woman was strip-searched by Israeli police for the crime of praying with a tallit at the Western Wall!

After years of neglect and disinterest, WOW gained national and international recognition. Moreover, the prime minister appointed a serious representative to come up with a plan, and he did.

The Reform and Conservative movements in Israel have welcomed the plan, because it finally breaks the unilateral and absolute haredi Orthodox hold on all of religious practise in Israel. It is a toehold perhaps, but an opening nonetheless.

Even the local rabbi appointed over the heritage area, Shmuel Rabinovitz, noted that he would not oppose such a third section. In North America, there was pronounced approval from Reform and Conservative communities and also, interestingly, from modern Orthodox organizations and leaders.

If all parties agree in Israel, there will be a great easing of tension around this very visible religious site. It will look as though the Netanyahu government can settle contentious issues. It will appear that the Jewish People can agree to different practices, and the Kotel is a unifier of sorts. One national monument where diversity is respected. WOW (pun intended)!

So why do I feel like this is a sellout?

We never needed a legal case for prayer at Robinson's Arch. The struggle for the Kotel was specifically for women to pray with Torah, tallit and voice in the women's section at the Kotel itself. We maintained our halachic right to pray with the rituals of our tradition, and we documented that in Jewish legal sources.

Sharansky has taken that entire encounter away. With one compromise, he has relegated us to a Conservative or Reform camp. But some of us in this pluralist group are Orthodox, and we have been compromised out. I don't pray in a mixed community. I am Orthodox. Have I lost my place completely in WOW?

Norma Baumel Joseph
in Montreal

I must admit that I have not been to Israel to pray with the group since its inception. By virtue of that I have relinquished my right to complain. (I was a participant at the first women's prayer service at the Kotel in 1988, and I supported the legal case that went to the Israeli Supreme Court, 1989-2002). But I can say that this compromise eliminates WOW's assertion of pluralism. It eliminates the future participation of Orthodox women and any claim for halachah.

Furthermore, I don't understand how so many modern Orthodox leaders and organizations don't recognize this as a sellout. For me, it's a complete abandonment of any form of Orthodoxy that is not haredi.

Reading carefully between the lines, one can see that for everyone involved, Orthodox from now on means haredi in Israel. The Orthodox will have two-thirds of the Kotel, and the rest of the Jews will have this third area, the egalitarian mixed one third. By this compromise, by hailing it and welcoming it, all these Jews have acknowledged that Orthodox means right-wing haredi. No room for women's greater ritual participation. No room for diverse halachic interpretation. One rule – haredi Orthodoxy – to guide them all.

Germany's first female German-born rabbi since the Nazi era

Rabbi Antje Yael Deusel found out she was Jewish when she was 16.

"It was a cultural shock for me," she said in an interview after conducting a Friday evening service in a synagogue in Bamberg, Germany. "But Judaism became an important part of my life."

To say the least.

Rabbi Deusel, who was born in Nuremberg and completed her rabbinical training at the Abraham Geiger College in Potsdam, discovered her Jewish roots by chance.

In 2011, she became the first German-born female to be ordained as a rabbi in Germany since the Nazi era.

Her predecessor, Regina Jonas, paved the way.

Born in Berlin in 1902, she studied with Rabbi Leo Baeck, a spiritual leader of the German Jewish community, and received her ordination as a Reform rabbi in 1935.

Unable to find a pulpit due to sexism, she worked as a chaplain in Jewish institutions. In 1942, she was arrested by the Gestapo and deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, where she continued to work as a rabbi. In the autumn of 1944, she was murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. She was 42.

Sheldon Kirshner in Bamberg

Rabbi Deusel, 52, regards Rabbi Jonas as something of a role model. But unlike Rabbi Jonas, she was raised as a Christian, her partially Jewish mother having distanced herself from the Jewish component of her ancestry.

I interviewed Rabbi Deusel, a friendly and approachable person, in Bamberg, a quaint town of 70,000 inhabitants in southern Germany where she lives and works.

I met her one evening at Or Chaim, a synagogue where she has preached for the past two years, and which was daubed with antisemitic graffiti in 2011.

The service was attended by about 30 people, mostly immigrants from the former Soviet Union past the age of 40. There was also a tall young African man in the shul. "He comes regularly and asks me a lot of questions," she said.

Rabbi Deusel was hired by Or Chaim's president, Chaim Olmer, who died last year. Olmer worked with her when she was vice-president of Bamberg's Jewish community.

As a woman rabbi, she has had no problems from her congregants. One of them recently told her, "We regard you as our rabbi."

But Orthodox rabbis in Germany shy away from her. "They won't look at us or greet us," she said.

Rabbi Deusel's personal history is nothing if not complex.

While her mother was of partial Jewish ancestry, her father was a Catholic who had no interest in religion. To the best of her knowledge, her grandfather, a shoemaker, converted to Christianity to gain admittance into an antisemitic shoemaker's guild in Nuremberg, a centre of the Nazi movement in the 1930s and 1940s.

To this day, she cannot explain how her partially Jewish relatives managed to survive during the long night of Nazism.

Yet mixed-race families like hers were not that uncommon during the Third Reich, to the best of her knowledge. "They didn't talk about it," she said.

Rabbi Deusel studied medicine at the University of Erlangen and specialized in urology. Later, she took classes in pediatric urology at the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.

Having been vice-president of Bamberg's Jewish community for 12 years, she decided to become a rabbi, following a formal conversion to Judaism.

Apart from her rabbinical studies, she took an MA degree in Jewish studies, writing her thesis on circumcision. Last year, it was published as a book.

Rabbi Deusel's younger sister took a different path. "I don't know if she considers herself Jewish. She's a proud atheist, like my mother."

Strictly speaking, she was not the first female rabbi in postwar Germany.

Alina Treiger, a Ukrainian immigrant from Poltava born in 1979, was ordained in 2010 in a ceremony attended by Germany's president. She works primarily with Russian Jews in Oldenburg and in the adjacent town of Delmenhorst, but of late, she has been on maternity leave.

There are some 900 Jews in Bamberg – a mecca of architecturally historic buildings – and its suburbs. The majority are immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Settled by Jewish traders about 1,000 years ago, Bamberg was not always hospitable to Jews. Pogroms broke out in 1298 and again in 1348. From the 14th to the 17th centuries, Jews were merely tolerated.

Jewish settlement in Bamberg reached its apogee in the late 1880s, when 1,270 Jews, representing four per cent of the population, lived here.

The town's Moorish-style synagogue was burned to the ground during Kristallnacht in 1938. By that point, hundreds of Jews already had left Bamberg. In 1941, the remaining 300 Jews in Bamberg were deported to Riga, Izbica/Lublin, Theresienstadt and Auschwitz.

Jews returned to Bamberg after the war, resurrecting the community. But in 1965, neo-Nazi vandals desecrated 32 tombstones in the Jewish cemetery and defaced a monument connected with the Nazi destruction of Bamberg's synagogue.

Rabbi Antje Yael Deusel stands next to a model of the synagogue in Bamberg destroyed during Kristallnacht in 1938. ***[Sheldon Kirshner photo]***

In response to these crimes, 4,000 citizens took to the streets in a protest as heavy rain fell on Bamberg.

The mayor, Theodor Mathieu, expressed his revulsion over the attacks and ordered flags in Bamberg to be flown at half-mast. In another sign of solidarity with the Jewish community, the local newspaper offered a reward for the capture of the perpetrators.

Before tens of thousands of Soviet Jews poured into Germany after 1989, Bamberg was home to about 25 Jews, mainly from eastern Europe, said Rabbi Deusel.

Rabbi Deusel, who has lived with a partner for the last 20 years, holds a part-time position at Or Chaim, working two to four weekends per month. Her colleague, Cantor Arieh Rudolph, is employed on a full-time basis.

She hopes to obtain a permanent position as a rabbi, but is not hopeful. As she put it, "There are not many rabbinical positions in Germany."

In the meantime, she practises medicine in a private clinic, performs circumcisions as a mohel and teaches Judaism at the University of Bamberg.

It's a hectic life, but she enjoys it immensely.

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ROMSPEN

Four friends come to aid of cancer patients

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A group of four friends are hoping their first major fundraising event will inject a bit of cheer into the lives of cancer patients at Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital as they wait for chemotherapy treatments.

From November 2010 until February, Emma Tushinski, 21, was fighting a form of leukemia, which required several rounds of chemotherapy, as well as radiation treatment, bone-marrow biopsies and lumbar punctures. She was being treated at Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre, and was astonished at how long patients had to sit while they waited to get treatment, and how emotionally draining that waiting could be.

"When you have such an intense thing happening to you, the waiting adds a lot of stress," she said.

Over the 2-1/2 years she spent undergoing treatment, Tushinski would read, knit and watch movies in the waiting room. "Anything to pass the time," she said.

When three of her friends heard that story, they decided to do something about it, forming the foundation for Project Art, a fundraiser set to run on May 9 at a marketplace gallery in the Burroughes Building on Queen Street West in Toronto.

Ben Cowley, Zac Cooper and Matt Cohen, all 22, are working with Tushinski to raise money for an art therapist, as well as additional distractions to keep patients occupied.

"There's a lot of research giving credence to art in the healing process," Cowley said, so combining their passion for art with Tushinski's experience was a no-brainer.

He said they're using a "full-circle idea," running an event that raises money through art sales to implement an art program at the Odette Cancer Centre. The hospital has

From left are Matt Cohen, Ben Cowley, Emma Tushinski and Zac Cooper, organizers of a fundraiser to provide an art therapist for cancer patients. *[Bruce Cowley photo]*

determined the cost of a part-time art therapist or teacher would be about $30,000, and Cowley said the team has already surpassed that goal.

"It would cost a lot of money to set aside a room, but we were thinking one feasible idea is having portable art carts," he said, adding that perhaps in the future, they could set up a multimedia art room.

He said the group is projecting they'll rake in at least $50,000 for the centre, and perhaps up to $70,000 – a major accomplishment, especially considering none of the planners have had any experience planning this kind of event.

"I threw a party in Grade 12 once," Cowley joked, adding that the whole ordeal has been trial by fire, but he wouldn't change a thing. "We're naive in the best way. We're open to all ideas, open to talking to anyone and taking on any suggestions."

The money they've raised so far has come mostly from sponsors and donations, and they're anticipating selling more than 500 tickets at $60 a piece.

The marketplace gallery will feature artists who have a "young, electric and exciting feel," Cowley said, adding that most are young, but they do range in age, gender and race.

Most notably, he said, is Jimmy Chiale, a French abstract painter and "street artist." Adding Chiale to the lineup gave the event a sense of legitimacy, helping them to pick up steam and give them credibility to approach other big artists, Cowley explained.

"He's this cool, cultured, urban guy who makes awesome abstract art," he said. "We have directed who we talk to based on that."

They will also feature live painter Jess Gorlicky who will be performing her art at the event, which Cowley said should add excitement and generate a huge buzz.

Both Cowley and Cohen recently quit their jobs to focus on the event full time. Although Cowley called it overwhelming, he said it has also been extremely rewarding.

"On a personal level, it's great to do something for Emma," he said, "and I'm also getting a lot of skills – communication skills, learning how to run a big event."

Tushinski said she hopes that even being able to purchase iPads or other technology could help patients alleviate stress and stop them from focusing on being sick.

Although the event has yet to happen, both Cowley and Tushinski are already looking ahead toward next year.

"I know, next year we'll be so well equipped," he said. "We'll have so much knowledge on how to do it."

For more information about Project Art, visit projectart.org.

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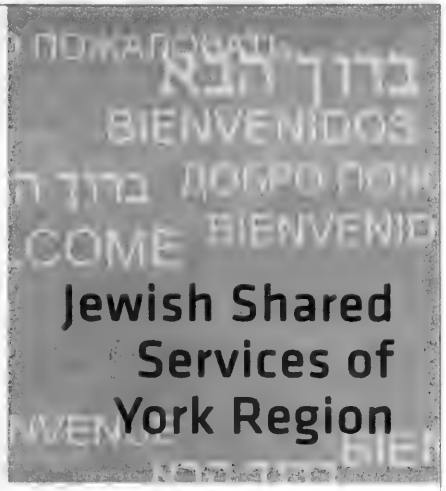

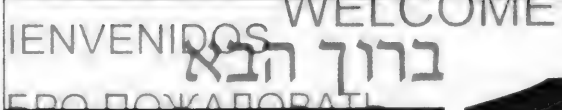

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'My heart is broken'

Continued from page 1

– the site is the first step toward ensuring there's a "place at the table" for all Jewish voices in the community, Singer told *The CJN*.

She said she and Kayfetz were motivated by their love of the paper, as well as the knowledge that their peers all felt saddened and shocked at the news.

"The decision was sudden, and it just felt like the community wasn't consulted. We felt this decision [to close the paper] shouldn't be made by just a few people" at the board level, Singer said.

Despite declining revenue and a drop in subscriptions, both she and Kayfetz say there are many young Jewish professionals in the community whom they believe would read and subscribe to *The CJN* if it was marketed toward them.

"Save *The CJN*" logo created by online supporters of the paper

"It has a following of all ages. As a 29-year-old, I know the support is out there," Singer said. "We want our [Jewish] news to come from an unbiased, independent standpoint."

Asked what their plan is with regard to the Save *The CJN* campaign, Singer said she first wants to "unearth" the youthful following of the paper using viral marketing techniques.

Their next step, she said, will be to ensure that she and Kayfetz will represent the young professional Jewish community in any decision-making effort where plans for the rebirth or rebranding of the paper are discussed.

"We're collecting people with expertise and we want to be that voice at the table," she said. "It is our objective that an online business plan is put in place… a sustainable business plan, not just for 10 years, but forever."

Asked whether any financial backers are part of her group, Singer said that "people have come forward," but she said she would not offer any names until they are ready to make themselves known.

She added that many of her peers and supporters of the campaign are children of well-known leaders in the community, and they can't bear to see the paper disappear.

"We'll keep yelling until somebody listens. We won't stop until the voice of the young professionals is represented and heard."

Aside from the youthful outburst of support for the paper, others have also made their feelings known.

Numerous columns and blog posts by community leaders have come out forcefully in protest of the plan to shutter the paper.

In an April 25 blog post, Avrum Rosenzweig, president of Ve'ahavta, commented on the then-nascent movement to save the paper.

"Which way will this thing go? It's hard to say, but I will state [that] the support the newspaper is getting from individuals of all ages and backgrounds is magnificent. It's true you never know what you've got until it's gone."

Bernie Bellan, publisher of the *Jewish Post and News* in Winnipeg, wrote on the *CJN*'s website that the closure of the paper would be "a great loss… not only to Torontonians, but Canadian Jews as a whole."

The hue and cry have not gone unnoticed by the paper's board of directors, and Carr issued a new statement on Monday that acknowledged the board's ongoing efforts to save *The CJN*.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), also lamented the news last week.

"*The CJN* was probably our most important platform to connect with our constituency and inform them of emerging issues or advise them on initiatives we were pursuing on the advocacy agenda," Fogel said. "Absent *The CJN*, it's going to create serious challenges for us to ensure an adequate level of awareness of what we do, how we do it and ways [people] can become more directly engaged in the advocacy process."

In Montreal, phone calls, emails and personal encounters have echoed sentiments in Toronto: disbelief has been quickly followed by such questions as, "What can we do? Who can we speak to? Who made this decision?"

Many are asking how dire *The CJN*'s financial situation is, whether other options were considered and why the community wasn't told closure was being considered. Many cling to the hope that *The CJN* will return online.

"When I first got the disturbing news, I did not want to believe it," said Larry Rosenthal, a businessman who is active in a number of community groups.

"It is a loss to the community at large, and a more serious loss to the Jewish community… The crew at *The CJN* are professional and dedicated in reporting the local, national and international news. For many years, they supported the causes that mean so much to us."

"This is awful news," said writer Barry Lazar. "I wanted you to know how much I appreciated the work you have done over the years, week in and week out: solid, reliable writing and reporting. I looked forward to catching up on community news and info each week."

"My heart is broken," wrote Baruch Cohen, who at more than 90 years old, remains an active volunteer. "I am at a loss for words to hear *The CJN* is closing."

"*The CJN* has been a mainstay of our Shabbat reading for many years," wrote Seymour Mishkin, a physician.

"I want to express my sadness about *The CJN*'s closure," wrote David Smajovits, who handles communications for Jewish National Fund. "I've literally grown up reading your articles every week."

"Say it ain't so…What can we, the public, do to reverse this decision?" asked retired insurance executive Hy Rissman. "Your reporting over the years kept our Jewish community so well informed."

"I think the whole community is in shock," wrote Shelley Lubiner Paris, a public relations consultant. "I can't believe this important paper will close."

"I am deeply shocked and can't really believe they would shut down *The CJN*," wrote Frederick Krantz, director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research.

"I, and the community, are devastated at the news of *The CJN* closing," wrote Jennifer Shugar. "Every Wednesday, I snatch it from the mailbox and read it voraciously. This is a huge blow to all of us."

"There is no question the paper has a loyal following," *Suburban* and *Jewish Tribune* contributor Mike Cohen wrote on his blog. "This was obvious from the comments I received on my Twitter handle and Facebook when I posted the news of its demise. 'What can we do?' one person asked. 'How are Jewish organizations going to get their word out?' asked a local publicist."

Behind-the-scenes dialogue between interested parties with "serious deep pockets" to save the paper are proceeding apace, according to one highly placed source in the community who spoke on condition of anonymity.

With files from Janice Arnold.

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Fundraiser to send underprivileged kids to camp

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

This year's Intercamp Classic, presented by Fred and Linda Waks, will take place on May 5 at the Powerade Centre in Brampton.

Males representing mostly Jewish camps from across Ontario will compete in either a softball or flag football tournament, while females will participate in a handball tournament.

More than 900 Jewish high school students, university students and young professionals will participate, and about 1,500 people from the community are expected to be in attendance.

From left are Arielle Kaplan, Corey Cott, Hayley Silvertown, Emma Leese and Brad Wishen, who participated in last year's Intercamp Classic fundraiser.

The teams will represent several camps, including Tamarack, Manitou, Timberlane, Winnebagoe, URJ George, White Pine, Wahanowin, Walden, Ramah, Northland, New Moon and Young Judaea (Shalom, Solelim, Biluim and Kadimah).

All proceeds will go toward the Kids in Camp (KIC) charity, which helps send underprivileged children to camps across the province.

"The physical, emotional and social skills that these kids develop at camp will be truly invaluable," said Josh Howard, who co-founded the tournament with Noah Sliwin.

Howard said he and Sliwin were passionate about camp when they were growing up and see the Intercamp Classic as "a fun way to bring camp people together to help support people in need."

All the players have had a similar camp experience, which has impacted who they are today, Howard said. "The event gives people the chance to reconnect with old campers and staff members. It gives people the opportunity to have a blast while displaying their camp pride and helping others."

By working together, "participants and fans alike can walk away feeling great about contributing to those less fortunate and providing them with a camp experience. Camp teaches confidence, self-esteem, perseverance, responsibility, respect and social skills in a way that is difficult to replicate elsewhere."

Last year, the event raised more than $120,000. This year, the goal is to raise $175,000, he said.

In addition to featuring a high level of competition among the players, the Intercamp Classic offers great food, music, inflatables, a silent auction and raffle prizes.

For more information, visit www.intercampclassic.com.

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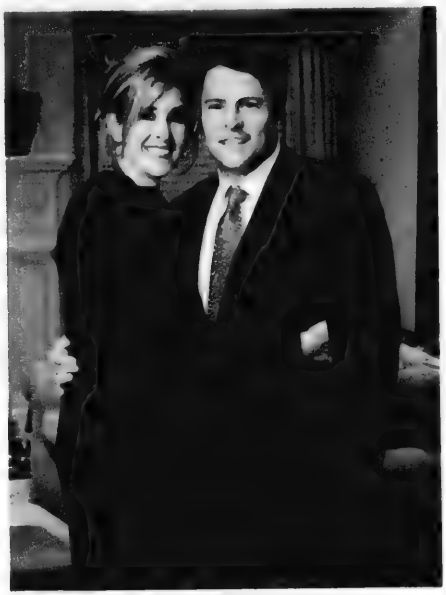
Ulpana and Or Chaim celebrate 40 years

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Bnei Akiva Schools will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a dinner May 8 at Terrace Banquet Hall.

The religious Zionist school, which has 200 students and almost 1,600 alumni, consists of Yeshivat Or Chaim, its high school for boys, and Ulpanot Orot, the counterpart for female students.

Community leader Saul Koschitzky was the driving force behind the creation of Or Chaim. According to a history of the school written by Suzanne Wintrob for the anniversary program booklet, he and his wife Mira were dissatisfied with the high school options available for modern Orthodox families at the time: either a co-ed Jewish high school, or a dormitory-style yeshiva. Their son David, now chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, was about to start high school at the time.



Marsha and Michael Lax, above, are being honoured as distinguished community leaders at Bnei Akiva Schools' 40th anniversary. Esther Berglas Guttman is being honoured as parent of the year.

Saul Koschitzky recalls in the article, "Our goal was not to create rabbis, but *ba'al ha'batim* who go to university, who stand on their own feet, and who have responsibility for klal Yisrael."

Or Chaim opened in 1973 with 29 students in Grades 10, 11 and 12. Two years later, the school moved to its current location on Almore Avenue, which was expanded in 2006.

Ulpana opened in 1974 in a house in Thornhill, Ont., with 23 students. Its development was also spurred by parents who wanted an alternative for their daughters. Ulpana has been in its current location on Canyon Avenue since 1976.

Michael Lax – who is chair of the school's board and with his wife Marsha is being honoured at the dinner as a distinguished community leader – told *The CJN* the school "has a major role to play in the community."

He mentioned, as examples, alumni Rabbi Rafi Lipner, founder of The House, a centre for young Jewish adults, and Rabbi Aaron Greenberg, JLIC director with Hillel of Greater Toronto, who both work with young adults in the broader Jewish community. Also, Lax noted, many alumni are involved in UJA.

About 25 per cent of graduates make aliyah, Lax added. As well, every year, three or four alumni of Or Chaim enter the IDF.

The school will enter a new era in September, when Rabbi Seth Grauer becomes Rosh Yeshiva/head of school.

Rabbi Grauer, who is currently assistant principal at Yeshiva University High School for Girls and associate rabbi at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue in Manhattan, is quoted in the dinner booklet as saying, "The feeling throughout the building is special.

"It will be my challenge to maintain that environment while also partnering with administrators and teachers to raise the level of professionalism and academic excellence and achievement... As we embark on our next 40 years, I look forward to helping Yeshivat Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot become stronger educational institutions and true models of excellence for Jewish day schools all across North America."

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The Advisor is responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing and leading all age appropriate social and religious programming for the targeted audience on Shabbat and Yom Tov mornings. In addition, the Youth Advisors will plan, lead and participate in monthly, weekday evening or Sunday programs at other times during the year as required. The candidate should be creative, energetic, responsible, engaging and dedicated. The candidate must have a strong Jewish identity, dedication to Jewish youth and a background in Jewish formal or informal education. The position is part time. The Advisor must attend all regular staff meetings and all Shabbat and Yom Tov morning programs. There are two advisor positions available; one for grades 1-5 and one for grades 6-8.

Only those applicants invited to an interview will be contacted. Please submit cover letters and resumes by May 17th, to Leah Dacks, Youth Program Director at leah@beby.org.

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Moroccan director shares country's Jewish history

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

"I strongly believe we can't just delete thousands of years of history," said filmmaker Kamal Hachkar.

Hachkar, a French citizen of Muslim Moroccan descent, has made a documentary film about a time when Jews and Berber Arabs in Morocco mingled and coexisted in apparent harmony.

Already screened in Morocco, Israel, the United States and several European countries, *Tinghir-Jerusalem: Echoes from the Mellah* is scheduled to be shown at Congregation Darchei Noam on May 5 at 7:30 p.m.

The one-and-a-half-hour film focuses on Jews who lived in the Atlas Mountains before their departure to Israel decades ago and their lives in Israel today.

Hachkar, whose Berber family hails from the town of Tinghir, will talk about his film via Skype.

"I wanted to make this movie to tell the story of the Jews who once lived in Tinghir," he said in an interview with *The CJN*. "It's a story that has never been told before. It fills a gap between the past and the present. Unfortunately, this part of history is not taught in schools in Morocco."

In 1940, one-third of Tinghir's population was Jewish, said Hachkar, who left the town with his father at the age of six months and has lived in France ever since.

"Today, there is not a single Jew living in Tinghir," he added. "The only memory we have of them are empty houses and tombstones in the Jewish cemetery."

In his film, Hachkar visits his hometown as well as Israel to discuss Tinghir's former Jewish community.

Kamal Hachkar

His grandparents knew Jews in Tinghir and told him about these relationships, he recalled.

Judging by his film, the Berbers in Tinghir have fond memories of the Jews, the last of whom left in 1964.

One elderly woman, however, points out that Jews and Muslims did not associate socially. "Everyone knew their place," she observes.

In Israel, Hachkar visits Kibbutz Neve Ur, Safed, Or Akiva and Haifa, where he meets Jews from Tinghir. They speak in a mixture of Arabic and Hebrew as they reminisce about the old days.

He wants to know why Jews left Morocco. Some say their immigration was religiously ordained. Still others think that the Arab-Israeli conflict drove them out of Morocco.

"A danger existed," a Jewish teacher said. Someone else remarks, "Jews were overtaken by history."

When Hachkar's film was screened at the Tangier Film Festival this past winter, Islamist and left-wing groups protested, claiming that he was promoting "normalization" with Israel.

Hachkar, however, was not expelled from the artists' union, nor was his film banned, as might have been the case in a country like Egypt or Jordan.

"Most of the people who have criticized my film haven't even seen it," he said. "People who saw the movie loved it and were moved by it. My film is actually an act of love to Morocco."

Hachkar, who has visited Israel 11 times since 2007, believes that Morocco's younger generation is interested in the Jewish dimension of its history.

Prior to the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948, Morocco was home to some 300,000 Jews, constituting the largest Jewish community in the Arab world.

But as tension between Israel and the Arab states worsened, more and more Jews left Morocco in fear of their safety.

Nonetheless, many Jews of Moroccan origin in Israel have refrained from cutting their ties with Morocco, he said.

Tinghir-Jerusalem, he disclosed, is due to be shown at the Tel Aviv Cinematheque on May 23 and then at Ben-Gurion University in Be'er Sheva before it is screened in Los Angeles in June.

Morocco could definitely play a role in Arab-Israeli peacemaking, as it did in the late 1970s, he said.

"My dream is to see a Palestinian state alongside Israel," he said, voicing support for a two-state solution.

Hachkar is currently working on a film about Moroccan Israelis who've visited their native cities in Morocco.

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Did Assad cross chemical weapons red line?

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Late last month, the range and pace of news coverage of dramatic North American terrorist-related events was overwhelming. First came the Boston Marathon bombings and reports of possible links to jihadists in Chechnya and Dagestan. Then came the arrest in Toronto and Montreal of suspects who allegedly were planning to attack a VIA Rail train, with reported links to an Al Qaeda cell based in Iran.

The intense focus on these stories overshadowed other important developments overseas. Still, there was one such development that managed to grab headlines.

On April 23, major Canadian media outlets carried an *Associated Press* story about a highly sensitive claim made by Brig.-Gen. Itai Brun, Israel's top intelligence analyst, at a security conference in Tel Aviv. Brun asserted that Syrian President Bashar Assad has used chemical weapons on several occasions over a number of months, including, allegedly, near Aleppo and Damascus on March 19.

Through analysis of images of the victims – who displayed shrunken pupils, foaming at the mouth, and other signs – Brun said that these symptoms "indicate, in our view, that lethal chemical weapons were used." Other Israeli analysts pointed out that Brun almost certainly had further evidence that he did not disclose publicly.

According to *AP*, Brun expressed deep concern about the international community's indifference to this matter and toward what could happen if chemical weapons fell into the hands of anti-Israel, jihadist elements. Brun estimates Syria's stockpiles of chemical weapons, one of the largest in the world, to be more than 1,000 metric tons and to consist of VX and sarin gas, both of which can be delivered by artillery shells and ballistic missiles.

In the *Times of Israel*, Mitch Ginsburg reported on three red lines that Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon outlined in reference to Syria. Speaking at a press conference on April 22 with visiting U.S. Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel, Ya'alon specified Israel's limits: the transfer of sophisticated weapons systems to rogue elements, the violation of Israel's sovereignty along the border and the rebels' acquisition of chemical weapons.

Ginsburg quoted Ya'alon: "We are ready to operate if any rogue element is going to put his hands [on chemical agents] or any chemical agents are going to be delivered to rogue elements in the region." (The principal "rogue element" of most concern to Israel is Hezbollah, with 50,000 missiles in Lebanon.)

Speaking of "red lines", it was U.S. President Barack Obama who stated last Aug. 20: "We cannot have a situation in which chemical or biological weapons are falling into the hands of the wrong people. We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is [if] we start seeing a whole bunch of weapons moving around or being utilized." He left the impression that if this line were crossed, the United States would respond militarily, at least to secure the weapons, even though the Americans have thus far avoided being drawn into the conflict in Syria.

It's because of Obama's explicit warning to Syria that Brun's revelation – which put Obama on the spot – was seen as a bombshell. The U.S. administration responded by saying that it's still awaiting definitive proof that chemical weapons had been used. In fact, the *New York Times* reported (on April 23) that Obama administration officials had in fact "pushed back" against the Israeli claim.

Bashar Assad

This response was led by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who told reporters at a NATO meeting in Brussels on April 22 that, having talked to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that morning, "I think it is fair for me to say that he was not in a position to confirm" the intelligence claim.

As this column goes to press, speculation is rife about why, at a time of increasing U.S.-Israeli security co-operation, Israel and American assessments of the Syrian chemical weapons menace would have clashed openly. This may reflect just how high the stakes have risen.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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Gabi will once again join Holy Blossom Temple to honour the Posen family and will share his views on the current issues affecting the Middle East today. The tenuous situation of Israel, her neighbours, and the state of the country as she celebrates her 65th birthday will be the focus of Gabi's remarks.

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Halifax celebrates Yom Ha'atzmaut

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — The joy of a huge birthday party filled the air in Halifax as more than 200 invited guests gathered to celebrate Israel's 65th anniversary of independence on Yom Ha'atzmaut.

Longtime observers claimed the April 21 event at the Lord Nelson Hotel brought together the largest number in memory of non-Jewish dignitaries at a Jewish event in Halifax. Included were the lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, J. J. Grant; politicians from all levels of government; members of the judiciary and high-ranking members of the military and law enforcement.

Hosted by the Atlantic Jewish Council (AJC) and the consul general of Israel to Atlantic Canada, Joel Lion, the gala reception included a selection of Israeli wines and musical entertainment by Toronto-based, Israeli-born singer Daphna Tsur, who presented a 30-minute program of well-known Israeli songs and melodies that had many in the crowd dancing enthusiastically.

In brief remarks, Grant recalled his days in the military serving "on a peacekeeping force in the beautiful country of Israel."

Premier Darrell Dexter talked of his impressions after two visits to Israel, the last during a trade mission in 2011. Halifax Mayor Michael Savage spoke of two trips he made through Canadian Jewish Congress' auspices during his time as the Liberal MP from Dartmouth, N.S.

Canada's most senior military officer in the Atlantic area, Rear Admiral David Gardam, brought greetings on behalf of the Canadian forces, recalling the co-operation between Canada and Israel as HMCS Toronto and the Israeli navy were on manoeuvres.

Prior to speaking, Lion showed a brief black-and-white film of Israel's history and then discussed the on-going economic co-operation between Canada and Israel, with specific mention of Nova Scotia.

AJC president Michael Argand of Halifax thanked Lion and presented him with a Tom Forrestall print of Camp Kadimah. Lion visited the camp last summer.

Halifax rabbinical clergy participated as Rabbi Ari Eisenberg of Shaar Shalom Synagogue led the audience in the prayer for the State of Israel, followed by Rabbi Amram Macabbi of Beth Israel Synagogue, who blew the shofar.

In Fredericton, April 22, Marilyn Kaufman co-ordinated a committee that welcomed more than 60 people to Sgoolai Israel Synagogue. Among the speakers were Fredericton MP Keith Ashfield, federal minister of Ocean and Fisheries, and Daniel Soucy, New Brunswick minister of Secondary Education, Training and Labour. Michael Argand brought greetings from the AJC.

Lion addressed the audience, stressing the past and continued co-operation between Canada and Israel.

Israel consul general to Quebec and Atlantic Canada, Joel Lion, speaks at the Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration in Halifax. *[Igor Naymark photo]*

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WOW! New UJA Federation initiative to transform supplementary education

By Daniel Horowitz

It's hard to imagine that in a community as strong and vibrant as Jewish Toronto, there are still some 20,000 school-aged children, between 4 and 17, who are not engaged in Jewish education.

Recognizing the opportunity – and the need - to engage these youngsters, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Centre for Jewish Education is spearheading a new, exciting and innovative project that will transform supplementary Jewish education across the Greater Toronto Area, and double the number of students in the next three years.

Representatives of the Centre for Jewish Education recently joined with two of Jewish Toronto's most committed and generous community leaders, siblings Harold Wolfe and Phyllis Flatt, to announce the launch of the new initiative called "WOW!" and based on the anticipation of this new program, "Wow!" is precisely the reaction expected from parents and students alike.

Celebrating the launch of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's WOW! Program are (left to right): Ted Sokolsky, President & CEO, UJA Federation, Phyllis Flatt and Harold Wolfe.

"When I was growing up, I attended supplementary school, *cheder*, as it was then known," explained Mr. Wolfe. "That education did not have much of an effect on me, however, I was fortunate to grow up in a family and in an environment where being Jewish was an important part of my life. My father took me to shul on Shabbat and all Jewish holidays; my mother observed the Shabbat. And we lived in a Jewish community, so I was very aware of being Jewish. But today, conditions are not the same. Even if a child attends Jewish day school, there are many competing influences that distract him or her from being aware of their Jewish heritage."

The WOW! project is a collaborative community initiative to engage greater numbers of children and families in satisfying and impactful supplementary Jewish educational experiences by enhancing what exists and expanding the range of program options to meet the needs of 21st century Jewish learners.

During the launch of the new initiative, the first four Toronto supplementary education beneficiaries were named: City Shul, Neshama Congregation of York Region, Torah High and PJ Library.

"With the generosity of the Wolfe and Flatt families, and a significant commitment from UJA Federation, we are supporting new programs downtown, in Thornhill Woods and beyond, that are going to transform our community over the next three to four years," said Ed Segalowitz, Executive Director, UJA Federation's Centre for Jewish Education. "Soon, new options and programs will be available to introduce the joys of Jewish education to virtually half the young Jewish families across the GTA."

"UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is committed to sustaining and strengthening Jewish life in the GTA," added Craig Rimer, a board member of both UJA Federation and its Centre for Jewish Education Committee. "Our future depends on a community that embraces Jewish values, understands Jewish learning, and can confidently stand up and identify as Jewish. To this end, UJA Federation seeks to maximize the number of community members in our education system since we believe that, in providing meaningful Jewish educational experiences to our children, we can be secure that our children will identify as Jewish in the future. And, Jewish children grow up into future Jewish leaders."

For more information on the WOW! program, please call Chari Schwartz, Associate Director of UJA Federation's Centre for Jewish Education at 416.631.5823.

UJA's Walk with Israel 2013 just around the corner

It's hard to believe, but, as it's done for over 40 years, United Jewish Appeal's annual Walk with Israel is about to turn the streets of Toronto into a veritable sea of blue and white on Sunday, May 26th.

By raising money for the Walk with Israel, you are not only proudly declaring to the world-at-large your love of the people of Israel, you are helping to support those men, women and children.

*Funds raised through the Walk with Israel support a number of UJA's ongoing, transformative programs and initiatives throughout the Jewish state, including:

- Increasing social mobility and economic independence for poverty-stricken Ethiopian Israelis in Bat Yam through professional and vocational training in various lines of work, including nursing, early childhood education, bookkeeping and more.
- Higher education and programs for young people in Israel's southern region of Eilat/Eilot, including career development and teaching future generations about renewable energy and sustainable development.
- Urgent social welfare and educational projects for residents of the beleaguered city of Sderot, which has endured unprecedented rocket attacks over the past decade.

An estimated 10 - 15,000 participants are expected at this year's Walk with Israel

The Walk kick-off party, held at Coronation Park – across from the CNE's Princes' Gates and sponsored by Fabricland – will begin at 9am, with the Walk starting at 10am, rain or shine.

This year's Walk will be chaired by husband and wife teams Micki and Sam Mizrahi and Lauren and Jamie Wise.

"Getting involved with community work that is family-oriented is such a beautiful thing to do," said Micki. "This is a mitzvah project for our family and I love that our kids are involved in this," added the mother of two.

"My parents are remarkable role models for Jamie and I, and they are wonderful leaders in our Jewish community," enthused Lauren. "I have inherited the 'love of Israel' gene from them. Ever since I was a youngster, my parents have always taught me about Israel."

The title sponsor for this year's Walk with Israel is RIOCAN, Canada's renowned real estate investment trust.

"As Canada's largest R.E.I.T., RIOCAN is thrilled and excited to be the main sponsor of this year's Walk with Israel," said RIOCAN'S President and Chief Operating Officer, Fred Waks. "You'd be hard-pressed to name another annual event in Toronto which, without fail, attracts between 10,000 and 15,000 participants as does UJA's Walk with Israel," added Edward Sonshine, RIOCAN's Chief Executive Officer.

The Walk with Israel ends with the Renee & Irwin Nadal Festival which starts at 12:30pm at The Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place, and features carnival rides and games; a petting zoo; an Israeli arts and crafts centre; a kosher barbecue; and much more.

For more information or to register and raise funds online, please visit walkwithisrael.com or call 416.631.5700.

*Funds raised for Israel and overseas needs are allocated to Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA, for which authorized organizations deliver services.

COR declares May kosher restaurant month

10% coupon aims to boost local eateries

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Get set for a month of tasty dining at some of Toronto's finest kosher eateries.

Throughout May, to celebrate 60 years of kashrut supervision in the city by the Kashruth Council of Canada, which administers the COR hechsher, more than 30 kosher restaurants and take-out establishments in the GTA have joined forces with the council to offer "Kosher Restaurant Month," with savings of 10 per cent off their entire menus with a coupon available from the agency's website.

Kashruth Council spokesperson Richard Rabkin said that "there's nothing [the community and the council] want to see more than the success of its COR-certified establishments."

Participating eateries range from pizza shops to falafel and shawarma joints, and from frozen yogurt to fine dining.

Andrew Novak of Umami Sushi is happy to be joining in.

"It could be a good thing," said Novak. "All it takes is one new customer to become a regular, and you can make back the 10 per cent."

He hopes the promotion will reach people beyond the "frum [religious] community" and even "outside the Jewish community."

The Kashruth Council is advertising the promotion, and there's no charge to restaurants to participate.

"I don't know of any other such kosher promotions in other parts of the world," Rabkin said.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, executive director of the Montreal Vaad Ha'ir, which oversees the MK hechsher, called the month-long promotion a "fine idea, encouraging people to go out and eat in kosher restaurants."

As a COR-sponsored and COR-initiated promotion, only restaurants under Kashruth Council supervision are included. Moti Bensalmon of Badatz Toronto, another local kashrut agency, said that while promoting kosher is a good thing, the "big picture" question remains, "How do we lower the cost of the kosher food chain, starting with meat?"

This is especially true given the imminent demise of Chai Kosher Poultry.

Twenty years ago, kosher may have been the default for simchahs and family meals, said Bensalmon.

Today, it's more common for the meal to be non-kosher, with individual kosher plates provided. But that could change, he said. "Kosher food is just as good. There's no difference in taste, no difference in quality… People will go for kosher if the prices are competitive."

Bensalmon said more than 50 kosher establishments in Toronto have closed down over the last five years, "one after the other," including longtime favourites Marky's and Richman's Bakery.

But Rabkin said the problem extends beyond the kosher world: "The restaurant business is a difficult one… Statistics that we've read are that 90 per cent of [non-kosher] restaurants close within their first three years of operation."

That's why the Kashruth Council, a non-profit organization that doesn't receive funding from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, is calling attention to its participating restaurants, twelve of which have opened within the last two years.

Reflecting on his agency's long history in Toronto, Rabkin said that from a "handful" of kosher restaurants only 15 years ago, his agency now certifies 162 local food service establishments, including restaurants, caterers, supermarkets, retirement residences and more.

But he said the community shouldn't take kosher restaurants for granted and urged Torontonians to "vote with your stomachs."

He added: "We should go out there and support our local kosher establishments so that they can thrive and be around for many years to come."

For a list of participating restaurants and to print the discount coupon, please visit KosherRestaurantMonth.com.

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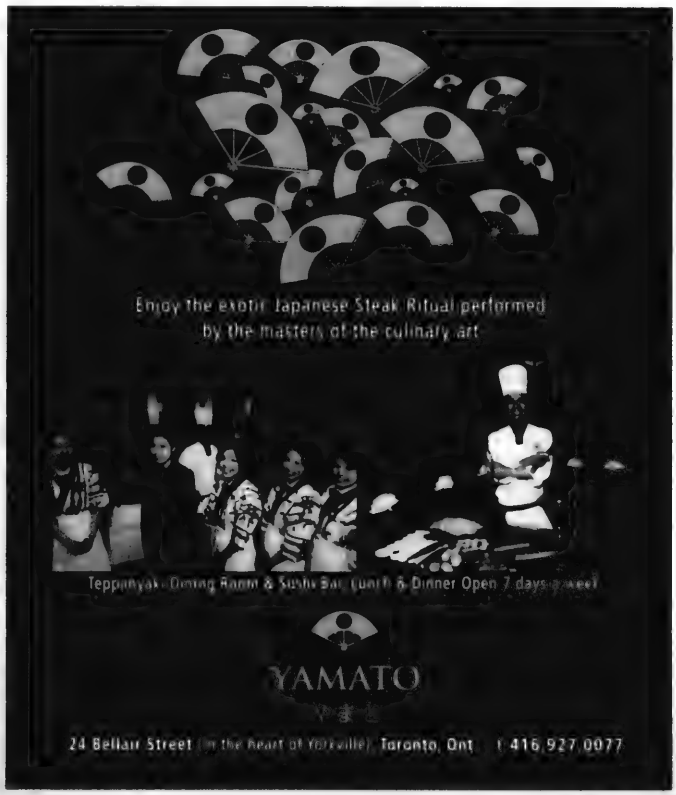
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Edmonton's Jewish history comes back to life

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

Edmonton's Jewish community will soon have a platform through which to tell the story of its contribution to the city's development, when the historic jewelry and optometry store H.B. Kline reopens at Fort Edmonton's Capitol Theatre June 9.

Fort Edmonton, a park that showcases the living history of Edmonton, opened the Capitol Theatre movie and vaudeville house as one of its exhibits in 2011. It included the windows of Kline's store, which had been located at the theatre until the store closed in 1972. But beyond the windows, there was nothing else to be shown of the shop.

Ken Wasserman, the great-grandson of Herman B. Kline, was determined that more of the story be told. His great-grandfather's store was in business from 1904 to 1972, and it morphed from something akin to a pawnshop into a jewelry store. "I'm assuming by virtue of what was, in a mercantile sense, realistic at that time," he said.

Edmonton's Capitol Theatre in 1928

Wasserman, who calls Edmonton home, began collaborating with Debby Shoctor, archivist and executive director of the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA), to bring the store back to life.

"We want the store to serve as an interpretive space through which the story of Edmonton's Jewish pioneers can be told," Shoctor said. "The Capitol Theatre building was an integral part of the Jewish history of Edmonton, but no mention of our story was made in the interpretation of this site in 2011."

The building was constructed by the Allen brothers, two American Jews who built theatres throughout North America. On the left side of the theatre, the Pipe Shop, owned by the Ostry family, was in business for 30 years, while on the right sat H.B. Kline Jewelers, one of the city's first jewelry stores.

Recreating H.B. Kline Jewelers comes with a price tag of $70,000, and neither the City of Edmonton nor the Fort Edmonton Foundation has stepped up to contribute, although they have co-operated in other ways, Shoctor says. Instead, Edmonton's Jewish community will have to foot the bill. To date, the community has raised $52,000 and is appealing to the public for financial donations and donations of vintage jewelry, antique eyeglasses and 1920s-era crystal and silver that will stock the store's shelves.

Five antique clocks are among the donations that have come in so far, the gift of a local clock restorer who once worked for Kline's son, Irving. Another donor has offered to match all financial donations up to $10,000. Wasserman has also donated genuine heirloom articles from his family's collection.

"This will be a wonderful honour for my family," Wasserman said. "It's a foot in the door, a lens we can use to view the history of the Jewish pioneers in Edmonton. It will be a bona fide historical locale."

What's more, it's in a location that plays a crucial role in historical storytelling in Edmonton. Fort Edmonton Park is one of the city's premier tourist destinations and an educational attraction that receives more than 100,000 visitors each year.

"At present there is no museum for the Jewish community of Edmonton or anywhere in northern Alberta, nor is there an outreach method whereby our rich history can be told to the general public or to student groups," Shoctor said. "This project will satisfy that need."

The funding will allow furnishing and build-out of the 400-square-foot space and pay for an interpreter to be stationed inside the store, starting this summer, to tell the story of Edmonton's Jewish community.

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Kevin Goldthorp
APPOINTED MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation and Mount Sinai Hospital are pleased to announce the appointment of Kevin Goldthorp as Foundation President and Mount Sinai Hospital's Executive Vice-President, Advancement

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Most recently, Mr. Goldthorp served as Vice-President, External Relations, at Western University where he drove a transformational campaign, re-branding strategy, aligned international foundations and launched a new International Advisory Board

Prior to Western, he spent six years as Chief Executive Officer of the Sunnybrook Foundation where he completed the integration of separate foundations and launched a successful multi-hundred million dollar campaign

Goldthorp graduated with an MBA from the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, and a Bachelor of Commerce from Trinity College at the University of Toronto

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MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL FOUNDATION
Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Health Complex

JNF Ottawa gets new executive director

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Lynda Taller-Wakter has been appointed executive director of the Ottawa office of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) of Canada, which is responsible for the Atlantic Canada region as well as Ottawa.

An active community volunteer, the Ottawa native has spent most of her professional career in the financial services industry, predominantly in marketing.

Taller-Wakter's strong connection to JNF began when she was a youth. Her parents were involved with the organization and planted a grove of trees in Canada Forest. She has visited JNF projects in Israel and sat on the organization's Ottawa board of directors several years ago.

Lynda Taller-Wakter, the new executive director of Jewish National Fund's Ottawa office, plans to raise the organization's profile locally.

After having become involved with the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project, Taller-Wakter became more deeply involved with Israel and her local Jewish community. "It was my involvement with that group that prompted me to connect some dots from my past – volunteering in the Jewish community, marketing, going back to school… With this position [at JNF], I can consolidate all of my interests and channel them to a good cause, a Jewish cause, an Israel cause," Taller-Wakter said.

"I am very impressed by how much of an environmental NGO the JNF has become over time."

While completing an executive MBA at the University of Ottawa, she took a course on startups and considers the JNF to be a perfect example of an agricultural, as opposed to high-tech, startup. "If you think about startups – pioneers who are starting settlements from scratch, who are able to transform and distil into organic, multimillion dollar crops with the assistance of JNF water pipes, it is an incredible feat to witness."

The JNF has done environmental work in Israel for 111 years, but has been best known for planting trees. Taller-Wakter plans to raise the organization's profile locally and increase awareness of the various projects it undertakes. "It is our intention to have more events, to engage more people and to help people understand the work we do in Israel. I will be working with the board to see that we have a broader presence and are more recognized for the work we do in the community, and that people see the relevance of JNF and identify with the work we do," she said.

Josh Cooper, chief executive officer of JNF Canada, said, "We are thrilled to have Lynda as an integral part of JNF and know that her wealth of knowledge and experience in the non-profit sector will bring tremendous success to our Ottawa branch."

For more information about JNF, go to www.jnf.ca and www.jnfottawa.ca.

Kenney addresses ceremony

Continued from page 3

Calling the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising "a moment of extraordinary defiance," Kenney praised those who participated in it.

"Their acts of bravery echo through time down to us today. They say to us that hope, dignity and freedom can overcome death, despair and depravity," he said.

Now that Canada has assumed the chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), it will lead the world in preserving the memory of the Shoah, he added.

"Canada will also continue to lead the way in isolating those who threaten the very existence of the State of Israel – the modern miracle that rose from the ashes of the Holocaust as the first and final refuge of the Jewish people," Kenney said.

The chair of IHRA, former Liberal MP Mario Silva, had just returned from a trip to Poland, where he participated in events commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

"I will focus on building partnerships with other international bodies… countries such as Ukraine where one-quarter of the Holocaust victims died," Silva said.

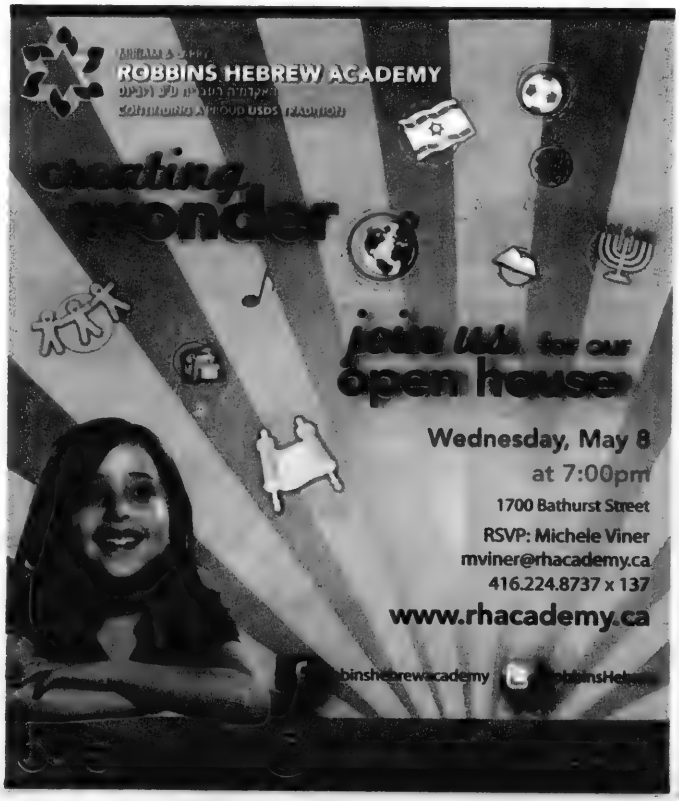
"In honour of the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, let us each renew today our commitment to fight antisemitism."

NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair, Mount Royal Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, Bloc Québécois MP M. Louis Plamondon and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May all echoed the message of remembrance and continuing the fight against intolerance and hatred.

York Centre Tory MP Mark Adler, the only MP who is the child of a Holocaust survivor, read a moving letter from a young girl to her mother whom she knew she would never see again.

Following remarks by Israeli Ambassador Miriam Ziv, six candles were lit, each by a group of survivors accompanied by parliamentarians and dignitaries.

The ceremony, organized and led by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem with the assistance of the Zachor Coalition, highlighted the theme "Defiance and Resistance," marking the 70th anniversary since the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, as well as 10 years since the Canadian government passed Bill C-459 establishing a national day to commemorate the Holocaust.



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Canada, Israel strengthen scientific ties

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

Canada and Israel continue to strengthen their ties in the science and technology sector.

In Toronto, Minister of Natural Resources Joe Oliver and Minister of State for Science and Technology Gary Goodyear last week put out a request for proposals under the newly created Canada–Israel Energy Science and Technology Fund (CIEST).

The fund will support "high-quality scientific research partnerships," a ministry statement says. "These collaborations will spur the development of innovative energy technologies and processes to enable the responsible development of unconventional oil and gas resources, including applications to address environmental challenges. They will also consider initiatives on other critical energy sources of interest to both countries."

This is a three-year initiative that will see Natural Resources Canada contribute $5 million to the new fund, with Israel providing funding "on a project-by-project basis."

The fund, announced last week, is administered by the Canada–Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation (CIIRDF), established in 1994 to "stimulate and invest" in collaborative research projects between the two countries.

Henri Rothschild, president of CIIRDF, said the fund will "identify Canada-Israel opportunities for research cooperation that apply Israeli world leadership in enabling technologies with Canadian expertise and the [overall] innovation needs of the energy sector."

According to Natural Resources Canada, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada will fund eligible Canadian academic components of selected CIEST projects "in partnership with Canadian industry through Collaborative Research and Development and Applied Research and Development grants."

Oliver left for Israel on Monday to meet with business leaders and government officials "to further explore trade and investment opportunities between the two countries," according to the ministry.

From left are Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation president Henri Rothschild, Canadian Minister of State for Science and Technology Gary Goodyear, Minister of Natural Resources Joe Oliver and Israeli Consul General to Toronto and Western Canada DJ Schneeweiss *(Natural Resources Canada photo)*

Prof. Daniel Hillel, the 2012 recipient of the World Food Prize, has advised and helped several of Israel's hostile neighbours. Hillel is optimistic that co-operation in areas such as water, agriculture and food delivery will break down barriers and build bridges between Israel and other Mideast countries. Hillel is seen here with Miriam Ziv, Israel's ambassador to Canada. To read story, go to cjnews.com.go

Jewish Heritage Month
Ontario

Join Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre for a special program in honour of Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario

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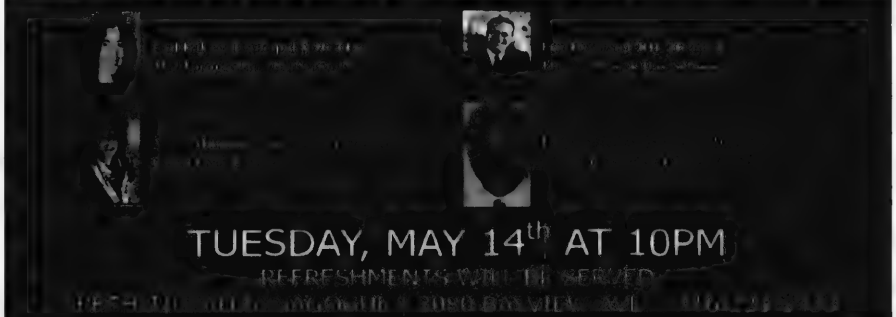
FEATURING SOME OF THE COMMUNITY'S LEADING EDUCATORS
THE CHALLENGES OF JEWISH EDUCATION



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דזשערי קעין

מוסקלען און האָר

פֿון הינדי אייבעלסאָן•

א מאַרדאָניש ליד וועגן דעם וויי נעזויסע מענער פֿירן זיך אויף

אור, מענער איר קענער
צו איז טאַקע וואָר
איר גיבורים– איר שטאָלצע
מיט מוסקלען און האָר
"געריזן" אין קריגן
פֿון כבל ביז טרוי
מיט טריזנטער פֿרויען געליגן – אַזוי?

פֿון נירייַרק ביז תל-אַביב
ביז פּאַריז, אַמסטערדאַם
די צוקונפֿט די זעלבע
וועט זיין מדהסתם
קעמפֿן, באַרימען
און קושן און גלעטן –
און שפּרינגען וויי טיגערס
פֿון בעטן צו בעטן.

געדענקט אָבער, מענער,
דעם אַלטן פֿאָלקלאָר –
איר נאַעטעט פֿאַדעס
אָן פֿעדערן גאָר –
אז אַדם אָן חוהן
געבליבן וואָלט נאָר
א נאַר פֿונקט ווי שימשון
בלויז מוסקלען און האָר.

•הינדי איז די דיי לידער שרייבערין? פֿיל טאַראָנטער קענען הינדי נאָענק אייבעלסאָן אלס איינע פֿון די נידנדער פֿון די "פֿרייַנד פֿון יידיש" און אַן אַקטיוויסט שטארק אין דער יידישער נעזעלשאַפֿט.

הינדי איז געבוירן געוואָרן אין 1947 אין אַ דיפּי – לאַנער, האַזענהעק, לעבן קאַסעל, דייטשלאַנד. אין 1950 איז די משפּחה געקומען פֿון פּאריז קיין וויניפּעג. אין דער היים האָט מען נערעדט בלויז יידיש. אין 1957 האָט די משפּחה זיך אויבערגעצויגן קיין טאָראָנטאָ וווּ הינדי האָט גראַדוירט פֿון פּרי־סול און שטודירט זשורנאַליזם אין אוניווערסיטעט. די חתונה הייַנט מיט איר מאַן דוד חיימאַן איז טאָראָנטע, ניט ווייט פֿון אירע קינדער און דרייַ אייניקלעך.

די איז אַן אויבערצייגטער פֿון יידישע וויכלידער און פֿאַנדיע אויף ענגליש. מיט צען יאָר צוריק האָט די אָנגעהויבן שרייבן יידישע לידער.

אויב איר האָט נעדאַנקען וועגן אונדזער וויכטיקן שרייבס דורך פֿאַסט אדער כליין- פֿאַסט: info@cjnews.com

Couple still dancing after 70 years

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Pearl and David Viner met more than 70 years ago at a dance party at Club Esquire.

To mark the couple's 70th wedding anniversary on May 5, Earl Bales Seniors Club, where they are active members, is holding a dance in their honour.

"We have never stopped dancing," said Pearl, 87, in a recent interview at their North York apartment.

Pearl said that after the Club Esquire party, her girlfriend asked if she would like to see David, now 89, again. "'Sure,' I told her, 'he's a good dancer, especially the jitterbug.'"

When they were about to be married – they now have three children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren – their fathers had to come with them to City Hall. "We were too young to get married on our own," she said.

She rented her wedding gown for $7.50 and had to baste it on herself. "Two weeks later, my friend rented the same dress. That's how we did things back then."

Their wedding was at Beth Israel congregation, known as the Shaw Street Syngogue, and with the $98 they received in wedding gifts, they went to Niagara Falls for a three-day honeymoon.

"We spent $80. We didn't worry about money."

Pearl was a cashier and David worked in a machine shop when they got married, but one year later, David was sent overseas with the Air Force. Eventually, he went into the scrap metal business and Pearl stayed home with the children.

"No one can believe we're married 70 years," said Pearl. "We can't even believe it."

David said that it's a good thing they kept their marriage certificate. "We have proof," he said, laughing.

They've had a happy marriage, Pearl said. "Of course we have arguments, but we make up. David's mother died when he was 17, so my mother became his mother. He really became part of our family."

They've always tried to have fun, she said. "Once I dressed David up like Carmen Miranda for a party. He wore my hat, and I attached fruit to it. Unfortunately, the fruit had been frozen, so within a few hours he was melting everywhere.

"We've been lucky. We have a wonderful family, and we had close friends. Sadly, though, there aren't many people left. We don't know anyone married 70 years," she said.

Pearl and David Viner

For David's recent birthday, they had a party for him and their grandson who also celebrated a birthday, and they are going to celebrate their anniversary with their family. "These are the things that give us a boost," Pearl said.

She hopes they have been good role models for their children. "I hope they grow old the way we've grown old."

A Jewish approach to job cuts

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Competition is the lifeblood of capitalism. It's why countries negotiate free trade agreements, to remove artificial barriers to competition. These benefit the many, but there are always some people who are adversely affected, at least initially. Competition forces companies to become more efficient, yet such efficiency inevitably leads to job losses. While this may be the best economic approach, economic policy is only one of many factors that must be considered.

The Royal Bank was recently accused of firing 45 Canadian workers and replacing them with foreign workers. The bank denied this, noting that they were a supplier's employees. Instead of debating semantics as to whether the bank technically fired workers, and ignoring the political rhetoric, it behooves us to examine the issue of employment equity.

A similar issue has arisen with the Israeli government's announcement of its intent to pursue an "open skies" agreement with European airlines, something the government says will lower prices and boost tourism. The response has been a strike by the Israeli airlines and a threat by the Histadrut, the labour federation of Israel, to close down all air travel to and from Israel.

While balancing competing interests is never simple, some basic guidelines can help. Economist Milton Friedman famously pointed out that "the business of business is business," but Judaism sees business as a means to an end. It's the mechanism by which we're able to lead a moral life – self-supporting, helping others and partnering with God in the ongoing process of creation.

As a starting point, one should try to conduct business with those closest to us, with fellow Jews, and, presumably, one should buy a Canadian product before a foreign one. However, this applies only when doing so doesn't cause a financial loss, though it would seem a small loss is a fair price to pay for supporting those who share our values.

A company is well within its rights to try to increase profit, though here, too, profit is just one function, if admittedly the major one, of the many functions of a firm. It's difficult to know where to draw the line, but it appears reasonable that a company that's making money in line with its competitors should not replace workers just to make extra profit. However, if a division is losing money, it would be appropriate. Thus the approach of the Royal Bank to find other jobs for the affected workers seems reasonable, even if the new jobs aren't exactly the same and come a slight pay cut.

Governments must take a wider view, and any decision they make will affect many people. Clearly the role of government is to make decisions that benefit society as a whole and not back down in the face of industry pressure or lobbyists whose concern is the welfare of the few instead of the many. Unfortunately this is a task most governments have failed at, which goes a long way to explaining the financial crisis, especially in Europe.

"Open skies" is hopefully the first of many initiatives the new Israeli government will take that will benefit Israeli society as a whole.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Book on Rashi not only for scholars

Views & Reviews

Martin Lockshin

An important new book on Rashi (Rabbi Solomon, the son of Isaac), the pre-eminent medieval Ashkenazic rabbi, is now available to English readers. The volume, titled *Rashi*, is Joel Linsider's translation of a 2006 Hebrew book by Avraham Grossman, one of the world's foremost scholars of medieval Judaica.

Translating a book like this is no mean feat, as it is filled with quotations from biblical, rabbinic and medieval Hebrew – some of them very difficult to understand – and the force of Grossman's arguments is often dependent on a close reading of these texts. Linsider has done a very capable job; his recent passing is an occasion for sadness in the world of Judaica publishing.

Before I began reading *Rashi*, I wondered whether Grossman would have anything new of value to say about Rashi (1040-1105). More books and articles have been written about Rashi than about any other pre-modern Jew, with the possible exception of Moses Maimonides. Yet serious gaps exist in our knowledge of Rashi's life. For example, it is reasonable to assume that his attitude to the Christians, among whom he lived in northern France, must have been strongly affected by the massacres during the First Crusade (1096) of the Jews of those German communities where he had studied in his youth. We know that Rashi remained active until close to his death in 1105. But we still don't know which books of his were written under the shadow of the Crusades in those last nine years of his life.

No ancient archive of documents about Rashi is revealed in this book. Rather, Grossman returns to Rashi's published writings, reading them very closely in an attempt to make Rashi come to life for 21st century readers.

Basing a character sketch on someone's writings is iffy. And when the major works of the author are works of commentary, as opposed to independent scholarship, the task is even more difficult. While Rashi was a prolific writer in many genres, the two largest and most significant works he produced were his commentaries on the Bible and the Babylonian Talmud. So when Rashi waxes eloquent in a commentary in praise of, for example, humility, does that mean that Rashi was promoting humility or that he was explaining that the Bible or Talmud did? This problem is complicated by the fact that in Rashi's most famous work, his Torah commentary, much of the prose (I'd estimate at least 80 per cent) is composed of direct quotations or light reworkings of the words of the Talmud and midrash collections that he drew upon. From Grossman's book, I learned that even Rashi's Talmud commentary is probably dependent on written Talmud notes of his predecessors and teachers, most of which are now lost, making it impossible to know how much of his commentary is original to Rashi.

In order to legitimate using Rashi's Bible commentary to reconstruct Rashi's worldview, Grossman also has to counter the position of Nechama Leibowitz (1905-1997), the *grande dame* of the modern study of classical Jewish Bible commentaries. Leibowitz taught generations of students, including me, that Rashi was more of a commentator than an educator. When reading any comment of Rashi on a biblical verse, Leibowitz taught, the most important question that the reader should ask is "*Mah kasheh le-Rashi* – what is bothering Rashi about the biblical text? What anomaly or difficulty did Rashi find in the text that underlies his comment?"

Grossman gently, respectfully and effectively refutes Leibowitz's approach, proving that, beyond identifying and solving difficulties in the biblical text, Rashi the pedagogue was pursuing various educational agendas. Thus, according to Grossman, Rashi's works can serve as tools for identifying his values.

For example, four times in his commentary to Deuteronomy (6:6, 11:13, 26:16 and 27:9), Rashi makes the same point – that the words of the Torah should be new in your eyes every day, as if you had just received it that day. In none of these four passages does the text demand such an explanation and in none does any insurmountable textual difficulty "require" Rashi to resort to that explanation. Grossman concludes, "Because of his powerful desire to teach people and to instil a particular idea into their hearts, Rashi repeated the same idea four times in one book. This is not exegesis so much as preaching."

In another example, in his commentary on the verse, "A lover of money never has his fill of money" (Ecclesiastes 5:9), Rashi quotes a midrash in praise of the study of Gemara. Grossman concludes, "The verse presents no difficulty warranting use of this midrash... It was Rashi's pedagogical agenda that moved him."

Grossman combs through Rashi's works and extracts points that, he argues, reflect Rashi's character and worldview. He paints a vivid picture of a humble yet self-confident man with a sense of mission, a man with a fierce dedication to and love for the Land of Israel and a strong antipathy to non-Jewish nations. He was fiercely committed to study and to his students, encouraging them to write their own works even while they were still studying.

While Grossman's research is impressive and most of his conclusions are compelling, some arguments are stronger than others. For example, as much as I wish that Rashi had been as pro-women's rights as Grossman suggests, I was not overwhelmed by the force of his proofs. Grossman's depiction of Rashi's humility, on the other hand, I found convincing and even moving. Serious students of traditional Bible commentaries know that Rashi often writes, "*Eini yodea* – I don't know," while most of the other traditional Bible commentators do not. It is inspiring to see how the most famous and accomplished Ashkenazi rabbi of all times was a man of almost unparallelled humility.

This and other points about Rashi are brought to life by Grossman, who teaches us that Rashi's "works contain consolation and encouragement no less than exegesis." Grossman's book, like the works of Rashi himself, can be read with profit and enjoyment both by scholars and amateurs.

(A longer version of this review, meant for a scholarly audience, may be found online at: bit.ly/ZGJPrX.)

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- Fluency in Hebrew would be an asset.

Submit resumes & cover letters to rstern@netivothatorah.com

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Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News for the :-) generation YT

What's New

By LULA SARICK

Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News for the :-) generation YT

Deadline reminder: Due to upcoming holidays, deadlines will change. May 2 is the deadline for the issue of May 14. May 6 is the deadline for the issue of May 23. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, May 2

NEW NOVEL

Samantha Stroh Bailey discusses her new novel, *Finding Lucas*, Temple Har Zion, 8:15 p.m.

Friday, May 3

ISRAELI CORRESPONDENT

Robert Slater, columnist for the *Jerusalem Report*, speaks at Beth Tzedec tonight and tomorrow morning. To register for meals, call 416-781-3511.

YEHUDA AVNER

Ambassador **Yehuda Avner** speaks at Shaarei Shomayim, tonight and tomorrow. 416-789-3213.

Saturday, May 4

BINGO NIGHT

Na'amat's Club Simcha Kadima holds a bingo night, Borochov Cultural Centre, 7:30 p.m. For tickets, Naamattoronto.com or 416-636-5425.

Sunday, May 5

BOOKS & BAGELS & FILMS

Rosemary Cohen reviews *The List*, by **Martin Fletcher** 10:45 a.m.

The movie *In Organic We Trust* will be shown at 2 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. RSVP 416-633-3838.

FOR THE LOVE OF YIDDISH

Mendy Cahan brings his program of Yiddish song to Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. Tickets, 416-487-3281 or www.templesinai.net.

TINGHIR

Tinghir-Jerusalem, Echoes from the Mellah will be shown at Darchei Noam, 7:30 p.m. $10.

ROSH CHODESH

The Chai Centre, 1089 Spadina Rd., holds a Rosh Chodesh gathering for women, 8 p.m.

SINGLES IN THE PARK

Sari Featherstone performs for Singles in the Park, 7 p.m., Earl Bales Community Centre, $10. RSVP debbygo@rogers.com or 416-631-0005.

ELECTRONIC RECYCLING

Toronto Heschel School is holding an e-waste recycling event at 819 Sheppard Ave. W., 11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. Drop off old cellphones, printers, inkjet cartridges and computer monitors. 416-635-1876.

BOOK CLUB

Shanghai Diary is reviewed at Temple Har Zion's book club, 7:30 p.m.

MEDICAL HALACHAH

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner discusses "Kashrut and Medical Devices," 8:45 p.m., Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation. 647-234-7299 or info@torontotorah.com.

THE 'GOD PARTICLE'

Physicist **Pekka Sinervo** discusses "What Finding the 'God Particle' Means," Temple Emanu-El, 10 a.m.

ART FAIR

Na'amat Club Beersheba holds an art fair, 2-5 p.m. in Richmond Hill. 416-636-5425 or naamattoronto.com. $18.

Continued on page 29

Jewish Music Week in Toronto
May 19-26, 2013
26 musical events in eight days including these six Gala Evening Concerts!
Sunday, May 19
Swingin' Sounds of Moe Koffman
Rex Hotel
Monday, May 20
Rocky Mountain Jewgrass
Pride of Israel
Tuesday, May 21
Musical Potpourri
Lodzer Synagogue
Wednesday, May 22
Divahn:
An Eastern Serenade
Holy Blossom
Thursday, May 23
The Great American Jewish Songbook
Toronto Centre for the Arts
Sunday, May 26
Jaffa Road & David Buchbinder's Odessa/Havana
Lula Lounge
PLUS Victoria Day Music Marathon • Community Melaveh Malka
Student Art Exhibit • Klezmer, Jazz, Cantorial, Israeli and more!
www.jewishmusicweek.com
JEWISH MUSIC WEEK in Toronto

Continued from page 28

DANI OPENING
DANI Centre has its grand opening, 2:30-4:30 p.m., 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. www.dani-toronto.com.

FROM SHTETL TO SHTETL
Cantor Tibor Kovari and **Klara Bagley** hold a lecture/recital about the communities of eastern Europe, 10 a.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

DJCS CELEBRATION
Downtown Jewish Community School honours **Joan Schoenfeld,** 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m., 750 Spadina Ave. RSVP marketing@djcs.org.

Monday, May 6

WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS
James Lockyer discusses "The Criminal Justice System and Wrongful Convictions," Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. 416-449-3880.

JEWISH IMPACT
Rabbi Ken Spiro discusses "The Jewish Impact on Civilization," 7:30 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah. 416-787-1631; office@shaareitefillah.com.

SURVIVORS' COOKBOOK
Chabad of Markham launches *Holocaust Survivor Cookbook: A Celebration of Life,* 7 p.m., 83 Green Lane, Thornhill. $20/$30. RSVP 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

MOSHIACH MYTHS
The Chai Centre presents a 4-week course on "Moshiach: Myths and Misconceptions," 8 p.m. 416-271-0659.

Tuesday, May 7

SILVERTHORN WINDS
Silverthorn Symphonic Winds perform at Temple Sinai, 7 p.m., 416-487-3281.

JEWISH GENEALOGY
Jewish Genealogical Society presents Tracing Our Roots, a series of author readings for Jewish Heritage Month, Barbara Frum Library, 7 p.m. www.jgstoronto.ca.

MUSICAL EVENING
National Council of Jewish Women presents a musical evening with the Montcrest Big Band and the Satin Dolls, Adath Israel Synagogue, 7:30 p.m. 416-633-5100.

FAR TO GO
Allison Pick discusses her novel *Far to Go,* 12:15 p.m., Beth Tikvah. $20. Must RSVP 416-221-3433, ext. 352; helen@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

Wednesday, May 8

OPEN HOUSE
Paul Penna Day School holds an open house, 10 a.m. RSVP **Sherri Rapp**, 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM
Rabbi Michael Skobac presents a counter-missionary survival seminar for deaf Jews, 8 p.m., Toronto Zionist Council, 788 Marlee Ave. 416-789-0020; toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

Thursday, May 9

ISRAELI SECURITY
Yossi Alpher discusses "The Changing Face of Israeli Security," Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. 416-322-5559; peacenowcanada.org.

GIRLS GONE GLAM
Canadian Hadassah, Yasmin chapter, presents Girls Gone Glam, an evening of shopping, music, auctions. Tickets at chw.ca/toronto or yasminchapter@gmail.com.

ONLY YESTERDAY
Toronto Workmen's Circle hosts a book launch for *Only Yesterday: Collected Pieces on the Jews of Toronto* by **Benjamin Kayfetz** and **Stephen Speisman**, 7:30 p.m., 471 Lawrence Ave. W. www.nowandthenbookstoronto.com.

AKA DOC POMUS
Beth Emeth screens the movie *AKA Doc Pomus* 8 p.m. $36. Pre-show reception, 6:30 p.m. For tickets, 416-633-3838.

TITANIC
Donny Zaldin and **Barbara Rusch** discuss "Titanic: From Myth to Memorial and the Jewish Connection," Temple Har Zion, 8 p.m.

OTHER NEWS

CELEBRATE MOTHERS
For a minimum of $25, you can send cards to honour the women in your life, while helping women in shelters on Mother's Day. Funds raised will also support Act to End Violence Against Women. 905-695-5372 or www.canadahelps.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 16

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women. Starts May 2, 7 p.m.

Parenting the Child with ADHD: A 4-week group for parents. Starts May 2, 7 p.m. Call for pre-group assessment.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 11. Starts May 22.

When You're About to Separate, What to tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. May 23, 6:30 p.m., Lebovic JCC.

Supporting Self-Reliance in Teens with ADHD: A workshop for parents. May 28, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS
Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Crawford Lake, May 14; Casino Rama, May 22; Dance with live music, May 26. Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., bridge 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Beth Tzedec Haverim. 416-781-3514, ext. 232. **Barbara Rusch** and **Donny Zaldin** discuss the Titanic Memorial Cruise. May 6, 1:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. May 7, **Kevin Courrier** discusses Woody Allen, 10 a.m.; May 8, health fair, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; May 9, **Margaret Furman** discusses exercise, 1:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Jewish archives presents early Toronto collections. Bring photos/memorabilia. May 9, 1:30 p.m.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Information meeting for Spirituelle Divas, May 9, 7:30 p.m.

Yiddish conversation, Mondays, 1:30 p.m.; Folk dance, Wednesdays 10 a.m., Duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; Shalom Singers are looking for new members, Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Mah-jong tournament, May 6. Call ext. 4235 to register.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Baruch Sienna teaches a course on "Reading Jewish," Thursdays starting May 23, 7:30 p.m. Ext. 154.

Toronto Jewish Film Society shows *A Serious Man,* May 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Ext. 0.

Adam Nayman discusses four controversial film directors, Mondays 7-9 p.m. May 6, **David Cronenberg**.

Music at the MNJCC. Women's Chorus, Mondays, 7:30 p.m.; Daytime choir, Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Klezmer Ensemble, Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. Jewish chanting circle, May 8, 7:30 p.m. MNJCC Community Choir performs June 5 and June 6, 8 p.m.

Structure and Photo by **David Trautrimas** is in the gallery until May 21.

Downtown Tikkun Leil Shavuot, May 14, 8 p.m.-6 a.m. Ext. 154.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:45 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Health Series: May 7, audiologists discuss hearing loss, 7:30 p.m.; May 21, heart disease, 7:30 p.m.; June 4, naturopathic medicine, 7:30 p.m.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

CHW campaign launch aids breast cancer centres

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) recently hosted its annual campaign launch event, Hope & Inspiration.

The April 21 fundraiser was held at the Eglinton Grand in Toronto and featured guest speakers Dr. Tami Karni and Dr. Eileen Rakovitch.

Karni, a surgeon who is the medical director of CHW's M. Fanny Comprehensive Breast Care Institute at Assaf Harofeh Medical Centre in Israel, talked about delivering the best possible patient care.

Rakovitch, the director of the new Louise Temerty Breast Cancer Centre at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, discussed how patient care is evolving with new research, treatments and technologies.

The CHW event, which supports the rapid diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, raised funds for an exam room at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre's new breast-cancer centre and an ultrasound unit at the CHW M. Fanny Comprehensive Breast Care Institute in Israel.

Dr. Tami Karni
(Cara Edell photo)

Thanks to a generous donation from CHW, the M. Fanny Comprehensive Breast Care Institute opened in 2000, setting a new standard for patient care in Israel. Karni said staff from various medical backgrounds work together at the facility to offer a multi-disciplinary haven for cancer patients and their families.

In its first year of operation, the institute served 5,300 patients. In 2003, more than 12,000 patients were screened, and between 250 and 300 new patients were diagnosed with breast cancer. Today, within 24 to 48 hours after a woman's first visit to the institute, she is provided with a diagnosis and a followup plan. Karni said she is "incredibly proud" of how the centre has evolved and is eager to share her knowledge with other medical centres and hospitals.

She said the greatest reward of the institute is the warmth and appreciation the staff receives from the women they help.

"The most important thing is to give support to these women, to understand their suffering and to help them get through the disease," Karni said. "We see the growth that can come from the misery."

The evening also featured comedian Marla Lukofsky, a breast cancer survivor, and musical entertainer Ilana Waldston. For more information, visit www.chw.ca.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Norma Schechter	Apr 5/13	6200 Bathurst Street
Bessie Grossman	Apr 5/13	128 Ava Road
[illegible] Goldberg	Apr 5/13	22 Turner Road
Edna Sharer	Apr 6/13	23 King High Avenue
Harvey Taub	Apr 5/13	7601 Bathurst Street
Ida Fox	Apr 5/13	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Moshe Flichtentraj	Apr 5/13	730 Ontario Street
Louise Zarnett	Apr 6/13	1 Glen Park Avenue
Boris Strasberg	Apr 8/13	17 Peterborough Ave.
David Goldberg	Apr 8/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Frank Faron	Apr 5/13	1337 Tower Lawn Drive
Pearl Wexler	Apr 9/13	20 Burkebrook Place
Frank Cadesky	Apr 9/13	767 Spadina Road
Sidney Bergstein	Apr 9/13	240 Heath Street West
Aliza Lustig	Apr 9/13	33 Delisle Avenue
Joey Rotman	Apr 9/13	25 Bevshire Circle
Hilda Stulberg	Apr 8/13	7 Alminton Street
Nachum Margaliot	Apr 10/13	1627 Stoney Brook Cres
Joy Gillman	Apr 9/13	1000 Ellesmere Road
Edward Dobbs	Apr 9/13	253 Morningside Road
Pessie Gwartz	Apr 10/13	866 Sheppard Avenue, W.
Sol Margel	Apr 10/13	7300 Yonge Street
Edward Lawrence Finkelst	Apr 10/13	66 Collier Street
L. David Roebuck	Apr 11/13	33 Glenrose Avenue
Alan White	Apr 12/13	139 Corstate Avenue
Iris Burnard	Apr 13/13	130 Carlton St.
Alexander Shapiro	Apr 12/13	384 Beresford Ave.
Philip Mandelbaum	Apr 12/13	1 Post Road
Rose Kopytowski	Apr 13/13	3560 Bathurst St.
Frederick Reiff	Apr 15/13	131 Beecroft Road
Dorothy Midanik	Apr 15/13	1800 O'Connor Court
Julia Fefer	Apr 15/13	795 Scottsdale Drive
Florence Winberg	Apr 15/13	19 Park Lane Circle
Rose Wexler	Apr 15/13	55 Skymark Drive
Susan Zaidlin	Apr 16/13	44 Crown Heights Cres.
Louis Glatt	Apr 17/13	91 Bidewell Avenue
Lawrence Gladman	Apr 18/13	8646 Lundy's Lane
Somer Rumm	Apr 19/13	3600 Yonge Street
Tamara Rose Bernstein	Apr 18/13	315 Chelwood Drive
David Solomon	Apr 19/13	79 Old Forest Hill Road
Irving Norman Arnold	Apr 18/13	55 Prince Arthur Ave.
Albert Sherman	Apr 20/13	645 Castlefield Avenue
Harry Diamond	Apr 20/13	49 Dunloe Road
Ralph Leo Summerfield	Apr 19/13	645 Castlefield Ave.
Carolyn Rona Ekstein	Apr 21/13	7300 Yonge Street
Edith Howard	Apr 21/13	8 The Donway East
Freda Benovitch	Apr 21/13	6101 Bathurst Street

HEDREW BASIC BURIAL

Stephen Waldman	Apr 10/13	5 Brahms Avenue
Chai Esther Starr	Apr 16/13	155 Kendall Avenue
Dora Hans	Apr 18/13	1 Northwestern Avenue

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ET fundraiser planned

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

ET Toronto's second annual fundraiser, Shake it Up, is set for May 8 at St. Lawrence Hall.

Funds raised from the event will be donated to the Movement Disorders Clinic at Toronto Western Hospital, earmarked for awareness and research into essential tremor (ET), a life-altering condition, often inherited, that causes involuntary shaking of the hands, head and voice.

Miriam Freedman, 74, said she first became involved in the organization, which has 100 groups in the United States, when she read an article in a Florida newspaper.

"I called them, because since I was in my 20s, I noticed that my hand would shake, and sometimes, my head shakes without me realizing it."

ET, is disruptive, she said, but not life threatening. "It does make daily activities such as writing a letter, dressing and eating a source of frustration and embarrassment. It is a problem that we want to publicize."

The ET Toronto group, recently created by Cecilia Ronderos, who suffers with ET, is the first group in Canada, said Freedman. "Our meetings provide a valuable forum for people with ET to discuss their problems, understand the latest research and share strategies for coping with this disease."

The fundraiser features violinist Moshe Hammer, a soloist with the Calgary Philharmonic and Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

For information, call 416-414-1511.

Group assists couples experiencing fertility issues

Reva Kaiser
Special to The CJN

In our Jewish culture, children are intrinsic to fundamental experiences and milestones.

They are valued members of our community, a focus of holiday traditions and markers of life-cycle events, from bris and bar/bat mitzvah, to wedding and beyond.

But for the couple that wishes to yet is unable to conceive, such celebratory events are instead aching reminders of the cavity in their life, a hollowness accompanied by isolation. Not only does a childless couple feel excluded by friends focused on their own growing families, but they often suffer alone.

After experiencing the anguish and tribulations of infertility, three Toronto couples, Pamela and Menachem Kuhl, Shaindy and Moti Seidenfeld, and Yona and Isser Elishis, decided that no one should face infertility without support.

And so, just over 10 years ago, Small Wonders was born. With a mandate of support, assistance and discretion, the Toronto organization assists Jewish couples experiencing infertility. Initially, the focus was to provide financial assistance, but it grew to include other forms of aid.

People are directed to Small Wonders via fertility clinics, doctors and rabbis, and ads are posted in mikvahs and community publications. The intention is to increase public awareness so that couples reach out as soon as they realize something is wrong.

The helpline is the first contact callers have with Small Wonders. From there, its peer-to-peer program matches up people with others who have endured similar experiences or medical procedures, whether it is in vitro fertilization (IVF), miscarriage or second-time infertility. Recently, a woman who was confronting cancer and was contemplating freezing her eggs contacted Small Wonders.

Because much of the organization's strength stems from its internal support network of couples, it promotes camaraderie through frequent events, which vary from educational, such as Q&As with medical professionals, and events like games nights and yoga classes.

Most events are held in Small Wonders' facility, centrally located on the Bathurst Street corridor. It has a discreet back entrance for privacy and houses a boardroom, lounge area and private computers for research use.

Small Wonders also helps couples through the medical process. "We'll do anything to assist a couple during treatments," Yona Elishis said. This could include obtaining quick medical referrals, assistance with administering medications and injections, or providing hospital transportation, hotel accommodation and even babysitting.

Floral arrangements and baked goods at the annual Small Wonders bake sale. ***(Shira Breiner photo)***

While Small Wonders provides emotional support to anyone, its financial assistance is reserved for Jewish couples, and is determined by a committee based on need and eligibility. An IVF procedure costs approximately $15,000, and since success is not guaranteed, repeat procedures are often required. The exorbitant costs climb quickly and, except in limited, specific circumstances, are not covered by OHIP.

Hundreds of couples have been assisted in some way by Small Wonders, and more than 100 babies have been born since its inception. While most IVF clients thankfully achieve success, it is often after years of emotional and physical stress. One couple involved with Small Wonders finally conceived after their 11th IVF procedure.

Upon a baby's birth, some appreciative families make a financial donation to the organization, which, in turn, assists other couples.

Small Wonders employs various fundraising endeavours, but raises most of its resources through two unique annual events: A Night of Wonder, a glamorous evening of design and décor, and the Small Wonders bake sale, now in its seventh year. Scheduled for May 13 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 122 Bannockburn Ave., the sale is an elegant display of beautifully packaged and scrumptious baked goods, from challahs and cheesecakes to cake-pops and fondant cakes. Hundreds of items are prepared by women citywide and many local food establishments donate kosher-certified items. As well, nearly two-dozen florists contribute striking arrangements that both beautify the sale and are available for purchase, fresh for the Shavuot holiday.

The anticipated event, which is always sold out, is run completely by volunteers from throughout the Jewish community. Not only do many people help support the organization, but the event creates awareness of Small Wonders.

"Our primary goal is to help as many couples as possible," said Shaindy Seidenfeld. Concurrently, it also strives to increase people's sensitivity towards childless couples.

"Our experiences have taught us all about sensitivity," said Pamela Kuhl, noting how comments are sometimes thoughtlessly dispensed. While the desire for children is often assumed by others, "you never know what's going on," she said. Children are both essential and celebrated in our life-cycle-centred culture, and while they are always a blessing, sometimes the miracle of their existence is far from small.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
ARTISTS
Federation CJA is inviting artists to submit proposals for a permanent multi-dimensional art installation in recognition of the donors of Federation CJA's Generations Fund.
The project will exemplify the themes of growth and opportunity, and reflect the goals of Federation CJA and the Generations Fund (strengthening Jewish identity and connectivity in Montreal).
For complete guidelines and submission details, please visit **federationcja.org/artrfp**.
GENERATIONS
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UJA Federation
Completed applications must be sent by **MAY 17, 2013**

Carleton cafeteria offers kosher brisket

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Carleton University students stressed out by exams may have been comforted by memories of bubbie's kitchen April 18 when the university introduced fresh kosher brisket into its main residence cafeteria.

The campus eatery added 18 kilograms of the Jewish comfort food to the day's meal options, hoping to serve it throughout the lunch and dinner hours to students who live on and off campus.

Instead, it was gone before half the lunch period was even over, said Lewis Novack, a self-described modern Orthodox second-year biology student who has been at the forefront of the push to introduce a kosher meat option to the university's all-you-can-eat dining service.

"It was funny to watch how everyone just lined up for it, and it sold out in an hour," he said, adding that not everybody who ate the brisket was observing kashrut. Some treated it as just another food option.

The brisket was made using a new pot and new cooking and serving utensils, said Novack, who advised Carleton's dining services on how to adhere to kashrut laws in preparing it. The task was simplified by the fact the chef had worked for a kosher caterer in Toronto and was familiar with the rules.

The next goal is finding a way to make the food available to everybody while ensuring there's enough for the people who really need it, and possibly eventually bringing in a mashgiach to supervise the preparation, he added.

Until now, options for kosher students have been limited to sandwiches made off campus, but those meals were meat-free. Otherwise, students could choose vegetarian food options or cook their own food that they purchased from the closest supermarket with kosher food, a Loblaws that Novack said is a 30-minute bus ride from campus.

He said he's been working on the kosher meat option since moving to Ottawa from his home in Halifax.

"I'm kosher in Halifax, and I thought... because it's a bigger [Jewish] population [in Ottawa] and it's a university that they would somewhat accommodate and have kosher food already, but they didn't," he said.

So he took it upon himself to work with Carleton's dining services to introduce it.

He spoke with the university's vice-president of student services, who told him food services had tried it in the past, such as by offering kosher hot dogs in the university centre, but it didn't prove popular enough to keep, Novack said.

However, the administrator told Novack there was no reason why a kosher option couldn't be tried again.

Novack said it's important to introduce kosher food options into the residence cafeteria, which, unlike other food services on campus, operates on an all-you-can-eat basis and is the main place for students with meal plans to eat. (The plans are mandatory for students in most residence buildings.)

Novack said he knows about 40 or 50 students on campus who would take advantage of a regular kosher option in the cafeteria.

Currently, the cafeteria serves halal food for Muslims, but students must request it and it's not available to the general public, Novack said.

But if it can serve halal food and vegetarian options, there's no reason it couldn't have kosher options, he reasoned.

When he returns in September for his third year, Novack said he plans to meet with cafeteria chefs to further the conversation on how they can continue to offer kosher options, as well as setting up rabbinic supervision.

Judging by the brisket, "this seems to be working," Novack said. "If they're going to do it, may as well make it worthwhile for all the students, not just the Jewish students."

Carleton University's cafeteria offered a brisket lunch to students on April 18.

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Ottawa conference honours Azrieli family

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — The Azrieli Foundation and the Azrieli family were honoured at a recent dinner hosted by Roseann O'Reilly Runte, president of Carleton University.

The tribute was part of the conference "If Not Now, When? Responsibility and Memory After the Holocaust," held at Carleton on April 24 and 25, in recognition of Canada's assumption of the chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) for 2013-14.

David Azrieli and his family founded the Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs.

O'Reilly Runte spoke about how Azrieli "left family and home at the age of 17, one step ahead of soldiers..." He eventually made it to Palestine, where he served in the Israel Defence Forces and later studied at the Technion in Haifa. After immigrating to Montreal, Azrieli made a name for himself as a property developer both in Canada and in Israel.

"At the age of 73, he undertook the study of architecture at Carleton," said O'Reilly Runte, and "in 2008 we named the school of architecture after him."

Naomi Azrieli, David Azrieli's daughter, said that her family's desire to help other Canadian survivors write and publish their stories led to their founding the memoirs project.

"The work that we do in publishing memoirs and perpetuating memory in this way is particularly dear to my heart," she said.

Her father spent 10 years writing his own story and "when he came to the end of his own long road... he discovered he was very lucky because he found a publisher."

To date, 31 books have been published and another seven are near completion. Fourteen of them have received awards. "So, out of a family discussion... has come a program that has changed the landscape for survivor memoirs in Canada," said Azrieli.

The conference was attended by some 200 registrants, including academics, parliamentarians, survivors, community leaders and members of the public who gathered at the university to discuss issues around the IHRA's mandate of remembrance, education and research.

Speakers at the conference included Immigration Minister Jason Kenney and MPs Mark Adler, John McKay, Elizabeth May and Irwin Cotler. Cotler delivered the keynote address in a session titled "The Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights: Universal Lessons for Our Time."

The conference was chaired by Deidre Butler, associate director of the Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies, and co-chaired by Shawna Dolansky, assistant director of the centre.

International

Assad used chemical weapons: IDF analyst

Mitch Ginsburg
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — The Israel Defence Force's top intelligence analyst said April 20 that the army was quite certain that Syrian President Bashar Assad deployed chemical weapons against rebel forces in Syria on March 19.

"To the best of our understanding, the regime used lethal chemical weapons," said Brig.-Gen. Itai Brun, head of the research and analysis division at the IDF Military Intelligence Directorate.

Speaking at a security conference in Tel Aviv, Brun said further that based on the pictures of the victims – the size of their pupils "and the foam coming out of their mouths" – the army believed that Assad's troops had used the lethal nerve gas sarin as a weapon.

Sarin, used in a terror attack in Japan in 1995 as well as by former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein in aerial strikes against Iraqi Kurds in 1988, is a nerve agent that cripples the respiratory system. It is hundreds of times more toxic than cyanide and is considered a weapon of mass destruction.

U.S. Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said on April 19 during a visit to Israel that "the Syrian government's use of chemical weapons would be a game changer."

Also that day, Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon described three red lines for Israel on Syria – the transfer of sophisticated weapons systems to rogue elements, the violation of Israel's sovereignty along the border, and the rebels' acquisition of chemical weapons.

Brun said that in Syria today there are more than 1,000 tons of chemical weapons, including sarin and VX, both of which can be deployed from artillery rounds and long-range ballistic missiles.

Chemical weapons have been used on more than one occasion in Syria, and the world's persistent reluctance to act in response to the use of those weapons is typical of the major powers' current approach to the tremors shaking the Middle East, he said.

Brun described U.S. hegemony as "dominant but eroding" and said that the world powers "prefer to focus elsewhere but are sucked into the Middle East."

Pointing to a slide featuring three images – of ineffectual UN observers in Syria, of a dead Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi splayed on the hood of a jeep and of the P+5 talks with Iran – he said all three depicted situations in which world involvement "did not attain achievements."

The region, he said, is undergoing "architectural changes" that will likely not stabilize in the coming years. Dominant among them has been the rise of Sunni Islamist parties, the shifting nature of global jihad and the weakening of the Iran-Syria alliance. Worsening economic conditions, unprecedented sanctions and upcoming national elections in June have weakened Iran's position and created "an interesting gap" between Iran's capabilities and its progress in advancing its nuclear program.

"This is not a good time for Iran," he said, adding that the regime would likely neither forgo its nuclear program nor break out for the bomb in the coming year.

It is clear, though, that the Sunni Islamist movements are ascendant and that the Salafist global jihad has changed its outlook. Perched on either side of Israel, he said, "their agenda has become more local, regional."

And though the dwindling threat of a standard military attack on Israel has lowered the overall security risk to the country, it has also brought new challenges to the fore. Referring to the surprise attack in October 1973, he said, "We also have to be prepared for a cyber Yom Kippur [War]."

TimesofIsrael.com

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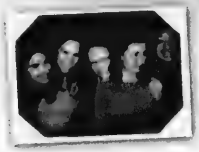

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YACHAD

OU ORTHODOX UNION

Judge rules women's arrests not warranted

JTA

JERUSALEM — Women praying out loud at the Western Wall in prayer shawls do not disturb the public order and should not have been arrested, an Israeli court found.

The Jerusalem District Court ruled April 25 that five members of Women of the Wall should not have been arrested on April 11. The court also rejected a police request for a restraining order barring women from the site.

The women, members of the group that has agitated for women's prayer rights at the Western Wall, were arrested earlier this month and questioned for several hours by police before their release. Jerusalem Magistrate Court Judge Sharon Larry-Bavly ordered their release and rejected the police request that they be prevented from visiting the site for three months.

The hearing on April 25 considered an appeal by the police over the restraining order.

In his decision, Judge Moshe Sobell said that the Supreme Court decision of 2003, which upheld a government ban on women wearing tefillin or tallit prayer shawls and reading from a Torah scroll at the Western Wall was never intended to serve as an injunction which would apply criminal violations to women, according to a statement issued by the Women of the Wall after the hearing.

The decision also did not ban Women of the Wall from praying in the women's section, he said. The judge said that the women were not a danger to the public and that their prayer did not disturb the public order.

"The most important aspect of this ruling is the fact that Women of the Wall's prayer in the women's section of the Western Wall does not violate the 'local custom' and therefore does not imply a reasonable doubt of violation of the Law of Holy Places The court has rejected any reasonable cause for a policy of repeated detainment and arrests of Women of the Wall by police," said the group's attorneys, David Barhoum and Einat Horovitz, in a statement.

Women of the Wall has held a special prayer service at the holy site almost each month for the last 20 years on Rosh Chodesh, the beginning of the new Hebrew month, at the back of the women's section.

Women participating in the Rosh Chodesh service have been arrested nearly every month since June for wearing prayer shawls or for "disturbing public order."

"Today Women of the Wall liberated the Western Wall for all Jewish people. We did it for the eight-year-old girl who can now dream of having her Bat Mitzvah at the Wall and for the grandmother who cannot climb on a chair in order to see her grandson's Bar Mitzvah. We did it for the great diversity of Jews in the world, all of whom deserve to pray according to their belief and custom at the Western Wall," Anat Hoffman, the group's chair, said in a statement.

Women of the Wall at a Rosh Chodesh service *[Flash90 photo]*

Shmuel Rabinowitz, the rabbi of the Western Wall and the holy sites of Israel, responded to the ruling in a statement issued Thursday. "The Western Wall is our last remaining unifying place. It is easy to set it ablaze with the fires of dispute. It is much harder to find the middle road which would allow all to continue to feel they belong and are welcome at the Western Wall. I implore the authorities and the silent majority that cares about the Western Wall to prevent fanatics from all sides from turning the Western Wall plaza into an area of conflict between brethren."

"The decision of the District Court and the reactions to it only strengthen the need for a sustainable, agreed solution, which will allow every Jew to feel at home at the Western Wall, as the basis for any resolution. An agreed solution reached through dialogue, understanding and mutual compromise will ensure that the Western Wall remains a symbol of unity for the entire Jewish people," Natan Sharansky, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, said in a statement issued Thursday afternoon.

Sharansky added: "Now that we have an agreed outline, I call on all the sides to move forward and implement it."

Israeli Chief Rabbinate backs oral suction for brit milahs

JTA

BERLIN — Israel's Chief Rabbinate issued a letter to Berlin's Chabad rabbi upholding the importance of a controversial circumcision rite, *metzitzah b'peh*.

The Berlin rabbi, Yehudah Teichtal, is the subject of a complaint by anti-circumcision activists for allegedly allowing the rite to be performed last month on his newborn son. The complainants argue that *metzitzah b'peh*, in which blood is sucked orally from the circumcision wound, violates German laws regulating circumcision. Rabbi Teichtal has neither confirmed nor denied that *metzitzah b'peh* was performed at his son's bris.

Rabbi Moshe Morsiano, chair of the division of circumcision for the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, said in his letter dated April 22 that there is no justification for avoiding *metzitzah b'peh*, "unless the mohel has a sore in his mouth, or some infectious disease."

The Jewish legal opinion came from Rabbi Morsiano after the complaint was lodged against Rabbi Teichtal. Berlin's state prosecutor is looking into the merits of the complaint.

Germany adopted a new law regulating ritual circumcision last December. The law requires that the procedure be done to the highest possible medical standards.

Metzitzah b'peh has come under fire from many Jewish groups, including modern Orthodox associations, due to the possible spread of infections that can be fatal to an infant. Opponents recommend the use of a glass pipette in place of direct oral suction.

Drone shot down

Israel's Air Force shot down an unmanned aerial vehicle, or UAV, off the coast of Haifa. The UAV was identified approaching the Israeli coast and was intercepted by the air force five miles off the coast of Haifa on April 25, the Israel Defence Forces said. The vehicle reportedly came from Lebanon and is believed to have been launched by Hezbollah. It's the second time a UAV has been intercepted in Israeli air space within the past seven months, the IDF said. The last unmanned aircraft, shot down in October, also originated in Lebanon and flew over several Israeli cities before being downed over southern Israel.

No charges against jails

Israel's state prosecutor won't bring criminal charges against the Israel Prison Service for the death of dual Australian-Israeli national Ben Zygier. The prosecutor's report, released April 25, showed that there's evidence that Zygier, who was previously known as Prisoner X, died after committing suicide on Dec. 15, 2010 in the high-security Ayalon Prison as a result of failures by the Israel Prison Service. But the report said there isn't enough evidence to bring criminal charges against the service or any of its personnel. According to the report, on the day of his suicide, Zygier received a visit from his wife, at which time he received "bad news." The report also said that Zygier attempted suicide twice while in prison, saw three different psychiatrists and met with social workers 57 times during his nine months there. The case has not been closed.

No parole for Katzav

Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni recommended that President Shimon Peres reject a parole request from former president Moshe Katzav. Livni made the recommendation to Peres April 23. Her recommendation reflects the position of the Justice Ministry's parole board. Katzav, 65, is serving a seven-year jail sentence for two counts of rape and other sexual offences. He entered prison in December 2011. The pardon request was filed by his wife, Gila, in October. Livni said in her recommendation to Peres that "the request submitted by his family describes the suffering that he and his family have endured since the story became known, including the accompanying publicity and public condemnation. I do not take the Katzav family's suffering lightly, but it is not sufficient to justify parole." She also wrote that she took into consideration the women "whose honour he trampled and whose bodies and souls he desecrated while misusing his power and authority as an elected public official." Livni said that Katzav's continued claims of innocence and his refusal to apologize or express remorse figured into her decision.

Files from JTA

UN official blames U.S. support of Israel for bombing

JTA

NEW YORK — Richard Falk, an official for the U.N. Human Rights Council, in an online commentary blamed the Boston Marathon bombing on "Tel Aviv."

"[A]s long as Tel Aviv has the compliant ear of the American political establishment, those who wish for peace and justice in the world should not rest easy," Falk, the council's special rapporteur on the Palestinian territories, wrote in an Op-Ed posted to the online Foreign Policy Journal on Tuesday.

Falk, who has said the George W. Bush administration was complicit in the 9/11 attacks, also called the Boston attack "retribution" for the actions of the U.S. military in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan.

"The American global domination project is bound to generate all kinds of resistance in the post-colonial world," Falk wrote. "In some respects, the United States has been fortunate not to experience worse blowbacks, and these may yet happen, especially if there is no disposition to rethink U.S. relations to others in the world, starting with the Middle East."

In recent months, Falk published an antisemitic cartoon on his blog and called for a boycott of Israel.

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird condemned Falk's comments and called for his immediate removal from his UN post.

"Once again, United Nations official Richard Falk has spewed more mean-spirited, antisemitic rhetoric, this time blaming the attacks in Boston on President Obama and the State of Israel. The United Nations should be ashamed to even be associated with such an individual," Baird said in a statement.

Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, sent letters to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, calling on them to condemn Falk's "odious and preposterous" remarks.

UN spokesman Farhan Haq, according to UN Watch, called Falk "an independent expert" and said Ban "did not appoint him and is not responsible for his views, which he has criticized in the past."

"Mr. Falk reports to the Human Rights Council, which is comprised of different member states," Haq said, according to UN Watch.

Former Iranian president takes softer stance on Israel

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Iran's influential former president has taken a softer stance toward Israel than the position President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's usually takes in his anti-Israel remarks.

Several Iranian newspapers, including the pro-reform *Shargh* daily, on Monday quoted Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as saying, "We are not at war with Israel.

"We are not eager to go to war with Israel, but if the Arabs wage war on it, we will support them," Iranian national radio quoted Rafsanjani telling reporters.

The remark is seen as part of growing calls by high-profile Iranian politicians, including potential presidential candidates, to repair Iran's image abroad. Ahmadinejad's comments since 2005 that Israel should be destroyed have prompted an international outcry.

Last week, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the mayor of Tehran– who is considered a potential candidate in the June presidential election – said the president's anti-Jewish remarks have damaged Iran.

Rafsanjani has not said whether he plans to run in the election.

In related news, a former head of Israel Defence Forces Military Intelligence, said on April 20 that Iran has essentially crossed the "red line" set by Israel for its nuclear activity and that the coming few months will be a crucial period.

Speaking at a security conference in Tel Aviv, Maj.-Gen. (res.) Amos Yadlin said that "for all intents and purposes, Iran has crossed Israel's red line... in the summer, Iran will be a month or two away from deciding about a bomb."

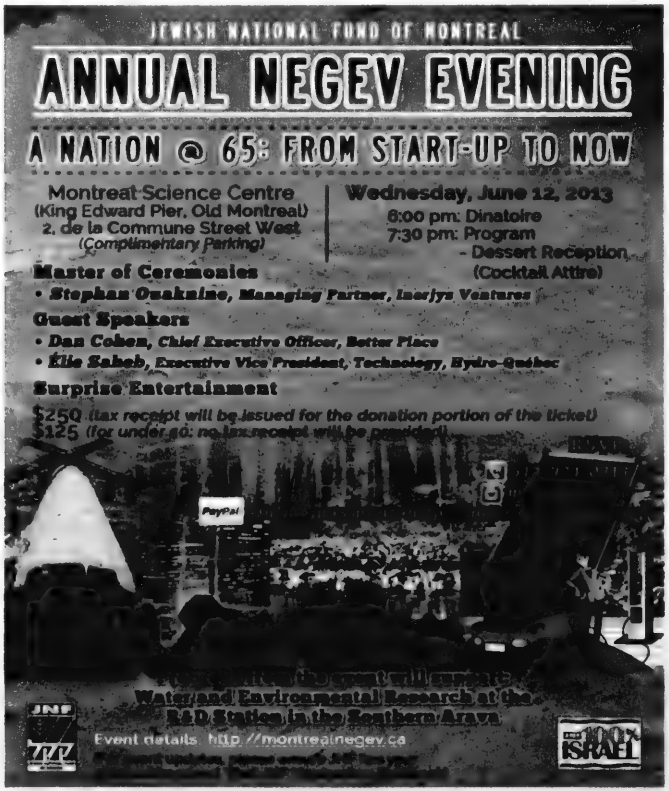
Unless there is a drastic increase in international pressure on the Islamic Republic, Yadlin said, Iran will continue to expand its nuclear program.

"There won't be an agreement if there isn't a price for [not] reaching one," he added.

In a speech before the United Nations last September, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu laid out a "red line" for Iran, and in later interviews he clarified that Iran's enrichment activities must stop before they produce enough 20 per cent-enriched uranium for a single bomb, some 240 kilograms.

Yadlin said that because of the June Iranian elections, Israel and the West had until then to decide on a military option to destroy or curtail Iran's nuclear operation, and expressed assurance that Israel was up to the task with or without direct help from the United States.

TimesofIsrael.com
With files from Mitch Ginsburg and Gavriel Fiske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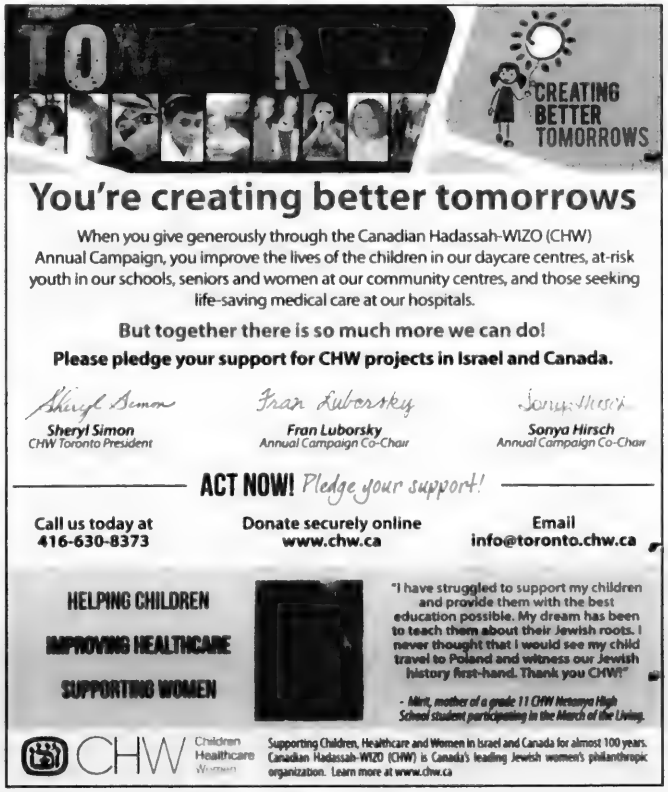
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Saskatchewan's PotashCorp won't buy Israel Chemicals

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — One of the world's largest potash manufacturers won't buy Israel Chemicals, Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan said in a statement last week, following weeks of pressure within Israel to cancel the deal.

While the sale would "be of tremendous benefit to stakeholders of both companies and the State of Israel, there must be receptivity to foreign investment and certainty in the rules that govern such investment," the statement read.

"Now is not the time to pursue this opportunity and [we] will focus our energies on other options to maximize shareholder value," PotashCorp concluded.

Israel Chemicals, owned by Israel Corp, which is controlled by Idan Ofer, said it would pursue other possible ways of investment and business development.

The Israeli group said it was "a strong company" with a bright and attractive future in many fields.

Earlier last month, Finance Minister Yair Lapid spoke out against the proposed merger between PotashCorp and ICL, saying Israelis should benefit from the country's natural resources.

Employees of ICL have vehemently opposed the deal, which would increase PotashCorp's grip on the potash industry. The potassium-based product, which ICL produces at its Dead Sea plant, is primarily used in fertilizers.

The Rotem Amfert Negev plant of Israel Chemicals, by the Dead Sea *(Flash90 Photo)*

"Israel's natural resources are public property, and the Israeli public should be the first to benefit from them," Lapid said.

He also called for the creation of a committee to re-examine Israel's rights to natural resources that are managed by private companies.

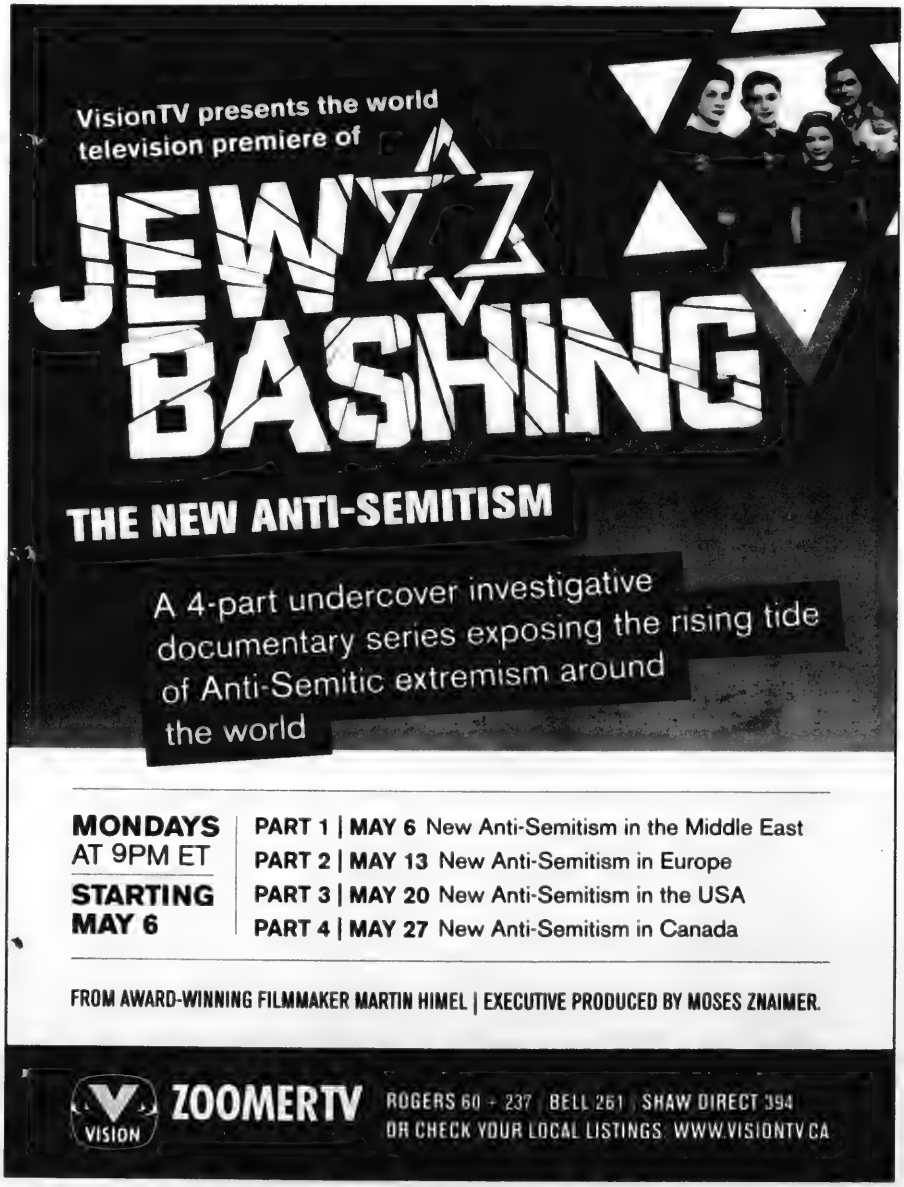
In late February, before he was named finance minister, Lapid called the sale of ICL to PotashCorp an "un-Zionist act."

The Canadian company was seeking to increase its current 13.8 per cent share of ICL to somewhere between 51 and 100 per cent.

The deal would have required approval by the Israeli government, which holds a "golden share" in the Israel Corporation, ICL's parent company. It allows special voting rights in a company, including veto power on mergers.

Talks came to a standstill as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu struggled to form a new government following January's elections. But in recent weeks, PotashCorp has been renewing its lobbying effort with top government officials, including the prime minister, a known proponent of privatization.

Timesofisrael.com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Jews were 'like Nazis,' Mandate boss said

JTA

LONDON — The British high commissioner of Palestine viewed Jewish fighters there in the 1940s as analogous to Nazis, newly published records show.

On April 30, 1948, Alan Cunningham wrote to his superiors that as the Jews celebrated military successes, their "broadcasts, both in content and in manner of delivery, are remarkably like those of Nazi Germany." In another report, he said that the Jews were prepared for statehood and an "all-out offensive" with "all the equipment of a totalitarian regime."

The reports were made public last week as part of a release of colonial administration records by the National Archives in London, the *Jewish Chronicle* of London reported last Friday.

A week before the British departure from Mandate Palestine, the high commissioner mistakenly believed that "all the ingredients of a successful truce were present," the documents also showed.

Alan wrote on April 30 that the Arabs' "much vaunted liberation army" was "poorly equipped and badly led." He wrote, "In almost every engagement, the Jews have proved their superiority in organization, training and tactics."

Israeli NGO warns pension giant against divestment

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Shurat HaDin – Israel Law Center is warning the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association – College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF) that it risks violating U.S. federal and state laws if it adopts a resolution boycotting firms that do business in Israel.

In a letter to TIAA-CREF, Shurat HaDin warned it would launch civil suits if the pension fund manager adopts the boycott measure at its membership meeting this summer.

TIAA-CREF is one of the largest pension funds in the world, with nearly $3.7 billion (US) under management. It provides financial services for people in the academic, research, medical and cultural fields.

The divestment measure was proposed by the shareholder activist group, Jewish Voice for Peace. The group's website said it wants TIAA-CREF "to consider divesting from companies that contribute to violations of human rights, including companies whose business supports Israel's occupation of the West Bank."

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, director of Shurat HaDin, said divestment or boycott would violate New York and U.S. laws. New York law defines boycotts as "unlawful discriminatory practice." Shurat HaDin's letter also pointed out that under the Ribicoff Amendment to the federal Tax Reform Act of 1976 – designed at the time to counter the Arab boycott of Israel – it is a federal violation to "participate in or co-operate with an international boycott."

According to Shurat HaDin's mission statement, it fights for the rights of terror victims, "seeks to bankrupt terror groups and grind their criminal activities to a halt one lawsuit at a time."

"We became known for the terror victim litigation but were always involved with a number of Israeli and world Jewish community issues. The BDS movement has escalated to be a national security threat to Israel and endangers all Israeli citizens, businesses and the armed forces, today. Since it is at its heart antisemitic, we feel compelled to act. Accordingly, we are trying to do what we can to confront these issues," said Darshan-Leitner.

The boycott, divestment and sanctions movement is an extension of the Arab boycott of Israel, she stated.

"Considering that the TIAA-CREF's corporate charter limits its proper function to conducting business 'to aid and strengthen nonprofit colleges, universities' we do not understand how a biased and malicious resolution like this can properly be presented to their membership. The resolution violates standing laws, is contrary to public policy and must be abandoned," Darshan-Leitner stated.

Meanwhile, an article in *Pensions & Investments* reported that TIAA-CREF officials are asking the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for permission to ignore the Jewish Voice for Peace's divestment proposal. The proposal, if implemented, would see the pension asset manager divest from companies such as Caterpillar, Motorola, Veolia Transportation and Northrop Grumman.

Two years ago, Jewish Voice for Peace filed a shareholder proposal that called on TIAA-CREF to consider divesting from three companies doing business in West Bank communities – Caterpillar, Veolia Environment and Elbit. At the time TIAA-CREF asked the SEC for permission to set aside the proposal and not bring it before shareholders. The SEC granted the request. In a letter outlining its decision, the SEC adopted the arguments advanced by TIAA-CREF, among them that the company had conducted a review of its policies and that, "To the extent [that]... the proponents in fact seek specific investment activities and decisions rather than review, the proposal impermissibly interferes with the conduct of TIAA-CREF's ordinary business operations and is excludable."

As the SEC ponders TIAA-CREF's current request, Shurat HaDin is in contact with "a large number of Israeli companies that have been subject to sanctions, divestment or have been picketed. We're trying to let them know that there are legal recourses," Darshan-Leitner told *The CJN*.

Too many companies seem to believe "that if you ignore it, it will go away," she said. "Some companies may not want the publicity, they're hoping it goes away or they are taking a wait-and-see approach. This is a flawed strategy."

Shurat HaDin has adopted a proactive approach, which has paid off in the past, she said. As an example, she pointed to an attempt by anti-Israel activists to run the Israeli blockade of Gaza. Shurat HaDin contacted maritime insurance companies, advising them the blockade-running ships could be smuggling arms to Hamas and that lawsuits could result if it provided the ships with insurance. Shurat HaDin also cautioned satellite radio providers about providing service to the ships, arguing that doing so would violate U.S. law. Those steps help scuttle the flotilla plans, she said.

Nevertheless, she continued, "the BDS [movement] has become gigantic. It's almost like a tsunami coming at Israel from all directions. Israeli companies don't have a handle on it."

Referring to the warning letter, she said, "This is only the beginning. It's the beginning of pushing back against the boycott movement."

Meanwhile, Shurat HaDin is planning to open a Canadian office in the Toronto area, perhaps by early May, according to Darshan-Leitner.

The non-governmental organization has hired a lawyer and will rely as well on the legal services of other volunteers, she said in a telephone interview.

Sisters design 'environmentally responsible' jewelry

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Two Toronto sisters, Jenna and Davida Goldenberg, design environmentally friendly jewelry that they sell online.

Jenna, 28, and Davida, 27, create the jewelry with 935 Argentium Sterling Silver, which is recycled silver that's one per cent purer than sterling silver. It's offered through their company, Pontus & Hawke.

"Argentium silver has many positive attributes that sterling silver does not possess," said Jenna. "It is hypoallergenic, tarnish resistant and shines a brighter white than platinum. We want to enable consumers to buy unique high-quality products that are both socially and environmentally responsible."

She added that Pontus & Hawke clientele can feel pride when wearing their pieces "because they are both supporting the economy and making evolved choices in regards to their consumption."

Davida told *The CJN* that they have been drawing since they were kids.

"We draw up all the [jewelry] designs, and we create a three-dimensional image on the computer," she said. "Our core value is to remain Canadian in every aspect from design to manufacturing."

Jenna and Davida are recent graduates of the Academy of Design in Toronto. Jenna attended York University, where she got a degree in administrative studies and marketing. Davida has a diploma in art and art history from Sheridan College and a degree from the University of Toronto in art and art history.

Jewelry designers Davida Goldenberg, left, and her sister, Jenna

The young entrepreneurs said that they were fortunate to receive assistance from their family in establishing their business.

"Our parents, Dr. Leslie and Susan Goldenberg, were encouraging and enthusiastically helped us get on our feet," Jenna said.

"And our brother, Ben, helped us with the technical aspects of the website. It was so helpful to have a supportive family while setting up our business."

Davida said that fashion blogs have helped them expand their business. They have also been featured in home and fashion magazines.

"Originally, there were four partners," she added. "But two went their own way, to achieve other goals."

Davida and Jenna and one of their former partners brainstormed to come up with the company name Pontus & Hawke. We "came with a list of names and events that included an ancient pre-Olympian god, Pontus, and HMS Hawke, a British battleship that was destroyed by the Germans in World War I," Davida said.

"The battleship had been launched on March 11, 1891, and March 11, 2012, was the launch date of our company. From that moment on, Pontus & Hawke was the name of our company.

"We plan on extending the Pontus & Hawke brand in the near future to include a chic sportswear line for both men and women," she said.

"We will design the clothing, and they will be manufactured in Canada. And in time, we hope to have our designs in stores as well as on the web."

For more information about the company, go to www.pontusandhawke.com.

A primer on Polish Holocaust movies

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

The first Polish feature film to portray the infamous Jedwabne massacre of 1941, during which Catholic Poles beat to death or burned alive nearly all of the town's Jews, opened recently in theatres in Poland.

Wladyslaw Pasikowski's *Aftermath*, which tells the story of a Polish man who learns a dark secret about his family's past, forced Poles yet again to confront one of the most unsavoury episodes of the Holocaust in Nazi-occupied Poland.

Aftermath is neither the first nor the last Polish movie to deal with the Holocaust. Indeed, as Marek Haltof observes in *Polish Film and the Holocaust: Politics and Memory* (Berghahn Books), the Holocaust, within the context of World War II, has been a major topic of Polish cinema.

In what he claims is the first book-length study on the subject, Haltof – a professor of literature and film at Northern Michigan University – says that Polish movies about the Holocaust and Polish-Jewish relations in general have always reflected the political reality of the day.

When Poland was under the sway of communism, he observes, Polish films that explored antisemitism linked the phenomenon to fascism and prewar "bourgeois" values. During the period after 1967, when a state-orchestrated campaign of antisemitism thinly disguised as anti-Zionism drove out many Jews, the Holocaust as a theme virtually disappeared from Polish films.

With the return of democracy in the late 1980s, Polish film directors were finally able to explore themes that the previous political order had deemed unacceptable.

Describing his book as a contribution to a neglected field of study, Haltof examines Polish-language films shot in Poland with significant Polish participation and films made by filmmakers of Polish origin, regardless of their nationality.

In postwar Poland, the first film to deal with the Holocaust was Leonard Buczkowski's *Forbidden Songs*, released in 1947. A year later, Saul Goskind's *Our Children*, the first postwar Yiddish film on the Holocaust, came out. But it was not approved for general screening by the Communist authorities, and Goskind immigrated to Israel.

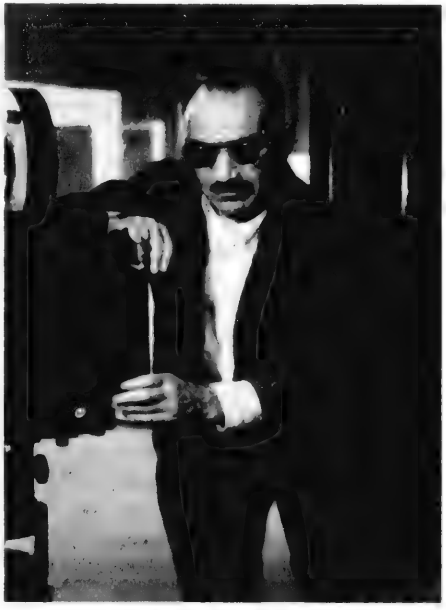
Polish films about the war tended to focus on concentration camp survivors trying to rebuild their lives. They made few direct references to the plight of Polish Jews, 90 per cent of whom perished during the Holocaust.

According to Haltof, the mother of all Holocaust films during the early postwar era was Wanda Jakubowska's *The Last Stage*, which provided a template for representations of victimhood and heroism under the Nazi yoke. Documenting her own experiences in Auschwitz, it was politically correct by virtue of emphasizing the role of the Red Army in liberating the camp.

The first movie to portray the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was Aleksander Ford's *Border Street* (1949). Ford, a Jew who survived the war in the Soviet Union, was forced to modify it to appease communist functionaries. Due to state antisemitism, he left Poland in 1969. He committed suicide in 1980 in Naples, Florida.

The second phase in Polish Holocaust films, known as the Polish School Period, unfolded between 1955 and 1965 on the heels of Joseph Stalin's death and a political thaw in Poland.

By Haltof's estimation, this era began with Andrzej Wajda's *A Generation*, a coming-of-age socialist realist film that examined Polish-Jewish relations from the perspective of Poland's left-wing underground movement. Probably best known for the classic *Ashes and Diamonds*, Wajda devoted more time to this topic than any other major Polish director, he claims.



Aleksander Ford in 1958.

But as Haltof points out in a discerning observation, the majority of the Jewish characters who appear in his films are assimilated, non-religious Jews who have been thoroughly Polonized. In his films, "Jewishness is a negative concept, an identity imposed upon [Jews] by the Nazi oppressors and, to a certain extent, by the Polish antisemites," Haltof says, quoting the critic Ewa Mazierska.

Apart from Wajda, Haltof also mentions Andrzej Munk as one of the masters of the Polish School Period. A descendant of a Polonized Jewish family from Krakow, Munk was killed in a car accident before he could finish his masterpiece, *The Passenger*, which turns on the relationship between two women, a German SS guard and a camp inmate.

Haltof's discussion of the explicitly antisemitic period that prompted thousands of Jews to leave Poland is quite instructive.

Aside from the fact that distinguished Jewish filmmakers such as Jerzy Toeplitz and Jakub Goldberg were dismissed from their positions, the Polish government virtually banned the production of films relating to the Holocaust and Polish-Jewish relations. However, several movies on German concentration camps in Poland were permitted, as long as references to the extermination of Jews were omitted.

The sole film made from 1971 to 1982 that significantly incorporated a Holocaust motif into its script was Stanislaw Jedryka's *Salad Days* (1980), which traced a friendship between a Polish Catholic boy, a Polish Jewish boy and an ethnically German Polish girl.

The introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981 did not affect Polish directors with an interest in the Holocaust. In the wake of this event, one of the last gasps of communism, four films revolving around this theme played in theatres: Jerzy Kawalerowicz's *Austeria*, Waldemar Dziki's *A Postcard from the Journey*, Stefan Szlachtycz's *Down Carrier* and Jerzy Hoffman's *According to the Decrees of Providence*.

Haltof claims that the television screening of Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) in Poland had a profound effect, influencing directors such as Agnieszka Holland (*Angry Harvest*) and Krzysztof Kieslowski (*Decalogue*).

With the fall of Communism, a succession of films dealing with the Holocaust were released, among them being Wajda's *Korczak* (1990) and *Holy Week* (1996).

Interestingly enough, as Haltof notes, the advent of democracy emboldened two filmmakers, Radoslaw Piwowarski and Jacek Bromski, to deal with a theme that would have been outside the usual norms of inquiry under communism: the antisemitic events of 1968. They respectively directed *March Almonds* and *Happy New Year*.

In passing, Haltof touches on Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*, which was filmed in Poland, and Roman Polanski's *The Pianist*, both of which won Academy Awards.

Concluding his illuminating survey, Haltof writes about made-in-Poland documentaries on the Holocaust. This chapter is thorough and erudite, like the rest of *Polish Film and the Holocaust*.

'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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Design is Gluckstein's passion

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Brian Gluckstein's path to a career in design and interior decoration was perhaps preordained, paved when he was a very young man.

"I was sensitive to space and very aware of the environment I was in," he mused, summing up his sensibilities.

By the age of 10, Gluckstein – the principal of GlucksteinDesign and one of Canada's most pre-eminent designers and interior decorators – was already tuned in to the myriad possibilities of space.

"I would move the furniture around in our home, usually when my parents were away in Florida," recalled Gluckstein, casually dressed one early morning in dark pants, a light blue V-neck sweater and a striped blue shirt open at the collar. "I would rearrange my room. It was clear I had some interest in design. Yes, it was an indicator of things to come."

Rather than berating their son for rearranging his furniture to suit his tastes, Larry and Barbara Gluckstein, the proprietors of furniture stores in Toronto, encouraged him to act on his creative impulses.

As he looks back, Gluckstein refers to other signposts in his life that pointed him toward the world of design. He remembers his father's friend, who would give him sophisticated European design magazines he'd devour in one sitting. And he recalls the influence his older sister, Joyce, a photo stylist today, exerted on him. "I got to see the projects she was working on," he said.

Contemplating his vocational future after graduating from Newtonbrook Secondary School, he was torn between architecture and interior design. He chose the latter partly because Joyce had only words of praise for the rigorous four-year interior design program she had taken at Ryerson University.

"I had all these people around me who exposed me to design," he said, summarizing the influences that affected him. "I don't know if a career in design was inevitable, but it was available if I wanted one."

In retrospect, Gluckstein, now 52, believes he was lucky to have been admitted to Ryerson, since some 700 applicants applied for for about only 70 places. "It wasn't some little decorating course," he said, adding that only 30 students eventually graduated. "It honed your skills. We had exposure to professionals in the industry."

On a more personal level, Ryerson was also useful to Gluckstein's development because it eased him out of his introverted shell. "I was really shy, and Ryerson taught me how to deliver presentations in front of people. Ryerson was an incredible school, an incredible experience."

Brian Gluckstein

With Ryerson behind him, Gluckstein landed a job with interior designer Linda Boorman. "I liked the small scale of it," he said. "I wanted creative input in projects and I got it. I wasn't just one of 100 employees."

Just as importantly, he observed, Boorman showed him how to run a business efficiently. "I learned everything there, from developing my drawing skills to dealing with clients," said Gluckstein.

Over the years, he has been influenced by such iconic figures as Jean-Michel Frank, who promoted minimalist interiors and developed the Parsons table; Billy Baldwin, the dean of American interior decorators, and Albert Hadley, who worked in a variety of styles and for American socialites.

If you ask Gluckstein what the most important asset he brings to the table, aside from his obvious artistic talents, he says it is the ability to listen to his clients' desires and whims. As he put it, "You can't impose anything on them. You have to create for them."

Gluckstein's strong work ethic is indubitably another one of his defining characteristics, a key to his success. He prides himself on being organized, disciplined and fiscally responsible. "I'm very efficient with my time," he noted. "I don't dither. I don't have time to waste."

Gluckstein, whose clientele runs the gamut from corporations to hotels, established his company in 1987 in midtown Toronto, in the vicinity of Yorkville. Today, he employs a staff of 22, two-thirds of whom are designers.

For the past 13 years, his headquarters have been in a refurbished Georgian-style building, formerly a printing house, which he reconfigured to look like an upscale British townhouse set in a courtyard.

From the outset, fortune smiled on him.

"I was recommended to clients by some important architects and given extraordinary commissions," said Gluckstein, who focuses on residential projects but whose resumé includes the interiors of the Four Seasons Hotel and the Windsor Arms Hotel in Toronto.

Nowadays, he works primarily with well-to-do families who want to upgrade their large, elegant and expensive homes.

"Residential design is where my passion lies," he said, sitting adjacent a wall plastered with magazine photographs of home interiors he designed or admires.

Two-thirds of his clients are Jewish.

"The Jewish community, worldwide but especially in Europe, has always been known to be adventurous in design."

Of his clients, he said, "They want special things. So we're constantly on the search for new items, some of which we design ourselves."

Typically, he finds the right furnishings in Toronto, the United States, Britain and France.

Being eclectic in his philosophy of design, Gluckstein fills space with both contemporary and traditional touches. "I like spaces that reflect a variety of styles and that are always comfortable and inviting."

He abhors clutter.

"I like organized and neat spaces," said Gluckstein, who lives in Toronto's Forest Hill and maintains a second home in Palm Beach, Florida. "I like a house that's very neat."

Gluckstein can afford to reject clients. As he said, "I've turned down many jobs. I have a responsibility to existing clients not to overload myself. And sometimes, the esthetics are not mutually compatible."

In 1999, he created GlucksteinHome, a line of high-end yet affordable home furnishings from bedding to outdoor furniture, sold in Canada at The Bay and Home Outfitters and in the United States at Lord & Taylor and independent stores.

"There was a void in the market, and I've tried to fill it," he said. "We design 3,000 to 5,000 items a year."

Gluckstein works hard, but he knows how to relax. Every month, he flies south to Florida for five to seven days to unwind in his contemporary home in Palm Beach.

"I have to get away from my hectic pace and recharge," he said.

Gluckstein also regularly travels to New York City, Paris and London to attend trade and design shows.

"These cities give me a lot of inspiration to push the envelope a bit."

Apart from tennis, he has no real hobbies to speak of. "Design," he said, "is my hobby."

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
President

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

JEWISHFICTION.NET AND NORA GOLD ARE BOTH THRIVING – SHE HAS A NEW NOVEL COMING OUT

Two years ago, Toronto author **Nora Gold** took a look at what was happening in the publishing industry, how it was all going digital, and saw the proverbial writing on the wall.

Concerned that "publishers were taking fewer and fewer books," Gold established a website dedicated to contemporary original Jewish fiction called Jewishfiction.net, which is entirely non-commercial and subsists on donations.

"I had heard from a lot of writers that they were having trouble finding publishers, and from many publishers about how hard it is to take on 'niche' fiction," Gold told me last week. "I was concerned that a lot of wonderful fiction was going to get lost along the way. That was my motive."

Jewishfiction.net recently published its 10th issue containing 16 pieces of fiction, seven of which were written by Israeli authors in honour of the recent Israeli Independence Day. The website has published an impressive roster of writers, including **Elie Wiesel, Aharon Appelfeld, A.B. Yehoshua, Chava Rosenfarb, Nessa Rapoport, Steve Stern** and **Morley Torgov**. It has received more than 40,000 visitors to date from more than 100 countries.

Gold, who maintains the website as a "labour of love," is herself a published author with an award-winning book of wonderful stories, *Marrow and Other Stories*, to her credit. She has also written a first novel, *Fields of Exile*, due for publication next year by Dundurn Press.

Set in a fictitious university, *Fields of Exile* deals with the ugly modern phenomenon of anti-Israel activism on campus, and it is Gold's hope it will help turn the tide against the current social hysteria within the political left of delegitimizing and demonizing Israel.

"There are a lot of well-meaning people around the world who just don't understand what anti-Israelism is. It's not just a form of criticizing, it's the new antisemitism."

Gold is the moderator of Writing and Publishing Jewish Fiction in Canada: Past, Present and Future, a panel discussion also featuring **Martin Levin, Cynthia Good** and **Cary Fagan**. Part of the 2013 Toronto Jewish Literary Festival, the event takes place at Ben McNally Books, 366 Bay St., Wednesday, June 5, 7:30 p.m. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

For further information, please visit jewishfiction.net or kofflerarts.org

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Yiddish Song: Israeli performer and Yiddish exponent **Mendy Cahan** performs For the Love of Yiddish (*L'koved Yidish*), a program of Yiddish song with accompaniment from Toronto pianist **Nina Shapilsky**. The concert is being dedicated to the late **Gloria Morris**, a former president of Friends of Yiddish and devoted member of Temple Sinai, two of the event's sponsors.

Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave., Sunday, May 5, 7:30 p.m. $10 in advance, $15 at the door. For tickets, visit templesinai.net/worship/music/mendy_cahan or call Marcie, 416-487-3281.

• • •

Jewish Theatre: Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre has announced its 11th season, beginning in November 2013. The season consists of three shows: *The Chosen*, a play based on the famous novel by **Chaim Potok** and adapted for the stage by Potok and **Aaron Posner**; *Seven Days*, a play by **Ron Rutberg**, about a Jewish family in Los Angeles who for some reason chose to live far from their beloved Israel, and *Handle with Care*, a romantic comedy by **Jason Odell Williams**. www.teatrontheatre.com

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Arts in Brief

• Born in South Africa, one-time journalist **Kenneth Bonert** reads from *The Lion Seeker*, the story of an irrepressible Jewish boy and his mother in 1930s South Africa. Authors at Harbourfront Centre, May 6. www.readings.org

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *A Serious Man*, the **Coen Brother**'s semi-autobiographical film that explores the hypocrisies of North American Jewish society and life. With guest speaker **Adam Nayman.** Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Sunday, May 5, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets available shortly before each screening; $15, $10. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Critic **Adam Nayman** opens a new series on four controversial directors with a look at the career and films of **David Cronenberg**. Miles Nadal JCC, May 6, 7 to 9 p.m. Other directors (to follow on weekly basis) are **Roman Polansky, Paul Verhoeven** and **Lars von Trier**. $40 for four classes, $12 drop-in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• The Civic Light-Opera Company presents the Broadway hit musical *Mame*. Tickets $28. York Woods Library Theatre, 1785 Finch Ave. W. May 22 to June 1. 416-755-1717. musictheatretoronto.com

• • •

At the Galleries: In his exhibition *Early Sunday Morning*, architectural photographer **David Kaufman** focuses on commercial structures in older parts of Toronto near the downtown core that are undergoing rapid redevelopment. The heart of the exhibition is a series of images documenting buildings along Queen Street. These three-storey brick structures, all constructed between 1880 and the start of World War I, are depicted in highly detailed, large-scale prints that highlight their beautiful, intricate masonry and richly coloured facades as revealed in morning sunlight. Twist Gallery, 1100 Queen St. W., May 1 to 26. Public reception, May 2, 6 to 9:30 p.m.

Vision TV's four-part series explores global antisemitism

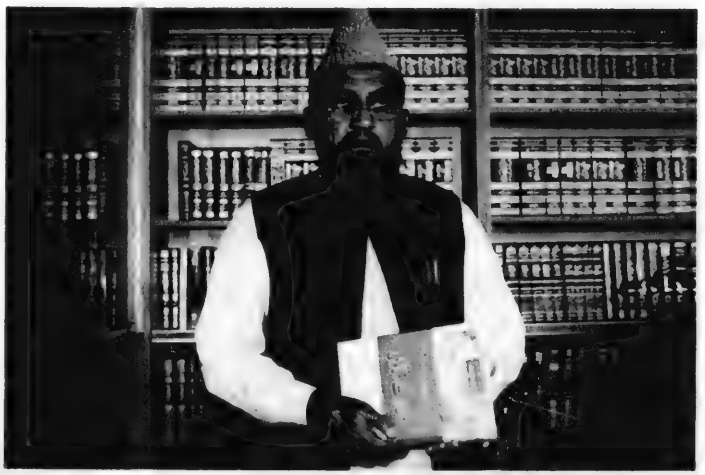
Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

Canadian journalist and broadcaster Martin Himel sifts through the malodorous detritus of antisemitism, the world's most persistent pathological hatred, in *Jew Bashing: The New Antisemitism*, his important four-part series starting on Vision TV on May 6 at 9 p.m.

In the first segment, Himel examines its Muslim variant in Pakistan, Iran, Egypt and the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Himel's focus on the Muslim world is hardly surprising. "No group is as receptive to antisemitic conspiracy theories as Muslims," observes Hebrew University professor Robert Wistrich, an expert on the subject.

Himel, based in Israel, uses Muslim surrogates to conduct many of his interviews, believing the interviewees will be more relaxed and candid if questioned by a fellow Muslim. It's a valid assumption, judging by their answers. The anti-Jewish animus spilling from their mouths is shocking, even for a seasoned observer.



A Muslim cleric in Pakistan spouts antisemitic views.

In Lahore, a Pakistani student openly calls for the destruction of Jews, while a cleric claims that the 9/11 terrorist attacks were perpetrated by Jews. No Muslim could possibly commit such an immoral act, he adds self-righteously.

Still other Pakistanis contend that Jews control America, wield too much influence and dominate commerce, even in Pakistan, where a Jewish community no longer exists. At a Shiite Muslim school, meanwhile, a bearded teacher accuses Jews of sowing tension in Muslim lands.

Himel's foray into Iran is brief but telling. In his view, the Ayatollah Khomeini, the first supreme leader of post-revolutionary Iran, set an antisemitic tone by perpetuating the myth that Jews are ritually unclean.

The antisemitic rants of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi are already on the record. But digging deeper, Himel excavates file footage in which an Egyptian protester standing in front of the Israeli embassy in Cairo holds aloft a placard reading, "The gas chambers are ready."

This clip is but the tip of an iceberg.

The editor of a major Egyptian daily says, "The Jews are far from being our friends." Another journalist claims that Jews recruited Osama Bin Laden, and that the Torah harbours nefarious plans for Jewish supremacy. A Sunni Muslim cleric even argues that Jews founded the Shiite sect.

Continued on page 41

My Mother, the Nazi Midwife and Me

Nancy Wigston
Special to The CJN

Montreal writer Gina Roitman was born in Passau, Germany, when her parents, Sula and Benzion Miedwiecki, were living in a displaced persons' camp eight kilometres outside the town.

The two survivors met and wed in the camp, immigrating to Montreal when Roitman was 18 months old. While other survivors' children heard only silence from their parents, Roitman's mother seemed unable to stop talking about her past.

One oft-told tale emphasized that Sula gave birth to her daughter in Passau's birthing hospital, rather than in the camp. "Too many babies were dying." So she made Benzion spend one of their precious gold rubles – they were saving for their new life in Canada – to cover the expense. Such stories seemed designed to elicit gratitude, but her Canadian daughter, cheerful by nature, thought her mother paranoid.

Roitman is the author of *Tell Me a Story, Tell Me the Truth*, published by Second Story Press. Her continuing story – and much more – unfolds in the moving documentary *My Mother, The Nazi Midwife and Me*, premièring on the CBC Documentary channel May 14 at 8 p.m.

Both of Roitman's parents had suffered grievous losses in the war. Sula's three-year-old son had starved to death, she told her daughter, because she was "too honest" to steal a potato for him. Rejecting her mother's worldview ("a perilous place"), Roitman felt burdened by Sula's stories. "I grew up with ghosts. They were my constant companions," she says from her Quebec home in the Lower Laurentian Mountains.

In 1976, Sula died "and the stories stopped." Yet, later in life, when Roitman began to realize her dream of becoming a writer, it was her mother's voice she heard most clearly. "I survived Hitler for this!" exclaimed Sula the day she came home to see her daughter practising gymnastics on their second-floor apartment balcony railing, a scene recounted in Roitman's story, *An Imperfect Child*. "What do I have to fear? Hitler's dead!" thought the little girl, a natural "daredevil."

Gina Roitman *[Jane Hawtin photo]*

Roitman had returned to Passau, a town she found "enchanting." But seeking her birth certificate at the town hall proved a waste of time. The office was closed. Then, in 1993, things took a startling turn when Roitman saw *The Nasty Girl*, a film based on the experiences of Passau native Anna Rosmus. An international sensation, the film details the ugly reaction of townspeople when a young woman probes into Passau's Nazi past.

By happy chance, a friend was able to connect Roitman with Rosmus, who immediately confirmed Sula's dark insinuations about goings-on in the camp clinic. Eventually, Roitman and producer friend Jane Hawtin joined an American War Veteran's Group, and travelled, video crew in tow, to Passau for the 60th anniversary of the war's end, an event heralded as "the liberation of Germany."

This visit forms the basis for Roitman's discovery of the shocking truth about her past. On film we see her speaking with students, with the town librarian (the library was once the birthing hospital), with Rosmus and a host of others. Most importantly, Roitman finds a witness. Survivor Solamon Brunner tells her that the Americans, growing suspicious about the disproportionate number of infant deaths at the DP camp, held an inquiry, performed autopsies and quietly found and punished the culprit – a Nazi midwife.

The story a daughter had not wanted to believe was true. Sula had not been paranoid, but had probably saved her child's life by insisting on leaving the camp to give birth in Passau. Today, Roitman is joined in her continuing search for archival facts by a retired German judge. Near the memorial to the dead from Passau's three wartime concentration camps, there also exists a memorial to the Jewish babies killed after the war.

Rosmus arranged with the town for a Shabbat dinner to be celebrated in the town hall. Visitors, war veterans and townsfolk attended, while an American Air Force rabbi officiated. In the surprise highlight of the evening, Passau's mayor presented Roitman with her birth certificate.

"Before I could talk, my mother and I were at odds," says Roitman today. But before Sula died, her daughter told her: "Everything I am I owe to you. Either I did it to prove to you I could do it, or to make you happy."

Today, Roitman helps child survivors write their stories. "I've found a path I never thought I would walk… As a child, people could not persuade me that the world was a dangerous place – to me, it was a feast," Roitman says.

"My mother tried to warn me, and she was right. We must not forget the past. We must ask for the stories before it's too late, for these stories tell us who we are."

Christians not exempt from Himel's scrutiny

Continued from page 40

In Gaza, Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Zahar claims that Jews were expelled from European countries because they committed treason. Ahmad Bahar, a member of the Palestinian Authority legislature, repeats the tiresome mantra that Jews seek world domination. "It's either us or them," he says ominously.

Christians in the Middle East are not exempt from Himel's scrutiny. Christian groups in the region, he contends, engage in antisemitism by questioning Israel's legitimacy.

In the second segment, Himel focuses on Europe. He interviews the sister-in-law of Tony Blair, the former prime minister of Britain. A convert to Islam, Lauren Booth is rabidly anti-Israel. People like her are careful not to express explicitly antisemitic views, yet their conspiracy theories smack of antisemitism.

Himel travels to France, where a Muslim fanatic of French nationality attacked a Jewish school last year, and to Malmo, a city in Sweden where Jews feel threatened by Muslim antisemitism.

The British novelist Howard Jacobson looks beyond the antisemitism clothed in anti-Zionist garb. The "new" antisemitism, he tartly observes, is really a newer version of the "old" antisemitism.

Episode 3 is on the United States and the impact of the Internet on the dissemination of antisemitism.

At a conference, a man claims that Wall Street and Hollywood are controlled by Jews: "They have tentacles everywhere." Yet another accusation is that a major pro-Israel organization pushed the United States into invading Iraq in 2003.

Himel correctly argues that the Internet empowers antisemites and gives them unprecedented reach and influence.

He interviews three anti-Jewish bloggers, all of whom live in small town America. Alex Linder, soft-spoken and well-groomed, says quite openly that Jews should be exterminated. Brother Nathanael Kapner, an Orthodox Christian monk who was born Jewish, gloats that his website has received 14 million hits since 2007. He describes the United States as a "Jew police state." Tom Metzger calls Jews "a key threat to the white race."

Some left-wing activists dabble in antisemitism, too. Ken O'Keefe suggests that Jews orchestrated 9/11. The African American novelist Alice Walker claims that "Zionists" control Congress.

In the final episode, Himel deals with Canada, which, he admits, has one of the best records in combating this ancient scourge.

Himel analyzes the United Church's critical attitude toward Israel's controversial settlement policy in the West Bank, wondering why it singles out Israel for special opprobrium.

He also zeroes in on the Montreal chassidic community's contentious relationship with some of its non-Jewish neighbours and studies the free speech vs. hate speech debate.

Himel, whose previous Vision TV documentary was on the plight of Christians in the Arab world, performs a valuable service in exposing the phenomenon of antisemitism in Muslim communities worldwide.

But *Jew Bashing* would have been more comprehensive and certainly far more informative had he also dwelled at length on neo-Nazism and traditional forms of Christian antisemitism.

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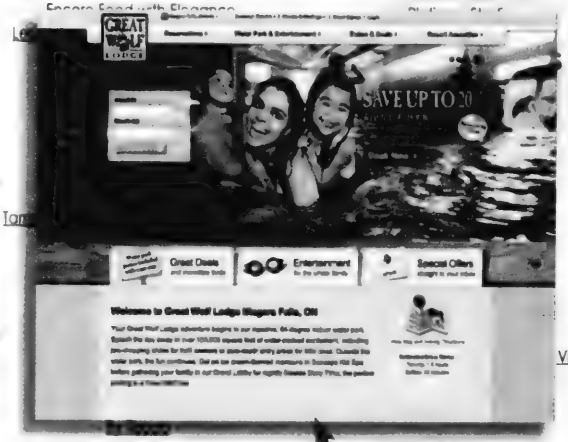

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Grandson shares musical legacy with deli mogul

Rosalin Krieger
Special to The CJN

Stacey Shopsowitz, 21, an upright and electric bass player who is the grandson of the late Sam Shopsowitz of Jewish delicatessen fame, is quietly carving out an interesting musical path.

One might say he's entered the "unofficial" family business: music. Turns out, his grandfather had unfulfilled musical ambitions of his own.

A 1984 obituary on Sam referred to him as a "frustrated musician," which Shopsowitz said is a fair assessment. Sam, an accordion player as far back as high school, was a regular performer, said Shopsowitz, and had a number of unsuccessful Hollywood auditions.

Shopsowitz said one of Sam's closest friends was former jingle writer and Tony Award-winning Jewish American composer Mitch Leigh, who told Shopsowitz that his grandfather was "the best guy I ever met."

Shopsowitz got hooked on jazz at age five, when his mother, Ellen Drevnig, took him to a Joshua Redmond modern jazz concert with a gospel jazz group as an opening act. But Shopsowitz considers himself a blues musician in the manner of Buddy Guy, who, Shopsowitz said, plays a lot of "happy" blues.

For Shopsowitz, blues is not solely about the pain of African-Americans; it's about "the smallest common denominator," he said. "If you listen to a B.B. King solo, he can say just as much with four notes as Charlie Parker can with 400. It's about communicating feeling through sound."

Shopsowitz cites three years of storytelling at the Toronto Heschel School as one of his influences. Two of his favourite storyteller musicians are African-American alternative singer-songwriter India Arie and Ravid Kahalani, of the critically acclaimed North and West African Israeli infused group Yemen Blues, whom Shopsowitz studied with.

Shopsowitz has played bass for the popular sibling Toronto and Los Angeles-based rock band Ménage and participates in Scarborough's East Collective youth music hip-hop program.

Shopsowitz said he was "really inspired" by his two summer terms with the Berklee Middle Eastern All-Star Ensemble program at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he shared a room with Turkish and Persian students.

Shopsowitz's parents would like him to pursue a law degree with music "on the side" because of the instability of a business, in which he can wait five to six months to get paid an amount sometimes lower than what was negotiated. But Shopsowitz is returning to Humber College to complete a contemporary music degree that encompasses mostly jazz, because in his third year he will learn music production and business, which will serve him well.

Shopsowitz's budding musical career connects him to his late grandfather – whom he only knows anecdotally and through photos – because he had serious musical aspirations that never came to fruition. In a sense, Shopsowitz is carrying on his grandfather's musical dream.

Stacey Shopsowitz got hooked on jazz, but considers himself a blues musician.

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Fichman plays key role for Canada in Fed Cup win

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

MIAMI — For the second time in 10 weeks, Sharon Fichman of Toronto earned a decisive victory in her final match to advance Canada to the World Group Two level at Fed Cup tennis for 2014.

Second seeded Fichman and top seeded teammate Eugenie Bouchard edged Ukraine 3-2 in the fifth match of the best of five series on April 21 by defeating Elina Svitolina and Lesia Tsurenko 6-4, 6-3 in the final doubles match. Playing in Kiev, the Canadians upset the favored Ukrainians, who were playing indoors on their home clay court. The Canadians, earning their first World Group Two berth since 2011, also earned their first Fed Cup victory in Europe since 1995.

The Fed Cup is a year round global competition for women involving 64 nations, similar to Davis Cup for men.

Fichman also won the decisive doubles match against Brazil on February 10 in zonal competition to advance Canada to their World Group playoff at Ukraine. Her dramatic victories in 2013 continue a banner year for Fichman at the Fed Cup.

"Once again, Sharon just took control and led our team to victory in the doubles match. Against the Ukrainians, she was everywhere, using great energy. Sharon has the potential to be a great Fed Cup player. She's very feisty, she's a proud Canadian and she's a dream for Canadians to have on the team because that is the kind of player we want to have," said Canadian Fed Cup captain Sylvain Bruneau, who first selected Fichman to play the Fed Cup as a 14-year-old in 2005.

Fichman provided much drama and heroics over the two-day competition. After Bouchard lost the first match to Svitolina, Fichman (ranked 125th in singles) upset the 71st ranked Tsurenko 7-6 (5), 2-6, 6-3 to tie the series at 1-1. Hitting one defensive lob after another in long rallies, Fichman forced Ukraine's top seeded player to commit 91 unforced errors and 16 double faults.

"I am comfortable on the indoor red clay and used a strategy of playing every ball and fighting for every point, waiting for the unforced error and the strategy paid off," said Fichman following her victory.

Bouchard defeated Tsurenko 6-4, 7-5 in the third match. Fichman lost the fourth match 6-4, 7-6 (5) to Svitolina, but felt optimistic about winning the decisive fifth match.

"I wasn't worried about losing my singles match because I knew I would get another chance in doubles. As a player, all you can ask for is an opportunity and we made the most of it today," she said.

"We [the Canadian Fed Cup team] are very excited because we mesh so well," added the jubilant Fichman, who celebrated with her teammates with an on-court huddle and a party in Kiev following the tie.

Fichman has not won any major titles on the women's circuit thus far, but she has played the best tennis of her career at the Fed Cup.

Sharon Fichman

"There are many players like Sharon that seem to thrive in the Fed Cup atmosphere of playing for your country, but not necessarily doing as well in individual tournaments. Tennis is more supportive in the team environment at the Fed Cup. All the girls practice together and cheer each other on. What made Sharon's results impressive was that she won against a higher ranked player and on the road. Tsurenko, despite the support of her home country fans, faltered against Sharon," said tennis commentator Rennae Stubbs, who played the Fed Cup for Australia.

Given that Canada has played the Fed Cup without top seed Aleksandra Wozniak, who has been recovering from shoulder surgery since last September, Fichman was selected by Bruneau for the Fed Cup as the second seeded Canadian and earned her spot on the team in 2013 with her dramatic wins.

The 22- year-old is the first Jewish player to play the Fed Cup for Canada since Vicki Berner of Vancouver from 1964-68. Fichman has an impressive Fed Cup won/loss record of 22-7 over 23 ties since she started playing Fed Cup in 2005. She finished her junior career ranked fifth in the world in 2006, winning the prestigious Orange Bowl junior title in 2003.

Fichman was born in Toronto two years after her parents immigrated to Canada from Israel in 1988. Her parents moved to Israel after leaving Romania in 1983.

Fichman started playing tennis at age five following her brother Thomas, who was a top Canadian player in the 14-and-under category. She is the youngest athlete at age 14 to win a gold medal at the 2005 Maccabiah Games in Israel.

Should Jesse Levine play Davis Cup for Canada in the World Group semi-finals in September, Fichman and Levine would become the first Canadian Jewish man and woman to play Davis and the Fed Cup in the same year since 1968.

It's Game On for annual road hockey tournament

Compiled by CJN Staff

The Prosserman JCC at the Sherman Campus will host the 2nd annual Game On Road Hockey Tournament on June 23.

Proceeds from the event will support summer camps and sports programs for children dealing with pediatric disabilities and illnesses. Last year's inaugural tournament featured hundreds of participants and raised more than $50,000.

The tournament features several youth divisions and one for adults. Participants will enjoy family activities, great hockey action and a variety of entertainment. Team and individual prizes will be awarded. Last year's top fundraiser won a trip for two to Florida to watch an NHL game in a private suite.

"The first tournament was simply amazing in terms of the experience had by so many participants and the results it produced through fundraising and sponsorship. It's also so unique to see kids helping kids. We can't wait for June," said tournament co-chair Michelle Zaldin.

The 2012 Game On video featured several prominent people in the world of sports, finance and politics, including NHL coaching legend Mike Keenan and Environment Minister Peter Kent. This year's video will feature ESPN's Dan Shulman, Paul Godfrey of Postmedia and others.

For more information or to register online, please visit the Game On web site at gameonrh.com or inquire by email at cageneral@chailifeline.org.

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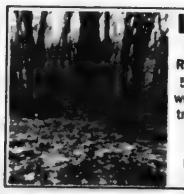

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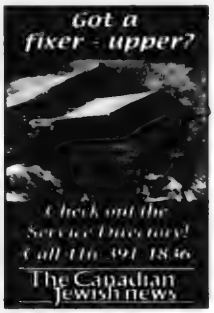

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Caissie Levy
is making Canada proud on Broadway

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

Caissie Levy describes herself on Twitter as a Canadian New Yorker, which suits her perfectly.

Although the talented performer grew up in Hamilton, Ont., she's been rooted in the Big Apple for more than a decade, because Levy just so happens to be one of Canada's most in-demand exports on Broadway.

The 32-year-old's Broadway credits include leading roles in *Hair*, *Hairspray* and last year's *Ghost: The Musical*. She also starred as the green-skinned Elphaba in the Los Angeles company of *Wicked*. Despite having lived a good chunk of her life south of the border, Levy says she still misses her native Canada.

"It's funny because I grew up in Hamilton and I moved to New York at 19, so my entire adult life has been in New York," she says. "So I don't know Toronto all that well – like I actually don't know my way around, even though a lot of my friends and family still live there.

"But I miss just Canadianisms in general. I still say 'eh' constantly, so that's like the dead giveaway to Americans… But I miss Tim Hortons, that's something I miss. I miss the general vibe of Canada and Ontario specifically. It's a welcoming place – it's so multicultural."

Both of her parents were singers and musicians, so Levy grew up surrounded by music. As a family, the Levys constantly drove to Toronto from Hamilton to catch the latest musical theatre shows. "Everything we did as a family involved music, so I think from a very early age I always loved singing, I always loved acting, so I got put into those lessons and started doing plays from the time I was eight," she reveals. "Just community theatre things, nothing professional."

The Hamilton native landed her first professional gig – a U.S. national tour of *Rent* – just a week after graduating acting school, at the tender age of 21. "It was pretty surreal because I grew up worshipping that show, and I actually remember I saw it in Toronto and I was just obsessed," Levy says. "And I couldn't believe what I was seeing, and I just connected so much to the story."

Being on tour introduced her to life on the road and performing every night. "It was a huge honour, and I think, had I realized what a big deal it was at the time, it would have freaked me out," Levy laughs. "But because I was so young and just so excited, I just kind of went with it and jumped into it and had the best time."

Levy made her Broadway debut playing Penny in the Tony Award-winning *Hairspray*. "I remember as soon as the lights went off I just thought, 'I can't believe I'm on Broadway after all these years of dreaming about it. This came true,'" Levy says. "It was incredible."

She adds: "It was a real blessing because I got to have my big-time Broadway debut in a role that I've been quite comfortable in. So even though I was nervous, I knew I could kind of rely on the fact that it wasn't a brand-new role, which was nice."

Her next major role on Broadway was Sheila in 2009's critically acclaimed revival of *Hair*. "I've been really fortunate to relate to a lot of my characters on various levels, but I guess if I had to pick the one I relate to the most it would be Sheila in *Hair*," says Levy. "She's very independent, very outspoken, very passionate and a very emotional person."

The following year, mega producer Cameron Mackintosh brought *Hair* to London's West End with most of the Broadway cast reprising their roles – including Levy. Near the end of the show's U.K. run, she scored an audition for *Ghost: The Musical*, a stage adaptation of the Oscar-winning movie. Levy admits she didn't know what to think about the project at first, but after hearing that the original screenwriter was adapting the show and that rock legends Glen Ballard and Dave Stewart were involved, she knew the play was in good hands. Levy eventually scored the gig and got to originate the role of Molly Jensen in the West End in 2011 and on Broadway the following year.

"I was actually travelling with my now-husband at the time I got the job, so we moved back to the U.K. for another year and a half," she says. "And originating the role was another huge honour, a huge learning experience, a huge challenge. Just kind of starting from scratch… and getting the words on the page and then transforming that into a fully realized person without any blueprint. It was very unnerving but so creatively satisfying."

So what's next for the hardworking performer? She's starring in a four-person musical called *Murder Ballad*, premiering off-Broadway this month. Levy says the immersive nature of the new show is different from anything she's ever done before.

"There's no actual stage," she reveals. "There's actually a bar that's been built in the Union Square Theater. So the audience sits at tables and can order drinks from the bar, which is also part of our set. And the action of the show takes place on their tables, around their tables and chairs, on the bar, up the aisles. So it's really innovative, really in-your-face."

Levy is also looking to nab more film and TV credits. "You know, theatre is my home and I'll always love it, and I'll always want to be on Broadway and off-Broadway and work in theatres around the country. But it's also a hard lifestyle to lead when you're 50 and 60 or when you want to have a child.

"If those things are in my future, it would be nice to get some film work and some television work under my belt just to not have to do eight shows a week. 'Cause that's incredibly tiring," she laughs. "But at this stage of my life, it's wonderful."

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אז אני צפונית

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טלי מחליטה להבריז לי ולנסוע לה לישראל, אז אני נזכרת בעדי. ידידה חביבה שלי שמשום מה, לא ממש יוצא לנו להיפגש. וזה מוזר, כי היא כל כך אצילית, ולא רכלנית ולא אגוצנטרית. אני די נרגשת מהפגישה.

אני: עדיל"ה, מתוקה שלי! כמה זמן שלא התראנו!

עדי: כן.

אני: חודשים, נכון? נורא התגעגעתי. אז מה קורה איתך? ספרי, ספרי הכל.

עדי: אין חדש.

אני (נזכרת פתאום למה בעצם לא כל כך שמרתי על קשר): לא? איך הילדים?

עדי: בסדר.

אני (היא שתקנית כרונית. היא לא מוציאה יותר משתי מילים למשפט. לכן זכרתי שהיא לא רכלנית ולא אגוצנטרית. על מה נדבר? על מה? אני מתה פה!): ...יופי. אז מה, עדינקה (נו. נו!) אה...איך...איך בעלך המתוק? (המתוק?!)

עדי: כרגיל.

אני (מחניקה התנשפות יאוש): איך הסטרט-אפ שלו? הוא עובד קשה? ככה זה בהתחלה. אני מתארת לעצמי שאת המון לבד עם הילדים, זה בטח לא קל.

עדי: זה בסדר.

אני (מותשת כמו בשיעורי הספורט המפרכים בתיכון. אני ממש מזיעה פה): אז מה את עושה כל היום, קניות ושטויות? בטח לא. את נראית לי דווקא טיפוס של מוזיאונים. זוכרת שפעם הלכנו למוזיאון עם טלי? (אוי טלי אהובתי, מחמל נפשי הקשקשן. איפה את, פטפטנית יפה שלי, חזרי אלי מהטיול בישראל!).

עדי: כן, זוכרת.

אני (טוב אני מזיעה, אני רצוצה, איבדתי את הרצון לחיות, והכל כדי להתעדכן במה היא עושה בזמנה הפנוי. שותקת! שותקת. זה מה שהיא עושה! ניסיון אחרון. אסור בשום אופן לשאול שאלות של - כן או לא. אוקיי): מה דעתך על קיית מידלטון? אגב, שמעתי שהיא חצי יהודיה. את יודעת ששבעים אחוז מהקנדים רוצים שתהיה לה בת? לדעתי יהיה לה בן, מה את אומרת?

טלי: מה זה משנה?

אני (הצלחתי! הצלחתי! היא שאלה אותי שאלה בחזרה. עכשיו אוכל להזיע על תשובה מפורטת): אני מייד אסביר לך מה זה משנה. רק רציתי לומר לך שאני נורא שמחה שנפגשנו לקפה, ושחייבים לעשות את זה לעיתים יותר קרובות!

עדי: לא בטוח. האמת היא...שאת מדברת המון, זה קצת מייגע...

אני (עשר מילים ברצף! עשר! יש סיכוי. יש עתיד. מזל שלא התיאשתי!)

CHANT DOUBLE CHOCOLATE COOKIES

2 sticks cold, unsalted butter, cubed
1¾ c sugar • 2 lg eggs
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¼ tsp. coarse salt • 1 tsp. baking powder
2½ c semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. In food processor, combine butter and sugar. Beat together on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 2-3 min. Blend in eggs scraping down bowl as needed. Mix in cocoa powder. Add flour, salt, baking powder until incorporated. Fold in chocolate chips until ingredients are well combined. Divide dough into 12 equal pieces. Roll each portion into a ball; flatten slightly into a disc. Place on baking sheets, few inches apart. Bake 16-20 min. Cool on baking sheets 5-10 min. and then to a wire rack.

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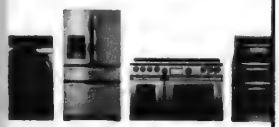

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On cjnews.com

The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Historian Edgar Feuchtwanger who talks about his experience growing up with Adolph Hitler as his neighbour, the subject he addresses in his latest book.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has restituted a valuable Nazi-looted artwork that has been in its collection since 1969 to the descendants of the German Jewish family that owned it before World War II.

Radio-Canada issued a correction to a report by its Middle East correspondent for her use of the word "attack" in referring to the Mavi Marmara incident two years ago.

Leaning over a table for an hour-long interview at the offices of *Les Actualités*, the weekly Côte des Neiges-based newspaper he has overseen for the last 25 years, Victor Afriat does not seem as busy as he actually is. Yet, in reality, Afriat never stops much. At age 67 (this month), the Moroccan-born and Paris-raised Afriat, along with a staff of nine, publishes one of the most successful biweekly – and bilingual – newspapers in the city.

Have you met holy?

Parshat Kedoshim, which we read a couple of weeks ago, tells the Jewish People how to be holy.

First, it states, be holy because "I [God] am holy." Then the Torah goes through a litany of instructions on how to be holy, the first one being honouring your father and mother. Other instructions include respecting the aged and loving thy neighbour, as well as directives less predicated on interaction between people, such as the prohibition against tattooing your body.

What is it to be holy? What is the pursuit all about? Do you know when you're in the presence of a holy person?

I might know some holy people. They are not self-evident, mostly, and Judaism is slow to call someone holy. Rabbi Judah the Prince is called *Rabbeinu Hakadosh*, for example, but that title is rare. But the people I consider holy don't gossip, or do so very infrequently. *Lashon harah* – gossiping – is very unholy. They don't embarrass others, particularly in public. The Talmud says that embarrassing someone publicly is like killing them. They don't waste time, and even when they are silly and fanciful, the holy people I know are filled with elation and laugh like a youngster. For them, silliness is learning, just as everything else is.

Urban Writer
Avrum Rosensweig

If I'm right and these people are indeed holy, one of my rules is to say little when I'm around them. Rather, I try to listen closely and ask appropriate questions. I am quieter, because they make me know how little I know.

Furthermore, holy people seem to have a type of clarity that they often preface with self-doubt, like, "But when we speak about life, so much of it is uncertain, so it's hard to say."

To me, that doubt might prove their holiness, as there seems to be something more authentic and genuine in doubt than in certainty. We all have family or friends who talk incessantly. Sometimes they're insightful and other times they speak as if fact-checking is obsolete. They don't give you a moment to consider the value of their statements and ideas. Holy women, men and children don't yammer. They like nothing more than to attach themselves to a colourful idea with dimension and facets, but their words are measured like flour for a cake, and more often than not, they make a lot of sense.

I don't know if the people I'm thinking of are holy or not. They do everything they can to reject admiration. It annoys and embarrasses them. And they do have personality blemishes, despite a cultural and religious belief, or desire, that the holy be without pockmarks of character.

I would say the opposite. The holy seem to suffer a lot from angst, and while their happy times are like cool water, you know they know about the endless suffering in the world. This angst can create intimacy challenges and a plethora of other social and personal challenges. Avraham, Yitzchak, Ya'akov, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah weren't perfect. The holy are scarred.

God tells us to be holy. He shows us the road to holiness, including, "*Ve'ahavta l'raycha kamocha*" – "love your neighbor as you love yourself." But holy never lets us know for sure if it's there. Humility is sewn into holiness, as is anguish and anger.

Those whom I believe to be holy may not be, and those whom I look at dubiously may be one of the 39 righteous in all generations. Or not.

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This Week

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Kosher chefs do battle with knives and flames. *Page 13*

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Business

Architecture is an international business for Jack Diamond. *Page 37*

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Netanyahu lands in China

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, speaks to businessmen during a gala dinner in Shanghai on May 6. Netanyahu is on a five-day official visit to China. He was scheduled to meet with China's top leaders on Wednesday and Thursday. ***Please see page 33.***

Effort underway to rescue The CJN

CJN Staff

TORONTO — The board of directors of *The CJN* has launched an all-out effort to save the print edition of the newspaper.

In response to the "outpouring of concern and the expressions of support," as mentioned by *CJN* president Donald Carr in his note to readers on May 2, the board last week appointed one of its members, Marty Goldberg, a well-known community activist and philanthropist in Toronto, to be its "chief rescue officer" leading the overall effort to save the print editions in both Toronto and Montreal.

Stanley Plotnick, a past president of Federation CJA in Montreal and Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA, will work with Goldberg specifically in relation to the Montreal edition.

Over the past years, the paper had outperformed most other print media in stanching relative revenue declines. Despite far-reaching cost-control measures undertaken by management and policies that minimized the erosion in advertising revenue, the paper could not withstand the negative impact of digital advertising on print media.

Continued on page 24

To our readers

Since my message in *The CJN*'s May 2 edition regarding the future of the paper, the board of directors has continued to work diligently, and there are substantial positive developments that have taken place. You will see the story elsewhere in this edition.

Some committed members of the community have agreed to provide part of our required financing. Others are being contacted. We are optimistic – though not yet sure – that we will be able to obtain what we need to achieve our goal of maintaining a *Canadian Jewish News* print newspaper, including a viable publication for Montreal, as well as strengthening the Internet edition.

In addition, it will be essential that our advertisers stay the course and that our subscribers assist. If we are to be successful, practicality dictates that it will be necessary for us to increase subscription rates to a realistic level immediately.

Many of you have told us, by telephone, by email, by letters and face to face, that you will gladly pay an increase. It would be your contribution to the well-being of *The CJN* – your paper.

It is also critical that we increase the number of subscribers, and we plan to embark on a campaign to achieve that.

We are working against the clock, but we are determined that we must succeed for the sake of the community.

Donald Carr, President
The Canadian Jewish News

Bamidbar
Candlelighting: 8:11
Havdalah: 9:16
Greater Toronto Area

Canada seeks technology co-operation with Israel – please see page 34

CANADA

Ex-CJNer Honoured

SUDBURY, Ont. — Former *CJN* reporter and columnist Laura Stricker, 26, won the Larry Smith Award for novice reporting at the Ontario Newspaper Awards in Waterloo, Ont., April 27. The *Sudbury Star* reporter, who was a *CJN* staff reporter and What's New columnist, won for three stories: a profile of Sudbury's small Jewish community, a piece about an abusive school bus driver, and a story on firefighting in Sudbury. Another ex-*CJN* staffer, Rita Poliakov, 25, the *Star*'s former police reporter, was a finalist for spot news coverage of the Elliott Lake mall disaster.

Natives Visit Israel

WINNIPEG — Ron Evans, chief of the Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba, led his second annual youth leadership development mission to Israel April 29 to May 6. Under the auspices of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs and the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, the 30 young people studied Israeli culture and society, visited Christian and Jewish holy sites, studied immigrant absorption, and skated on the ice rink at the Canada Centre in Metulla. The band raised funds for the trip through initiatives, such as a golf tournament, silent auctions, a raffle and pancake breakfasts. Evans hopes to run the trips for 10 years.

WORLD

Fraud Arrest

LOS ANGELES — The FBI arrested a Los Angeles man who allegedly operated a Ponzi scheme targeting the city's Iranian Jews. Shervin Davatgarzadeh, also known as Shervin Neman, was arrested last month on suspicion of defrauding $3 million from mostly Jewish Iranian-American investors. Police allege he posed as a hedge-fund manager promising to invest in Los Angeles real estate. He's suspected of illegally using the investments to pay for a lavish lifestyle that included jewelry and luxury cars.

Record Auction

NEW YORK — An auction of the 500-piece Judaica collection owned by philanthropist Michael Steinhardt was the "most valuable auction of Judaica ever held," Sotheby's said. The April 29 auction of nearly the entire collection brought in some $8.5 million, exceeding presale estimates by $6 million. The Israel Museum and New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art jointly bought a medieval text of Maimonides' Mishneh Torah for an undisclosed amount that was more than the $2.9 million it sold for in 1989.

Mom Sues Cosmetic Firm Over Ad Claim

NEW YORK — An Orthodox Jewish woman is suing Lancome cosmetics, claiming its 24-hour makeup does not last as long as advertised and thus prevents her from looking good all Shabbat.

In her lawsuit, Rorie Weisberg of Monsey, N.Y., said Lancome's Teint Idole Ultra 24H foundation does not last 24 hours and that the company is practising false advertising, a violation of New York State business law, the *New York Post* reported.

Weisberg's lawsuit says her son is having a bar mitzvah next month and that she tried the Lancome foundation in advance to see if she could look good in her makeup for the entire 25-hour celebration. According to *Halachah*, makeup cannot be removed and replaced during the Sabbath.

"The 24-hour claim was central to plaintiff's purchase decision, as a long-lasting makeup assists with her dual objectives of compliance with religious law and enhancement to her natural appearance," the suit says. The suit seeks unspecified damages from Lancome and its parent firm, L'Oreal, for Weisberg and other makeup purchasers, as well as a "corrective advertising campaign."

L'Oreal said the lawsuit has no merit and that Lancome stands behind its products and will fight it.

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Canada House to serve diverse community

Community centre dedicated in Jerusalem

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Dignitaries from the government of Canada and the municipality of Jerusalem gathered in Jerusalem last week to dedicate "Canada House," a community centre funded largely with donations from Canadian Jews.

Located in the Morasha neighbourhood of Jerusalem, Canada House will serve a diverse population with programming geared to young people, recent immigrants, the elderly and other local residents. The $4-million refurbishment is a project of the Jerusalem Foundation, a non-profit organization with a branch in Canada.

"Canada House will be dedicated to the many Canadians who share the values of coexistence, culture and community with the Jerusalem Foundation. The newly established Canada House will also recognize and honour the warm friendship of Canada towards the city of Jerusalem and her diverse population," the Jerusalem Foundation in Canada (JFIC) stated in a news release.

Continued on page 19

From left, Julia Koschitzky, Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, and Canada's Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver dedicate the Canada House community and cultural centre in Jerusalem.

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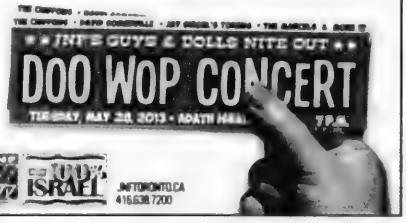

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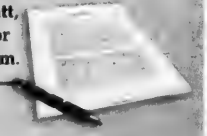

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From the editor's desk...

At the core of the moral, legal, historical and emotional absurdity of referring to the eastern portion of Jerusalem as occupied territory is the term's insidious, malevolent separation of the Jewish People from the only remnant of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.

The only time in history that Jews did not live in the eastern portion of Jerusalem – the Old City – was the 19-year period between Israel's War of Independence in 1948 and The Six Day War in 1967.

The proposal by the United Nations in 1947 to partition British Mandatory Palestine into an Arab and Jewish state did not encompass the city of Jerusalem. The United Nations proposed a special set of rules for Jerusalem, namely, that it become a uniquely internationalized city.

The Jews of Mandatory Palestine acceded to the plan for partition. They did not accede to the plan for Jerusalem.

The Arabs of Mandatory Palestine acceded neither to the plan for partition nor to the plan for Jerusalem. Nor did the Arab countries of the Arab League accept either of the plans.

They could not abide even a sliver of land in their midst where the Jews would be sovereign.

The Arab world did not wait for the British to quit Palestine before attacking the Jews. With the exhortation of the Nazi Haj Amin Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, to kill the Jews still ringing in their ears, Arab fighters launched their war of genocide against the Palestinian Jews, even as the votes for partition were being counted by the members of the UN General Assembly.

Having rejected the compromise of partition and the idea of coexistence with the Jews, the Arabs also failed in their violent attempt to make the partition plan a moot point. The Jews defeated the charging Arab irregular forces of Palestine and the armed forces of the surrounding Arab states.

When the armistice that ended the fighting in 1949 was proclaimed, King Abdullah of Jordan was in control of what we call the West Bank (of the Jordan River), included in which was east Jerusalem and the Old City of Jerusalem and the Western Wall of the Second Temple.

It was always King Abdullah's intention to add the West Bank to his own Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan. Apart from Great Britain, no other country thought this was a good idea. Ironically, for the sake of a tranquil border with Jordan, Israel might have acquiesced in that armistice configuration, had Abdullah's grandson, Hussein, not joined in the fighting against the Jewish state in 1967. Despite the pleas of the Israeli government to stay out of the war, the young King Hussein attacked at various points along his border with his 19-year-old western neighbour. Notably, Jordanian snipers fired across the no-man's land separating east from west Jerusalem.

On June 7, 1967 (the 28th day of Iyar), the last day of the fighting of the Six Day War, Israel recaptured the Old City in east Jerusalem. The army of the sovereign Jewish state had returned to the Old City, to the Western Wall.

Jews from all walks of life and from all corners of the world were also about to return there, where they had always been, except for those 19 years prior to 1967.

We celebrate that day of reunification as Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day).

It is not a celebration of sanctimonious self-righteousness. It is not a celebration of malice or hatred toward others. It is simply a celebration of touching and holding and cherishing the fulfilment of a promise.

In his masterful work *Israel: An Echo of Eternity*, the late, beloved theologian and scholar Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel elegiacally expresses the religious, historical, emotional essence of the Jewish People's connection to Jerusalem.

"For more than 3,000 years we have been in love with Jerusalem," he writes. "She occupied our hearts, filled our prayers, pervaded our dreams. Continually mourning her loss, our grief was not subdued when celebrating festivities, when arranging a dinner table, when painting our homes. No meal was concluded without imploring: "Build Jerusalem speedily in your own days..." (He writes so much more. It is absolutely imperative reading.)

To be sure, there is indeed a great deal to discuss regarding all aspects of coexistence arrangements in eastern Jerusalem and the Old City between Palestinians and Israelis. But to say that eastern Jerusalem and the Old City and, of course, the Western Wall are occupied territory is absurd to the point of grotesque.

This point must be made over and over again. And we must teach it to our children so that they – and we – will be entirely resolute with this truth.

The prophet Isaiah would have wanted us to feel this way too. As he once spoke and wrote, "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent/ And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest."

We must not allow Israel's enemies to separate truth from history.

Happy Jerusalem Day. –*MBD*

SeeJN

THE PRESIDENT AND THE POPE

During a visit last week to the Vatican, Israeli President Shimon Peres invited Pope Francis to visit Israel. The Pope accepted the invitation "with willingness and joy," a Vatican spokesperson said, but there was no indication when a trip would be made. "I am expecting you in Jerusalem, not just me but the whole country of Israel," Peres told the Pope after 30 minutes of private talks in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.

[Israel Sun photo]

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May is Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

The history of Ontario Jews provides insight into all immigrant groups in Canada, according to Irving Abella.

The author, historian and York University professor shared his thoughts on Ontario and Canadian Jewry as keynote speaker for the launch of the province's second annual Jewish Heritage Month at Toronto's Lipa Green Centre April 30.

Dara Solomon, director of the 40-year-old Ontario Jewish Archives, said she was excited to be launching a new photo exhibition titled *Being Jewish in Ontario: A Pictorial Celebration.*

The exhibit was co-organized by the Ontario Jewish Archives and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). It focuses on five aspects: community builders, culture and leisure, ritual and observance, teaching and learning, and tikkun olam.

It will be on display at 10 venues over the month, including several public libraries, Jewish community centres and Vaughan City Hall. Other events during the month include walking tours, talks, performances, and a series of exhibits at Baycrest.

Abella said Jewish students know next to nothing about the history of Jews in Canada. "That is a shame, because it's fascinating, colourful, important, and deserves to be known."

He suggested that the Jewish community's greatest contribution to the province may have been that it "paved the path for the culturally diverse society we have become."

Ontario is the first "and hopefully not the last" province to celebrate Jewish Heritage Month, said Joel Reitman, a board member of both UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and CIJA. May is also Jewish American Heritage Month in the United States.

Irving Abella speaks at the launch of Jewish Heritage Month. *[Leigh Brown photo]*

Eglinton-Lawrence Liberal MPP Mike Colle, the driving force behind Bill 17, which declared Jewish Heritage Month and was passed in February 2012, said he grew up in a Jewish area at College and Grace streets. His mother did piecework on Spadina Avenue and later was employed by a high-end Jewish tailor for 25 years.

Colle, a former history teacher with an Italian family background but a passion for Jewish history, reflected on the accomplishments of Jews across Ontario.

"We've got to make sure these stories are not forgotten," he said.

He cited as one example the late David Goldberg, a Hamilton lawyer and former RCAF pilot in World War II who was shot down over France. Goldberg walked back to England, signed up to fight again, and flew more than 235 missions in all.

Thornhill Tory MPP Peter Shurman, who co-sponsored Bill 17 with Colle and MPP Cheri Di Novo, said that his riding is home to the largest Jewish community in the province, he said.

Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of the federation, spoke of the Jewish community's "fervent desire to build community together."

Multiculturalism is the legacy of the early immigrants, Abella said. "If they could become fully Canadian and yet maintain their unique identity… then any minority could."

But the Jewish presence in Canada goes back at least 250 years, almost to the beginning of European settlement, Abella said.

In the War of 1812, every single Jew of military age enlisted to fight off the invading Americans, he noted. Among them were the first Jews in the British Empire to become officers.

The 1840s marked a high point in Jewish life in the province, with no restrictions, quotas or antisemitism, he said.

But Abella cautioned against romanticizing the past, citing a history of quotas, restrictions and antisemitism in the middle of the 20th century.

"It changed at the end of World War II with the help of sympathetic politicians and courts."

Ontario was the first province to adopt anti-discrimination laws in housing, he added.

For a full listing of Jewish Heritage Month events, go to jewishheritagemonth.ca.

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Speaker's venue shifted after police visit rabbi

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The U.S. woman at the centre of a controversy that saw a synagogue cancel her speaking engagement is warning Canadians to be vigilant over police infringement of free speech.

Pamela Geller, who was slated to speak May 13 at the Chabad @ Flamingo Synagogue accused York Region Police (YRP) of "enforcing sharia [Islamic] law. That's what this is, that under blasphemy laws you cannot criticize or offend Islam. That's shocking."

Meir Weinstein

Geller is executive director of Stop Islamification of America, which opposes construction of a mosque near Ground Zero in New York. The group has also sponsored anti-jihad advertisements in subways and buses. Her critics accuse her of Islamophobia.

Last week, Insp. Ricky Veerappan, head of YRP's diversity, equity and inclusion section, along with members of the force's hate crimes unit, visited Rabbi Mendel Kaplan, spiritual leader of Chabad @ Flamingo, at the synagogue. The Jewish Defence League (JDL) had rented space in the synagogue for the event.

Veerappan said police told the rabbi they would reconsider his position as a volunteer chaplain with the force if the event went ahead as planned.

Veerappan did not respond to a request from *The CJN* for an interview and Rabbi Kaplan declined to comment. In a news release, YRP stated, "Free speech is the right of every citizen and YRP recognizes that. However, some of Ms. Geller's previous comments clearly conflict with the values of our organization and our continuous work to enhance relationships in all our diverse communities.

"Rabbi Kaplan's connection to Ms. Geller's event posed a concern for YRP as it would put our organization in conflict with our long-held position of inclusivity.

"Rabbi Kaplan decided to cancel Ms. Geller's appearance as it would place him in conflict with the values of our organization, which support a safe, welcoming and inclusive community for all."

Geller, however, said there is nothing in the record that would warrant police interference in a matter of public policy which should be protected by the right to free speech.

"There is a global jihad. We're not allowed to talk about it?" she asked.

Geller said some "Islamic-supremacist groups have tried to stop her in the United States. That's not new. What's new is law enforcement [doing it]. That's the really big difference."

Geller said the visit by police "intimidated" Rabbi Kaplan. "Religious leaders are not equipped to deal with that."

Rabbi Mendel Kaplan

Geller, who publishes the AtlasShrugs.com blog site, questioned Veerappan's statement that her presence would contradict the YRP's values. She said she speaks against gender apartheid, ethnic apartheid and Jew-hatred. "What exactly are his values?"

JDL director Meir Weinstein said the synagogue "caved in" to police intimidation. At worst, he said, police should have attended the lecture to see for themselves if there were any violations of the law.

Responding to the incident, columnist Salim Mansur published an open letter to YRP Chief Eric Jolliffe.

"I am appalled that in this day and age we continue to hear regularly how the liberal democratic tradition of Canada and the West is being systematically shredded by institutions sworn to protect it," he wrote.

"I submit your intentions might very well be of some merit as a guardian of law and order. But those pushing for preventing Ms. Geller from speaking by putting pressure on Rabbi Kaplan to deny the use of his synagogue for holding her event are people I know very well. These are people, Muslims as I am, who come from cultures that have no respect for individual rights and freedoms enshrined in our constitution, and while making home here in Canada have no respect for the culture of this country," Mansur added.

"They need to learn the culture of a free society, of a society that is open to debates and discussions however painful this might be to someone else's sensibilities. But if you concede to their demands, all that you would be doing is indulging them, heeding their wishes and threats, and slowly, intentionally or not, bending Canada's tradition in the direction of the ruined cultures of these people which they have brought with them and want to push into our society."

Geller's speaking engagement was shifted to the Toronto Zionist Centre.

It will mark her first visit to Toronto.

"What a welcome wagon," she said.

The Canadian Jewish news

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Jerusalem Day

Last week, in the Morasha district of downtown Jerusalem, a group of Canadians attended the dedication of a newly renovated community centre that will be a hub for social, educational and cultural services for all of the residents in the area.

The centre has been called Canada House by the Jerusalem Foundation, the non-profit agency started by the late former mayor of the city, Teddy Kollek, that spearheaded the project. The name attests to the fact that Canadian philanthropists have been the catalysts for the project and instrumental in providing its funding. (Please see the story on page 3)

It is fitting that the dedication of the new centre occurred merely days prior to Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day), the day set aside to commemorate and celebrate the reunification of east and west Jerusalem, the Old City with the new city, on the 28th day of Iyar, June 7, 1967.

The Jordanian army had expelled the Jewish community from the Old City 19 years earlier, during Israel's War of Independence, and brutishly tried to destroy all vestiges of Jewish life and history there. Synagogues were destroyed; burial places were desecrated. Disfiguring barbed wire fences cut the city into its two parts. Large, ugly cement slabs blocked any movement between the areas.

The barbed wire was taken down and the cement blocks were removed 46 years ago. The city was physically, geographically and municipally reunited. Since then, its modernization and beautification have continued unabated.

As poets, songwriters and travel writers have noted, Jerusalem is a golden city of unique, arresting beauty.

Its diverse peoples fill the streets with the sounds of movement, commerce, music, laughter, learning, discourse, argument and shouting.

But despite the city's sheer physical beauty, it aches and throbs with intra-communal tensions – Jew against Jew – and inter-societal tensions – Jew against Arab.

The city is not yet fully at peace, although that is our dream and our hope.

And that is partially why the Canada House project is so worthy of our commendation. It will become a meeting place where Jews and Arabs, haredi and non-haredi Jews, will come together to advance and improve their own respective lives. In the process they will meet each other. They will talk to each other. They may even befriend each other.

The millennial dream of the Jewish return to Zion has been fulfilled.

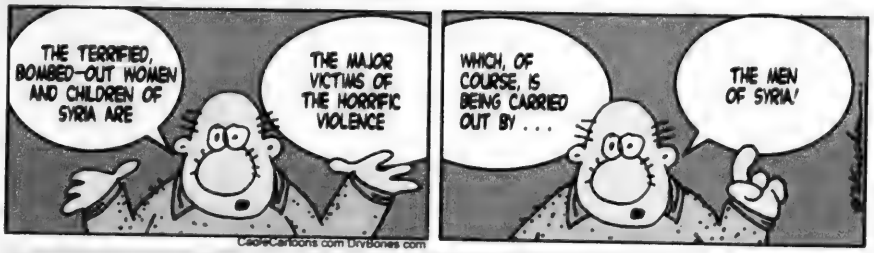
The millennial aspiration of Zion's restoration, however, is still unfinished. In truth, in a real and symbolic way, it must always be thus if we are to allow each generation through eternity to add its measure of love and devotion to that wondrous place.

Despite the ongoing task that remains, on the 46th celebration of Yom Yerushalayim, we shall take the prophet's words to heart and celebrate. "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her all you who love her."

25 years ago in *The CJN*

World Jewish Congress president Edgar Bronfman told a Montreal audience that Palestinians in the West Bank could have autonomy under a "loose confederation" with Israel rather than Jordan. He thought Palestinians would prefer such a link because of Israel's democratic freedoms, its better salaries and its beaches.

Dry Bones DEATH OF A SOCIETY


THE TERRIFIED, BOMBED-OUT WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF SYRIA ARE
THE MAJOR VICTIMS OF THE HORRIFIC VIOLENCE
WHICH, OF COURSE, IS BEING CARRIED OUT BY . . .
THE MEN OF SYRIA!
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Jewish Heritage Month

On behalf of the government of Ontario, it is my distinct pleasure to extend warm greetings to everyone marking Jewish Heritage Month.

I feel privileged to be premier of a province rooted in diversity, one of our government's core values. It is our differences that unite us and that define us as a vibrant, caring and inclusive society. I am proud of the Jewish Canadian community – and of the countless ways you continue to enrich our province and make it an even better place for people of every background to live.

I am honoured to join you in marking the second official Jewish Heritage Month, following the passage in the legislature of the Jewish Heritage Month Act, 2012. This is a time for reflection on the past and on the immense obstacles your community has overcome. But, even more importantly, it is a time to rejoice in your remarkable triumphs – and to look with optimism to the promise of an even brighter future for Jewish Canadians, people of great courage and resiliency.

Please accept my very best wishes for a Jewish Heritage Month that is both memorable and uplifting – a true celebration of your community's inspirational contributions to Ontario.

Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

• • •

Youngest rabbi at Beth Torah

I would like to wish a hearty mazal tov to Beth Torah Congregation in Toronto on its 50th anniversary (Shuls celebrate special anniversaries, April 18). However, I would like to mention that although Rabbi Yossi Sapirman is one of the youngest rabbis in the shul's history, there was a rabbi younger than him. My late uncle, Rabbi Solomon Z. Domb, became rabbi of Beth Torah at the tender age of 23, although his 6-foot-3 large-framed stature may have made him appear to be older than he actually was. He served not only as the shul's rabbi but also as its chazzan. My uncle was a child prodigy and received his Orthodox smichah in New York, in addition to studying chazzanut under the personal guidance of world-renowned Cantor David Koussevitzky. He had a wonderful strong tenor voice that I greatly miss to this day. He became the rabbi and cantor at Beth Torah in 1975 and served until 1980. He then went on to become chazzan at Beth Tikvah Synagogue for a short period of time until he started his own synagogue, the first and only of its kind in Thornhill, B'nai Shalom North Congregation.

Julie Domb Gonik
Thornhill, Ont.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Rabbi Kelman's visionary concept

The loss of *The CJN* is a huge loss. Over the past two years, Rabbi Jay Kelman, in his column, has alerted us to perhaps the most critical need facing our community today: the threat to Jewish continuity. His columns detail the enormous financial burden on parents of Jewish day school students and what this means for our future. His visionary concept of "Birthright Education" is imaginative and brilliant. He proposes pragmatic solutions to make this education eventually self-sustaining. In the column "Four questions about Jewish education" (April 4), Rabbi Kelman challenges us all to address this now, before a generation is lost. In time, it may benefit many communities around the globe. But we need to start here and now. This is a project truly worthy of our time and effort.

Linda Paton
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

The CJN feels like home

I am so sad to hear that *The CJN* is planning to stop publishing! It has been a staple in my life for so many years, a Jewish Canadian institution. Our family would always look forward to reading it each Shabbat. I have always found the paper to be replete with fascinating articles and columns. I could always read it and find mention of the schools, institutions, shuls and people that have been a part of my emotional landscape for my entire life. Where else could you read columns from your high school history teacher, university professor and rabbi alongside reports about the important issues affecting the Jewish world? I read a good Jewish paper in New York, but for me, *The CJN* will always feel like home.

Janine Muller Sherr
New York, N.Y.

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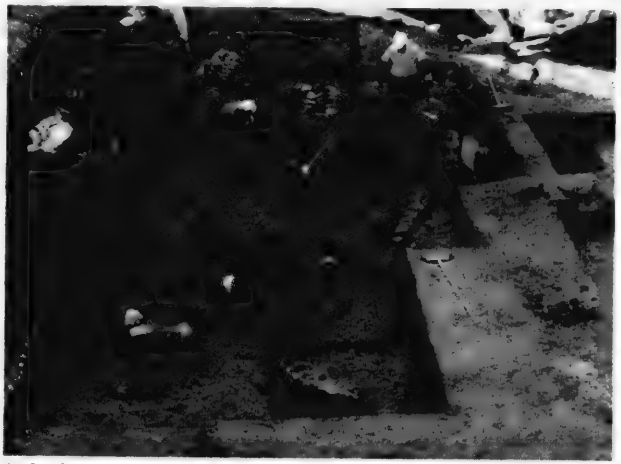
Archeological discoveries reveal Jerusalem's history

Yom Yerushalyim, Jerusalem Day, 28th day of Iyar

Judy Lash Balint
JNS.org

Tens of thousands visit the Old City on Jerusalem Day, May 8 this year, the anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem during the 1967 Six Day War. While celebrations go on above ground, new excavations underneath and around the Old City are being uncovered and opened to the public, peeling back layers of history and expanding understanding of events in the centre of the Jewish universe.

Old City expert Rabbi Barnea Selevan, a veteran licensed tour guide and co-director of Foundation Stone, which explores and shares Israel's heritage, is excited about a series of archeological digs taking place in the vicinity of the Western Wall. For the past several years, the Western Wall Heritage Foundation has sponsored excavations at the back of the plaza, and workers have uncovered part of a Roman colonnaded street dating back to the second century CE.



Archeologists and workers from the Israel Antiquities Authority excavate ruins in the Old City of Jerusalem from the Second Temple period. ***[IAA photo]***

But what was ignored until recently, Rabbi Selevan says, are several small stone buildings, overgrown and blocked by material from the dig.

"When I look down from the street in front of the Chabad building several levels above the site, those old walls are the most exciting thing I see," Rabbi Selevan told *JNS.org*. "There's no question they're from First Temple times."

Seals from the Temple were found nearby. The walls, according to some archeologists, are from homes that were abandoned but not destroyed by the Roman onslaught on Jerusalem in 70 CE.

Rabbi Selevan noted that the streets exposed at the back of the plaza lead to the Temple Mount in the Robinson's Arch area and provide evidence that the Romans stayed in Jerusalem and used the Temple Mount during the early Roman period.

Plans call for further excavations underneath the plaza and then to open the underground area, much as the Western Wall tunnels have been open to the public since the 1990s. Rabbi Selevan said excavations are continuing in the tunnel area too, and beautiful rooms with ornate capitols from First and Second Temple times are being prepared to be open to the public.

In today's Jewish Quarter above the Western Wall Plaza, Rabbi Selevan described the "delicious" discovery of a "fancy Roman bathhouse" two stories underground on Ha'omer Street, which was found in the course of construction of a new mikvah (ritual bath) for men. "In all likelihood, the bathhouse was used by the Roman 10th Legion – the same guys who thought they were wiping out the Jews," he said.

Yuval Baruch, Jerusalem district archeologist at the Israel Antiquities Authority, says that despite the extensive archeological excavations in the Jewish Quarter, not even one building has been discovered there so far that belonged to the Roman legion.

"The absence of such a find led to the conclusion that Aelia Capitolina, the Roman city established after the destruction of Jerusalem, was small and limited in area," he told *JNS.org*.

"The new find, together with other discoveries of recent years, shows that the city was considerably larger than we previously estimated," Baruch said. "Information about Aelia Capitolina is extremely valuable and can contribute greatly to research on Jerusalem because it was that city that determined the character and general appearance of ancient Jerusalem and [the city's appearance] as we know it today. The shape of the city has determined the outline of its walls and the location of the gates to this very day."

The trauma of the Roman plunder of Jerusalem is heavily evidenced at several locations in the City of David, located a few hundred yards from the Western Wall to the southeast of the Dung Gate.

Aharon Horowitz, director of Megalim, the Institute of Jerusalem Studies of the City of David, points out that the drainage channel under the Herodian-era street in what is known as the Pilgrims Ascent area of the City of David was used by Jews hiding from the Romans. A Roman sword was found in the channel.

According to University of Haifa archeologist Ronny Reich, who has worked in the area for decades, the smashed paving stones indicate that the Romans broke through the street to the channel below to drag out the Jews who tried to flee toward the Kidron Valley in the last days of the siege.

Over the past year, the ascent has been opened and visitors can walk along the Herodian Road to the southern wall excavations at The Jerusalem Archaeological Park - Davidson Center.

Across the road from the City of David Visitors Center is the Givati Parking Lot site, the largest archeological excavation in Jerusalem. "Every day there are new finds here," Horowitz told *JNS.org*. "There are remains here of every strata of Jerusalem history."

One of the most magnificent is the floor of a building considered by some experts to be the first-century palace of Queen Helena of Adiabene, who converted to Judaism. A huge Roman mansion from the third century was also uncovered in the former parking lot, and hundreds of Roman and Byzantine artifacts have been unearthed inside, including a gold earring inlaid with pearls and stones. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently chose a facsimile of the earrings to present to American First Lady Michelle Obama when she visited Israel with her husband.

Besides the digs and excavations below today's city, significant conservation and restoration have been completed on the Old City walls in recent years. Over the past six years, the Jerusalem Development Company, the Prime Minister's Office and the Israel Antiquities Authority have spruced up and restored all four kilometres of the city walls built in the 16th century by Sultan Suleiman, and all seven gates of the Old City. The last time any rehabilitation work was done on the walls was in the 1920s, during the British Mandate period.

A tiny, button-sized object of fired clay stamped with a two-line Aramaic inscription meaning "Pure for God" is one of the most intriguing archeological finds of recent years in Israel.
[Israel Antiquities Authority photo]

Last October, a delegation from the Jewish National Fund of Canada dedicated a park containing a restoration of the grounds in front of a stretch of the Old City wall, south of Jaffa Gate.

At the ceremony, Shuka Dorfman, head of the Israel Antiquities Authority noted, "These impressive walls attest to the building and destruction of seven different regimes, and include remnants from the First Temple Period. Our preservation activities concentrated on the park's main promenade and on the antiquities along the wall."

Today, visitors can walk along an accessible path along the wall between Jaffa Gate and Zion Gate, touch the ancient stones, and peer into the small caves dotted along the base of the wall.

Other discoveries of a much smaller nature will end up in museum displays, but still tell a story about Jewish life in Temple times. A tiny, button-sized object of fired clay stamped with a two-line Aramaic inscription is one of the most intriguing finds of recent years.

According to archeologists Eli Shukron of the IAA and Ronny Reich, the meaning of the inscription is "Pure for God." Like a modern-day kashrut seal, the object was probably used to mark products or objects that were brought to the Temple and had to be ritually pure.

"This stamped impression is probably the kind referred to in the Mishnah," Shukron said. "To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time that such an object or anything similar to it was discovered in an archeological excavation, and it constitutes direct archeological evidence of the activity on the Temple Mount and the workings of the Temple during the Second Temple period."

Culinary comforts on Yom Yerushalayim

I tasted my first artichoke in Jerusalem when I was 19. I had a *yerushalmi* boyfriend who decided to cook dinner for me. The first course was artichokes, with a lemony dipping sauce. I had never seen an artichoke before. Sitting on my plate, round and spiky, it looked both forbidding and inviting. It seemed to me some sort of ossified exotic flower (which, as it happens, it would have become, if allowed to continue growing on its stem instead of being harvested for sale in a Jerusalem market). I didn't know how to approach it.

My host demonstrated. He tore off an outer leaf, dipped in a lemony sauce, placed the bottom of the leaf between his teeth, scraping off the soft inner part as he pulled the leaf from his mouth. Barbaric, but also, somehow, elegant. I tried it. I had never tasted anything like it. I was hooked. I loved the taste, but also the ritual of peeling off layer after layer, revealing leaves that were increasingly tender. If you, too, are a fan of artichokes, then you've also contended with the nastiness of the choke – the hard and sharp fibres at the centre that guard the delectable heart.

The *yerushalmi* and I eventually parted ways, but a lifelong love of artichokes was forged.

I sometimes imagine that the forbidden fruit in Eden (which Europeans imagine as an apple and some midrashim identify as a fig) was an artichoke – although I know the artichoke is not a tree fruit at all, but a kind of flowering thistle. Still, somehow the slow and deliberate act of stripping off leaf after leaf in pursuit of the tender heart, negotiating the spiky choke along the way, seems to me an apt metaphor for the acquisition of knowledge or of love, both of which are implicated in the edenic story.

The artichoke is native to the Mediterranean region and popular in Italian and French cuisines. I have eaten, cooked and served artichokes in many places. Perhaps because of where I first encountered it, and perhaps because its combination of prickliness and tenderness dovetails with the metaphor of the Sabra, I can never eat one without thinking of Jerusalem.

(The misnamed Jerusalem artichoke, of course, is neither an artichoke nor a Jerusalem cultivar, but a tuber native to North America. Like the artichoke, it is a relative of the sunflower, or *girasola* in Italian, which morphed into the Jerusalem of its name.)

Culinary memories, the chain of associations that come with foods, capture the crosscurrents of flavours that migrate with people, taking on new nuances, and attaching themselves to evolving ideas of such things as identity, family, peoplehood and relationships.

Many of my friends have been cooking their way through *Jerusalem*, a tantalizing new cookbook by Jerusalem-born

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Yotam Ottolenghi and Sammi Tamimi, two chefs who have electrified London cuisine. Tapping ther respective Jewish and Muslim culinary traditions, in their introduction, they refer to the "flavours and smells" of their native Jerusalem as their "mother tongue," the foundational culinary grammar that undergirds the cuisine they develop. "We imagine them and dream in them... They define comfort for us, excitement, joy, serene bliss."

Perhaps it's superficial or trivial to focus on foods in the context of Yom Yerushalayim. But I don't think so. Food memories are potent. We celebrate and mourn with foods, use them to solidify the ties of friendship and family. There is something especially powerful in sharing and melding food cultures.

Food is, after all, our first nurturance. On my own university campus, the shared food cultures and religious overlap between kashrut and halal have turned our kosher cafeteria into a space that both Jewish and Muslim students find inviting.

It would be naive to suggest that food can bring peace. But there is something elemental about cooking and feeding and sharing that fosters community. We could start with the prickly artichoke. You must take your time and show patience in eating it. And, after all, even the forbidding choke hiding in the centre of the leaves, under the right conditions, could blossom into a flower.

A morning with Women of the Wall

Though I spend much time in Jerusalem I never pray at the Western Wall – for religious reasons. The reflection by the late Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, one of the great Jewish teachers of the 20th century, that Judaism has holy events, not holy places, resonates with me.

In view of its history, the Western Wall is most effective as a symbol of national rebirth. Thus, for example, I was greatly moved when, a couple of years ago, I attended my grandson's swearing in as an IDF soldier there. The fact that it has been turned into a shrine over which haredim claim hegemony and which others legitimately challenge is another sign of the lethal mixture of religion and politics that bedevils Israeli public life.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Lately, the group Women of the Wall – with members across much of the Jewish denominational spectrum – has claimed equal access to worship there. Seeking to revive the Jewish tradition of Rosh Chodesh, the new moon, as a special day of celebration for women, they assemble every month in the women's enclosure of the Wall to conduct their own services.

Many ultra-Orthodox Jews are up in arms. Contrary to what they consider to be Jewish law, women are heard singing, some don tallitot and a few even put on tfillin. Jerusalem police have until now used a legal provision that allowed them to prevent such "sacrilege" by arresting participants.

In order to show my 12-year-old granddaughter on a visit from England the charade, and to "smuggle" her aunt's – the soldier's mother's – tallit (which might otherwise have been taken from her at the security barrier), I broke my rule and spent the morning of Rosh Chodesh Iyar (April 11) at the Wall. I stood on the plaza behind the women's section with many other men to express my commitment to gender equality in Judaism.

It was a less than edifying experience. Haredim were shouting across the barrier in an effort to disrupt the women's prayers. Cameras, many in the hands of journalists, dominated the scene.

The previous day, Natan Sharansky, the chairman of the Jewish Agency, whom Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had charged with finding a solution to the impasse, unveiled a much-publicized plan to American Jewish leaders purporting to give all streams what they want by creating a third section to the south of the present enclosures where women and men could worship together, non-Orthodox style.

A former staffer in the prime minister's office has recently written that Netanyahu finds it very difficult to make decisions. To avoid annoying the ultra-Orthodox on the one hand and disappointing Israel's American-Jewish backers on the other, he may have chosen to outsource the problem to Sharansky. The latter, conscious of the egalitarian sensitivities of American donors, is now seeking a way to appease them with a non-solution.

The fact that, despite the media hype, neither haredim nor liberals have persuasively objected to Sharansky's proposal suggests they know that it won't fly. Archeologists and engineers have already expressed misgivings about it, and the Muslim Waqf, responsible for the Temple Mount, is bound to seek to disrupt it. But the public seems to be weary of the whole issue and thus keen to hail any ruse as a solution.

However, even in the unlikely event that it works, the proposal won't make the Wall more religiously significant. Though this remnant of the outskirts of the ancient Temple tells of a national tragedy some 2,000 years ago, it also reminds us that much of it may have been precipitated by religious zealots.

Hiding behind expressions of piety and reverence, their spiritual descendants today aren't only praying with Orthodox Jews for the improbable rebuilding of the ancient sanctuary, but they also make quixotic and dangerous plans to put it into effect. Should their scheme ever materialize, the devastation of the land and the people of Israel would be infinitely greater now than it was then.

With this in mind, the best way we can serve Judaism in general and Israel in particular is to leave the Wall for secular occasions, for tourists and perhaps for the few pious Jews who pray there daily.

Though gender equality in Israel is of vital importance for its future, and despite a favourable recent ruling by an Israeli court, the champions of equal rights for women should consider more suitable, even if less photogenic, ways of pursuing their just cause.

Bayreuth bound up with the legacy of Richard Wagner

Leonard Bernstein, the great American musician, struggled with ambivalent feelings about Richard Wagner, the renowned German composer and theatre director (1813-1883). In a moment of exasperation, he said, "I hate Wagner, but I hate him on my knees."

Wagner composed soaring epic operas featuring rich orchestration and harmonies and complex textures. His works included *Tristan and Isolde, Parsifal, The Flying Dutchman, Tannhauser* and *Lehergrin*, which will be performed at the annual Wagner musical festival in Bayreuth, Germany, from July 25 to Aug. 28.

Sheldon Kirshner in Germany

Wagner, however, was an outspoken antisemite who, in a notorious pamphlet, *Judaism in Music*, claimed that Jews were an "alien element" in German culture whose influence had to be eradicated. Published in 1850 and reissued in 1869, it was a landmark in the annals of 19th-century antisemitic literature.

Much like Bernstein, Wagner's great-granddaugher, Nike, recoils at the dark dimension of his legacy. "How could such a sleazy character, a trickster and a racist, write such wonderful and enduring music?" she observed in a recent article.

The problem transcends Wagner, who, curiously enough, had an assortment of Jewish friends, from the conductor Hermann Levy to the pianist Karl Tausig. Wagner's heirs, Cosima and Winifred, both perpetuated the antisemitic tone he set after establishing the Bayreuth Festival, or *Festspiele*, in 1876.

Cosima, the daughter of Franz Liszt and the mother-in-law of the British racist Houston Stewart Chamberlain, claimed that Germany was a "Judaized state." In this spirit, Cosima hired Jews only if a "German" performer was not available, or if their star status made them absolutely indispensable.

In 1924, after an interval of 10 years since the outbreak of World War I, Cosima relaunched the festival as a manifestation of nationalist, antisemitic sentiment, some critics say.

Winifred, a Briton who married Wagner's son, Siegfried, enjoyed a close friendship with Adolf Hitler. Winifred, who succeeded Siegfried as festival director in 1930, joined the Nazi party in the early 1920s, a good decade before Hitler became chancellor. She effectively turned over the festival to the Nazi movement after 1940, when Germany was embroiled in total war.

Hitler, who was born six years after Wagner's death, was addicted to Wagner's music. "My youthful enthusiasm for the Bayreuth master knew no bounds," he mused in *Mein Kampf*.

In 1933, on the 50th anniversary of Wagner's death, the Nazi party staged a grand celebration in his honour in Leipzig, where, ironically, he was born in its Jewish quarter. From that juncture onward, Hitler regularly attended the festival, giving it tax-exempt status and using it as a propaganda tool to bolster Nazi ideology.

During the war, two-thirds of Bayreuth, a pleasant town in Upper Franconia where Wagner spent 10 years, was destroyed by Allied bombardments. Wagner's theatre, the *Festspielhaus*, whose design and construction he personally supervised, was miraculously spared.

Under the postwar U.S. occupation, the theatre stopped performing Wagner's operas. But his music was brought back in 1951 with a performance of *Parsifal*. As for Winifred, she was banned from the festival. Her two sons, Wolfgang and Wieland, succeeded her.

Wolfgang's daughters, Eva and Katharina, took over five years ago in favour of their cousin, Niki.

In honour of this year's bicentenary of Wagner's birth, the German National Tourist Board reports, a host of German cities from Bayreuth and Leipzig to Dresden and Nuremberg will stage celebratory concerts. (Israel, unofficially, still bans Wagner's music).

Bayreuth, population 72,000, is marking the 200th anniversary of his birth with a series of concerts and exhibitions. All over town, signs and banners extol Wagner. A glossy brochure issued by Bayreuth's tourist office reads: "Throughout 2013, Bayreuth will be welcoming to orchestras, choirs and soloists who will be performing both traditional and contemporary interpretations of Richard Wagner's works alongside works by his contemporaries."

Visitors in Bayreuth can also pause at Wagner's unmarked marble grave, and will be able to visit the Richard Wagner Museum once renovations are completed.

Tickets to the festival, which is housed in a sylvan park-like setting, are exceedingly difficult to obtain, with demand (estimated at 500,000) grossly exceeding supply (58,000 tickets).

Bowing to pressure, the festival has tried to come to terms with its antisemitic past. After Winifred's death in 1980, a plaque was installed to pay homage to two Jewish singers who were murdered during the Holocaust, Ottilie Metzger-Lattermann and Henriette Gottlieb.

For the remainder of this year, *Silenced Voices*, an outdoor installation of grey glass panels etched with the names and photographs of former Jewish performers, will remind visitors that they played no small role at the Bayreuth Festival, the Wagners' antisemitism notwithstanding.

The installation, sponsored by a bevy of prominent German citizens, lies about 50 metres away from the theatre.

Tragically, a number of these distinguished Jewish musicians and singers were murdered in Nazi extermination camps in Poland. Hendrik Prins, a violinist, and Lucian Horwitz, a cellist, were deported to Auschwitz. Henrietta Gottlieb died in the Lodz Ghetto. Hermann Horner, a baritone, was killed in Belzec. Still others, such as Elsa Julich, managed to emigrate before it was too late. Fleeing Germany in 1935, she settled in Palestine, and died in Ramat Gan in 1964.

Richard Wagner

This installation is not the sole reminder of the Nazi era in Bayreuth. The names of Jewish residents in Bayreuth who perished during the Holocaust are inscribed on a wall in the lobby of city hall. On the opposite side, a memorial pays respect to all victims of Nazism and recalls an Allied air raid in April 1945 that killed 875 residents of Bayreuth.

Despite Bayreuth's infatuation with Wagner, some of its inhabitants could not care less about him. "Wagner was only a short time here," said Felix Gothart, the president of Bayreuth's Jewish community, the son of Polish Holocaust survivors and a building renovator. "He is of no interest to me. I don't ignore the festival, but it's not so important for me."

(Sheldon Kirshner photo)

Felix Gothart

A 57-year-old observant Jew whose wife is a Christian convert to Judaism, he is the son of Josef and Rifka Gothart, who participated in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, settled down in Bayreuth after the war and knew a fellow member of the Mizrachi Zionist movement, Kurt Rothschild of Toronto and Israel.

Before the Nazi era, Bayreuth was home to between 200 to 300 Jews, some of whom were deported during the war. But thanks to an influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union, there are now 500 Jews in Bayreuth, which is served by an 18th-century synagogue. A mikvah is due to open in the summer. To Gothart, the present and the future are clearly more important than the past.

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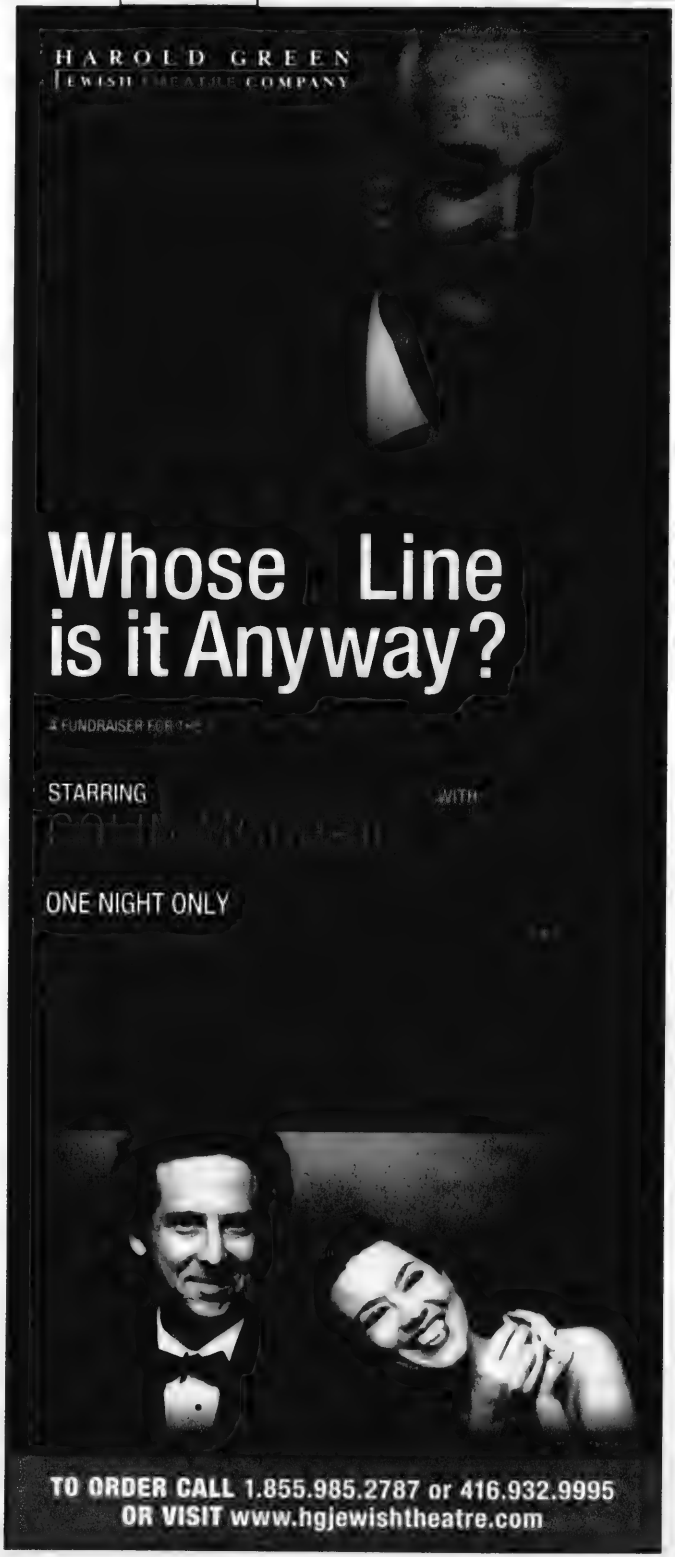

TanenbaumCHAT welcomes new head

Frances Kraft
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Lee Buckman is looking forward to his new position as head of school at what he calls "one of the flagship schools of Jewish day high schools in North America."

In a phone interview from Atlanta, Ga., where he is head of school at Greenfield Hebrew Academy, Rabbi Buckman talked about his upcoming move to Canada, where he will become head of school at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

Rabbi Lee Buckman

He succeeds Paul Shaviv, the school's former director of education. Shaviv left last year to become head of school at the Ramaz School in Manhattan.

The change in title does not reflect any change of duties, according to Rhona Birenbaum, TanenbaumCHAT's CFO/executive director and acting head of school. Rather, it was changed so that it would be in line with the title most commonly used by independent schools in Canada and the United States, she said.

Rabbi Buckman – a 51-year-old native of Chicago who says he loves teaching, learning and kids – cited TanenbaumCHAT's "outstanding reputation for educational excellence" as a factor in his decision to take the job. He begins Aug. 1.

The move will bring him and his wife, Rachel, also an educator, closer to family in Detroit. Some of their four sons, now grown, are alumni of Camp Ramah in Canada.

As well, it will bring him back into high school education, a field he left four years ago when he moved to Greenfield, which runs from preschool through Grade 8. Prior to that, he was at the Frankel Jewish Academy of Metro Detroit, a Jewish community high school.

"My feeling is that high school is a particularly critical time for Jewish identity," he said. "The teenage years are very turbulent, and a week of adolescence can wipe out the finest elementary day school education. What I like about high school is that it creates a Jewish context for kids to walk through their adolescent years as they're doubting, challenging, questioning and rejecting."

In 1999, when Rabbi Buckman was hired to start the school in Detroit, he visited CHAT, as well as a few other schools, because of its reputation for "excellent programs."

One of the challenges he expects to face is building relationships with a student body of more than 1,000.

Rabbi Buckman was ordained by the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary and has a master's degree in psychology. He later received Orthodox smichah as well. He served as a congregational rabbi in Milwaukee for nine years before making the move to education.

More recently, he has served as a consultant to Jewish day schools and organizations including Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE).

"I see myself as somebody who can bridge denominational lines, and somebody who stands, on one hand, for a particular expression of Judaism, but at the same time, appreciates that it's the multiplicity of expressions of Judaism that makes Judaism vibrant."

His vision for the school includes "an environment where knowledge is being driven by questions that students ask."

He is cautious, however, about making sure he understands "the context and the culture of Canadian education," before proceeding in ways that may be more applicable to the United States. He plans to visit local public and private high schools to familiarize himself with the differences between the two cultures.

In addition to his administrative duties, he hopes to have opportunities to teach. "Ultimately, I got into this field because I love teaching."

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Kosher cuisine reigns supreme as chefs gather

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

"Whose cuisine reigns supreme?" This is a question that begins every *Iron Chef* episode, but not one usually heard in kosher circles, where you might think that flavour will take a backseat to Halachah.

This is clearly not the case for at least three kosher chefs in Toronto, as the recent Taste for Success Kosher Chef Challenge proved.

Those chefs, David Blum of Hartman's, Ashley Farnell of Culinary Magic and Ayelet Or of Zuchter Berk battled with knives and flame at the Warehouse Event Venue, in the second annual championship of kosher cuisine to benefit the Toronto Teachers' Center of Torah Umesorah, the two-year-old local branch of a nearly 70-year-old organization based in the United States.

Co-hosted by media personality Adrienne Gold and Park Hyatt executive chef Joan Monfaredi, the women-only event offered all the thrill of the televised series in a scaled-down kosher version. Three chefs, 35 minutes and a theme ingredient: blue marlin, a "meaty" fish that was an unusual pick because it's so similar to swordfish that it was long considered non-kosher by many.

Chefs were given only butane burners, convection ovens and a few kitchen tools. Unlike on the real *Iron Chef* show, there were no sous-chefs or assistants, and unlike last year's event, no preparation was allowed ahead of time. "I don't know why we love to watch people sweat," Monfaredi said jokingly. "But we do."

True to the *Iron Chef* tradition, the three chefs produced very different dishes with a humble piece of fish: Blum's was presented steak-style, with a galette of potatoes and zucchini, Farnell's was incorporated with a Mediterranean-inspired ratatouille, and Or's was presented herb-crusted and lightly seared, served with beet salad and drizzled with soy and grapefruit juice. Using text messaging, audience members voted for their favourite dish, based on visual appeal.

Tasting the results was a panel that included chefs Samir Elamri of the Windsor Arms Hotel, Sam Kanner of Pantry Foods and Catering, cookbook author Daphna Rabinovitch and thrilled audience member Nancy Weisbrod, a Cordon Bleu-trained chef who'd entered a raffle to win a spot as a judge.

Judging was "very close," Gold announced, but ultimately, based on presentation, creativity and flavour, the winner was Zuchter Berk's Chef Ayelet Or.

"Cooking is natural," Or said in a video recorded before the event. "It's not work, it's a way of life." The secret ingredient that helped her win the competition? "Love."

Participating chefs received a case of kosher wine, courtesy of Herzog Wine Cellars. The winning chef also received a refrigerator from Frigidaire.

Earlier in the evening, a stand-up reception offered more than 330 guests the chance to sample "savoury bites" from local restaurants and caterers including Umami Sushi, Menchen's Catering and Ba-Li Laffa.

Kanner, who won last year's Kosher Chef Challenge, was thrilled to be back judging the event and giving out tasty samples of his restaurant's vegetarian delights: tofu taco, mango salad and a cucumber-melon drink. He said the Toronto Teachers' Center is "a great resource... you have to give teachers as many tools as they can get."

The centre receives 20 per cent of its funding from its international parent organization, Torah Umesorah (its name means "Torah and tradition"), which supports educators in Orthodox day schools. Its activities include workshops on topics like teaching strategies and technology, as well as hands-on support, like poster printing and lamination services, to help teachers create vibrant classrooms.

At $100 for the evening, not many on a teacher's salary could afford to attend, but several, including Bais Chomesh Girls' High School teacher Aydla Wechter, won seats ahead of time. She said the teachers' centre services help her "creatively present holiday themes and activities," and network with other teachers. Its central location, on Bathurst Street just north of Lawrence Avenue, makes the centre "very inviting."

The centre has had more than 5,000 teacher visits since it opened in 2011 and estimates that, thanks to its services, nearly 50,000 students a year benefit from its resources.

"It's a gift to the community," Wechter said. Besides Toronto, there are other Torah Umesorah locations in Chicago, New York, St Louis and Lakewood, N.J.

For more information, please visit ttctu.com or call 647-352-7900.

Co-host Chef Joan Monfaredi observes Chef David Blum of Hartman's in the thick of the action at this year's Taste for Success Kosher Chef Challenge.

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J-Serve brings out hundreds of teen volunteers

Students lend a hand to make city a better place to live

Taylor Isen
Special to The CJN

More than 500 Jewish students from grades 6 to 12 recently spent an afternoon doing volunteer work in Toronto, including planting trees and picking up litter, as part of the fourth annual J-Serve Toronto.

J–Serve is the Jewish service component of Youth Service America's annual Global Youth Service. J-Serve Toronto is hosted by BBYO in partnership with youth movements, synagogues and social service agencies from across the city. It is funded by the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the BBYO Panim Institute.

Left, Edan Kelner, above, Ben Marshall and Carly Lermer were all part of J-Serve. *[Taylor Isen photos]*

The students gathered at the gymnasium of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Wallenberg campus, on the morning of April 28, to select a volunteer activity from more than a dozen J-Serve project options.

The HDrummers, an interactive percussion troupe performing Latin, African and Middle Eastern rhythms, entertained, to get the crowd pumped and ready to work.

Volunteer options included litter cleanup at G. Ross Lord Park; a casino-themed day interacting with clients from DANI Toronto, a program for young adults with physical and/or cognitive challenges; joining seniors at the Bernard Betel Centre for an afternoon of activities, and tree planting at Downsview and Earl Bales parks. There were also workshops with organizations such as Pencils for Kids, Free the Children and Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Although it was a warm day, with the temperature climbing to above 16 C, the tree-planting volunteers persevered at Earl Bales Park. More than 30 participants planted around 150 trees on a new trail. The process included digging holes, putting the tree in the ground and mulching. The teens, working in groups of two, finished the job in just three hours. The work paid off, when people saw the end results – three new patches of land covered with baby trees native to the land.

Carly Lermer, a Grade 11 student at Westmount Collegiate Institute, said she chose the tree planting and mulching activity because she did the same sort of work while she was in Israel. "Although it's fun, it's a little challenging, too," she said.

Lermer said she takes part in J-Serve as it helps her "know more about my culture" and "helps me learn more as I explore the world."

Grade 9 student Ben Marshall said it was his first year contributing to J-Serve. "J-Serve is helping me learn about my roots, fulfilling tzedakah, just and charitable giving," he said.

J-Serve staff member Edan Kelner, 24, said that as a former member of BBYO, he believes that Jewish teens from different organizations getting together to do something good helps them be more aware of what's out there for them. He added that the best thing about being a supervisor is seeing everyone's smiles, that they're having a good time and, most importantly, that they're realizing they're contributing to making a difference in the world.

The day opened a lot of the participants' eyes as to how they can help make the world a better place.

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Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.
The Untold Story of None Is Too Many

Co-author **Irving Abella** explores the writing process and the impact of *None is Too Many*, one of the most significant studies of Canadian history ever written on the occasion of its 30th publication anniversary.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 7:30 PM
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Ben McNally Books, 366 Bay St.
Writing and Publishing Jewish Fiction in Canada: Past, Present and Future

Moderated by **Dr. Nora Gold**, this panel includes **Martin Levin**, **Cynthia Good**, and **Cary Fagan**, who will discuss the challenges of writing and publishing Jewish fiction in a Canadian context.

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IBook addresses religious, environmental issues

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

What does Judaism teach us about the environment and what does nature teach us about the Bible?

Jewish educator and environmentalist Baruch Sienna addresses these topics in his first book, *The Natural Bible*, published by Behrman House, which was launched April 21 at Congregation Darchei Noam. The innovative iBook uses the latest technology for interactive and engaging learning.

"Earth Day certainly seemed an auspicious date for the book launch," Sienna told some 60 people at the launch. "My book stresses Judaism's message that all of us must be stewards of the earth and to live sustainably on this planet. The environmental crisis is the defining issue of our age, and we face enormous challenges. We believe that insights from our Jewish textual tradition can instil a respectful and reverent attitude towards the earth. Appreciating the natural world, in turn, helps us understand our sources and reconnect with Jewish tradition."

The book "explores how religious environmental values can help us have a healthier relationship with the earth, and at the same time, how an appreciation of the natural environment enriches our understanding of the biblical text's use of metaphors from the natural world," Sienna writes in his blog on Jewcology.com.

Baruch Sienna *(Susan Minuk photo)*

It breaks new ground in the field of Jewish environmental studies for Bible students, nature lovers and anyone concerned about the environment. "Topics include sustainability and stewardship, our relationship with living creatures and God's creation, and environmental justice. Essays on water, plants and animals explore the symbols from the world of nature, and how the Jewish calendar and holiday cycle are linked to the climate and Land of Israel.

"The… book includes a guide to the many plants and trees of the Bible," the blog adds.

Guests at the launch commented on the format of the book. "I have already downloaded the book and had a chance to look at it. I am fascinated by the concept of using the iPad as a medium to deliver messages," guest Paul Robinson said.

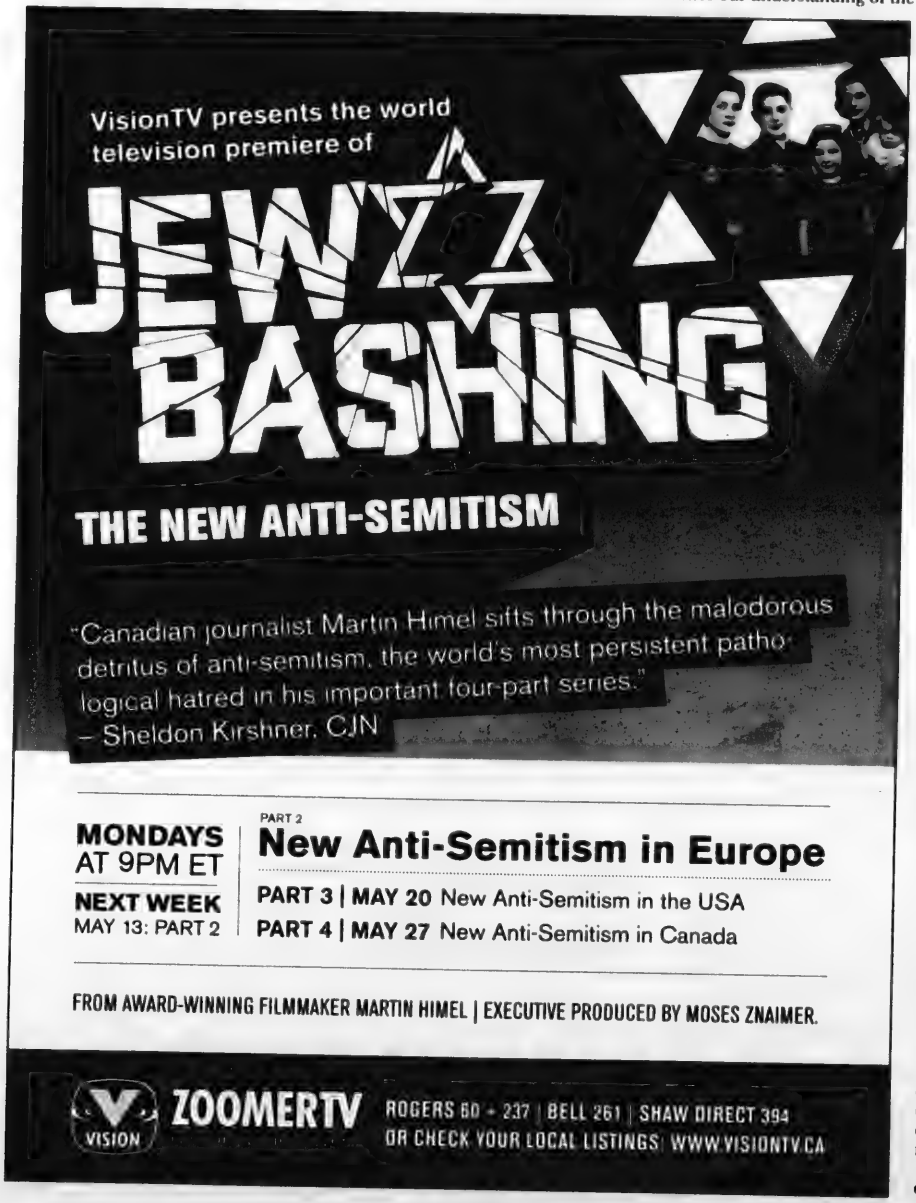
It became apparent that readers are beginning to enjoy the advantages of iBooks. For example, in addition to the flexibility of being able to customize the text for your own needs, if a book you purchase is republished with new or additional content, iBooks will let you know. You can then download the updated version for free, and automatically replace the older copy.

In a discussion and demonstration, Sienna shared the innovative technology used in his iBook. "Take it with you, highlight text, take notes and bookmark your favourite passages," he said. "Search for specific text and tap the audio icon to hear Hebrew titles. There is a built-in glossary and index, multimedia and hypertext links.

"My absolutely favourite page in the book is where I discuss how important the moon is in the Jewish calendar. The moon helps us know what day it is, and I thought it would be nice if I could say to the reader, 'Here is what the moon looks like today,' so I have included a picture of the moon. But what is amazing is that every day you look at the picture, it's different! The iBook allows you to show the changes each day, depending on what the moon looks like on that particular day."

Donald Schwartz, chair of the adult education programming committee of City Shul, told *The CJN* he attended the book launch because of "the subject matter of the [book], which is the way in which Jewish law and ethics can help us to understand and mobilize in support of environmental issues at a time when both micro-environment and the larger environment are at risk."

To see Sienna's work, go to the iBookstore on your iPad or to http://thenaturalbible.weebly.com.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Jonathan Boulakia with his son, Jonah *(Susan Minuk photo)*

1st grader shaves head for cancer society

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Jonah Boulakia's smile was a mile wide as his brown locks fell to the ground. Surrounded by family and friends, Jonah, 6, gave up his hair to aid the Canadian Cancer Society in its search for a cure for cancer.

Jonah's dad, Jonathan, clippers in hand, did the momentous shave right down to the skin, at the Boulakia family home in Toronto on April 21.

Jonah told *The CJN*, "Sometimes when you have cancer your hair falls off, and I am shaving my head to help people who have hair that fell out. There are lots of people I know who have cancer, and I am doing this to help them and everyone in the world who has cancer."

Jonah and his mother, Hannah, asked friends, family, work colleagues, neighbours and his teachers and classmates at John Ross Roberston Jr. Public School to make donations in exchange for Jonah's promising to shave his head.

"I made flyers and distributed them in the neighbourhood, prepared ads in my school bulletin, and have been talking about it with my classmates. My parents created a Facebook and LinkedIn page for people to support my cause," Jonah said. His efforts raised almost $3,000.

"I think I would like to do this again next year and raise even more money," he said.

Sacha Michna, co-ordinator of corporate and community partnerships at the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario division, said that "with the help of his parents, Jonah has done an outstanding job of fundraising. For someone so young to recognize that cancer is something that affects everyone, and that we can all do our part to fight back, is really quite special. It's great to see that even a little guy like Jonah can have a big impact in the fight against cancer."

Jonah's mom said that her son is a "typical 6-year-old who tends to be quite mischievous, but underneath is an extremely aware and very caring little boy. It was his decision to shave his head and raise funds, having been around too many people who are going through cancer. It is far more than a six-year-old should see. Jonah pushed us to make this happen."

His father added, "He wanted to feel empowered and make a difference – and he is making a big difference."

Jonah's uncle, Mark Griller, said that "Jonah has done a lot of work to raise money for a cause he believes in. I think it gives him good perspective, as he knows some people who have cancer and I think it has broadened his view on things. It is nice to see someone so young taking a positive action."

Another of Jonah's uncles, Charles Boulakia, added, "I think this is fantastic. It is never too young to care – very brave of Jonah to want to take an active and proactive step like this."

Christopher Rzepa, the principal of John Ross Robertson, said that Jonah's "actions show that he has made a strong personal connection with a cause that is near and dear to his heart… It is absolutely wonderful to see one of our young students make such a grand statement, and show such caring and compassion."

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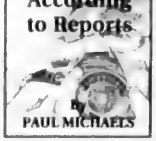
Lack of PA press freedom an unreported story

In her April 30 *Toronto Star* column ("Palestinian Authority keeps media under thumb"), Vivian Bercovici shines a light on an under-reported phenomenon in the Middle East: the contrast between Israel and the Palestinian Authority when it comes to press freedom.

According to Reports



By PAUL MICHAELS

For many journalists who report routinely from Israel and take the country's open, democratic system for granted (the very reason they're based in Israel in large numbers), this contrast is not "news" and thus garners little attention in the West. What sometimes does make news, however, are complaints about occasional constraints by Israeli authorities on their free access to conflict-driven stories involving the IDF in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel's refusal to allow foreign correspondents entry into Gaza during the January 2009 war with Hamas is one example.

The Foreign Press Association (FPA), representing foreign correspondents based in Israel, lists numerous complaints against Israel's security services for "harassment" of, and even "brutality" against, several of its members who try to cover disturbances in the West Bank. However, a former member of the FPA now reporting from the Arab world (who wishes to remain anonymous) said in a recent personal communication: "It's possible that there are a few more incidents of harassment of journalists by Israeli forces, but one cannot overlook particularly arrogant and confrontational elements among certain [Palestinian] correspondents who also view themselves as activists... More importantly, I am sitting in a place now where I find out what real mistreatment of journalists is. They get beat up. They get arrested. They get killed."

In other words, it's important to put things in perspective. That's precisely what Bercovici does in her *Star* piece.

She lists recent cases in which Palestinians received jail sentences for merely mocking PA President Mahmoud Abbas. She mentions, for instance, the case of a young "PA resident [who] was sentenced to a year in prison for posting a photograph of Abbas kicking a soccer ball with a silly caption: 'Real Madrid's New Striker.'"

That's on the milder end of things in the PA, where intimidation, if not arrest, is par for the course. Not to be ignored are cases where foreign correspondents have been threatened for covering events the PA does not want exposed, such as the lynching of two IDF reservists in Ramallah in 2000 and scenes of Palestinians celebrating immediately after the 9/11 attacks.

It's arguably worse, though, in Gaza under Hamas' rule. As Bercovici notes, Hamas "is reported to have arrested dozens of journalists since coming to power in 2007, torturing and imprisoning some." Bercovici interviewed Bassam Eid, founder and executive director of the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group, who told her bluntly, "Freedom of the press never existed in Arab culture."

Israel is the only country in the Middle East that's described, according to the U.S. State Department's annual report on human rights, as enjoying "an independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system [which] combined to ensure freedom of speech and of the press." And yet it's Israel that's often scrutinized for what Bercovici, in a nice turn of phrase, calls "painstaking granularity."

In an April 26 post on the Gatestone Institute's website, Arab-Israeli journalist Khaled Abu Toameh draws attention to what he calls a new phenomenon of Palestinian journalists declaring a state of hostility against their Israeli counterparts.

Speaking of double standards, he writes: "What is disturbing is that foreign journalists based in Israel have not come out against the campaign of [Palestinian] intimidation against their Israeli colleagues. Could it be because these foreign journalists have also been facing threats and want to stay on good terms with Palestinian reporters and will also agree to report only on 'Palestinian suffering?'"

He concludes: "Today, there is a new generation of Palestinian journalists who have evidently been radicalized to a point where any meeting with an Israeli is being viewed as a 'crime.' This is the result of anti-Israel incitement by the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, especially over the past two decades."

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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PART OF THE PROCEEDS WILL BE GOING TOWARDS THE CHILDREN'S INTEGRATION PROGRAM IN ISRAEL

Centre recognizes Canada's support of Israel

Continued from page 3

JFIC spokesperson Monica Berger said the organization adopted the name "Canada House" in part to recognize the support for Israel by the government of Canada. The facility had been known as the Morasha Community Center.

Dedication of the building took place during the Jerusalem Foundation's annual International Conference Meetings. Part of the festivities included presentation of the annual Teddy Kollek Award to Henry and Julia Koschitzky.

The award, presented in Teddy Kollek Park, recognizes "significant contribution to life in Jerusalem." Teddy Kollek served as mayor of Jerusalem from 1965 to 1993. He was instrumental in creating the Jerusalem Foundation.

The Koschitzkys joined the Hassenfeld family from the United States; Sonja Dinner; the Dear Foundation of Switzerland and Israeli Ruth Cheshin in receiving the award.

Julia Koschitzky, immediate past president of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada, said, "Jerusalem is the heart and soul of the Jewish People. We pray for it every day. It's a part of our tradition.

"To me, it's an extension of my own community and it's the capital and centre piece of the Jewish People."

Dedicating the community centre as "Canada House" required the permission of the government of Canada, which was granted. "We decided it should, in recognition of the friendship and steadfast support of our government and the Right Honourable Stephen Harper towards Israel… The Jerusalem Foundation stands for the same values of diversity and human rights that Canada stands for," she added.

The Canada House community centre is located in Jerusalem's city centre (Lev Ha'ir), to the northwest of the Old City. The neighbourhood, which lay on the border between Israel and Jordan, was largely destroyed during Israel's 1948 War of Independence, but following the 1967 Six Day War it began to experience revitalization.

Berger said the community centre and Teddy Park, which is located in what used to be an unkempt field near the Jaffa Gate, fit the Jerusalem Foundation's mandate to improve the quality of life of Jerusalem residents through parks, recreational facilities, educational programs and cultural activities. Such facilities are important in retaining young people and young adults in Jerusalem, she added.

"[Canada Centre] bridges gaps between the population of Jerusalem. It's a place where everybody can feel welcome," said Koschitzky.

Canada House is slated to house:

- The Gorman-Shore Learning Centre, providing after-school programs for elementary school children needing remedial help, as well as social and sports activities;
- The Freedman Teen Club and Youth Services, providing education and leadership programming;
- The Springboard Project at the Yaacov Gladstone Leadership Development Centre for Ethiopian Jerusalemites, counselling employment and education options for those completing military service;
- The Weisfeld Computer Centre, offering classes for everyone from kids to seniors;
- The Posluns-Mitz and Holbrook Families "Canada Club," a neighbourhood coffee house.

Among the dignitaries attending the Canada House dedication were Joe Oliver, minister of Natural Resources; Paul Hunt, Canadian ambassador to Israel; Sen. Linda Frum; Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat; Sallai Meridor, international chair of the Jerusalem Foundation, and Lewis Miz, president of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada.

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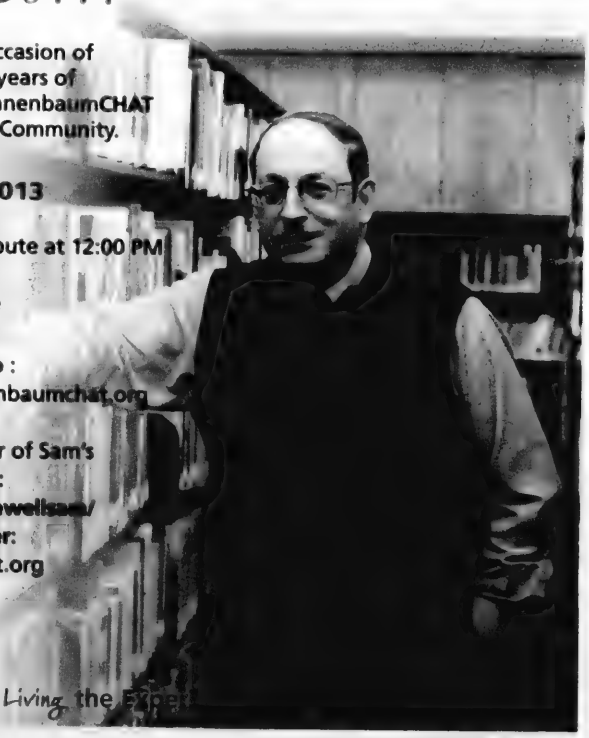

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מספר הכרטיסים מצומצם. להתראות באנה פרנק.

ההמנון הישראלי לעומת הקנדי

באירוע השנתי של בית החולים מאיר בכפר סבא ערך הקונסול הישראלי די ג'יי שניוויס השוואה מעניינת בין ההמנון הישראלי והקנדי, שהושרו בפתח האירוע.

"מעניין שבהימנון הקנדי מופיע מספר פעמים המשפט 'אנחנו נגן עליך מולדתנו', אמר שניוייס, דווקא ב'התקווה' לא מוזכרת הגנת המולדת אפילו פעם אחת, למרות שהישראלים נאלצים לעשות זאת כל יום מאז הקמת המדינה".

חשבתי לעצמי כמה שזה אכן מייצג את המציאות: הישראלים אמנם אוהבים את הצבא ומאוד גאים בשיריותם הצבאי, אבל ברובם הם אנטי מיליטריסטים, וכשהם לובשים את המדים במילואים הם נראים ברובם כמו הגשש החיוור. הקנדים לעומתם מעריצים כל דבר צבאי, ומרוב נענועים הם מביימים אחת לשנה את הקרבות שהיו להם נגד האמריקאים לפני מאות שנים.

הדבר הכי קרוב שיש לחייל קנדי להגנת המולדת זה שירות באפגניסטן בו הוא עלול לאבד את חייו מידי הטאליבן, אלפי קילומטרים מארצו. בישראל מושג הגנת המולדת הוא כל כך מוחשי ובלתי מליצי- שאין צורך להזכיר אותו בהמנון, מה גם ש"התקווה" נכתב הרבה לפני שהיתה מדינה להגן עליה. אבל שישאר בינינו.

המזוזה

באירוע השנתי של בית חולים מאיר זכו למדליית הוקרה בני הזוג פרימוצ'י האיטלקים שהקימו את "פיצה נובה" ותורמים מאסיביות לקהילה. מר פרימוצ'י, איש מקסים, הודה למארחים על שאיפשרו לו 'להיות יהודי'. על כך הגיב יושב ראש האירוע אריה רייף בסיפור הבא:

למשפחה יהודיה היה שכן נוצרי,שכל שנה פרצו לביתו מספר פעמים, בזמן שליהודי לא פרצו אף פעם. כששאל את שכנו היהודי מה הסוד שלו, הסביר לו מיסטר כהן שזה בגלל המזוזה. הלך מיסטר כהן ושם מזוזה על דלתו של הגוי, ואכן הפריצות פסקו מיד. על כן מאוד התפלא היהודי שכעבור שנה הגיע הגוי להחזיר לו את המזוזה. "מדוע אתה מוותר על המזוזה למרות שהוכיחה את עצמה כל כך?" שאל כהן את שכנו.

"אני אגיד לך, ענה לו הגוי- מאז ששמתי את המזוזה כל יום מגיעים אלי לפחות שני תורמים שמתיאמים לי את הנשמה. אז עדיף כבר שתים שלוש פריצות בשנה"....

More Gidi Koren at www.gidikoren.com

Tikkun Leil Shavuot: the holiday all-nighter

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietkiewicz

On Tuesday, May 14, the first night of Shavuot, tens of thousands of Jews around the world will be burning the midnight oil. And the two o'clock oil. And the four o'clock oil. They will be staying up all night and learning Torah until daybreak as part of Tikkun Leil Shavuot, a tradition with mystical roots and modern adaptations.

Why an all-nighter? Shavuot, of course, is the festival during which we commemorate the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. As the Orthodox Union site explains, "The midrash tells us that some of the people of Israel slept on the night before Matan Torah, and God had to awaken them in order to give them the Torah. Our sages do not fault them for sleeping – they were exhausted from their travels. However, a custom developed to spend the night prior to Matan Torah immersed in Torah study, as a 'better' preparation for the event of the morning." **[http://bit.ly/tikkun1]** Tikkun is a "correction" or "rectification".

Eliezer Segal writes that the earliest mention of the tradition is found in the 13th-century kabbalistic book, the Zohar. The Zohar tells of the all-night study session held by Rabbi Shimeon bar Yochai over 1,000 years earlier. "Rabbi Shimeon's tikkun was not so much an educational event as a mystical rite. In the Zohar's rich symbolism, Shavuot, the anniversary of the revelation at Mount Sinai, is depicted as a metaphysical wedding of the male and female aspects of the divine. The masculine image of an exalted king is joined with the Shekhinah, the divine presence in our world, portrayed as a princess." **[http://bit.ly/tikkun2]**

Traditionally on that evening, people would read from a volume called *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*, which would include a selection from every book in the Torah, the Prophets, the Writings as well as from the Oral Law, the Mishnah. That is followed by a listing of the 613 mitzvot and a brief selection from the Zohar. **[http://bit.ly/tikkun3]**

The Union for Reform Judaism has created three 64-page study booklets for the evening, which can be downloaded free from its website: *Journeying Toward Sinai, Together at Sinai and Aseret Hadibrot: Illuminating the Ten Commandments*, which includes the essay "God Revealed at Sinai: Cecil B. Demille and Modern Midrash."

[http://bit.ly/tikkun4]

If you'd like something more traditional, you can download the 486-page *Sefer Kriay Moed (Book of the Readings for the Festivals)*. It was published in 1697 and is now available free online. The section for Shavuot goes from pages 343 to 410. **[http://bit.ly/tikkun5]**

You've got the background. You've got the books. All you need now is the stamina. In *All-Night Learning for Shavuot: You Can Do It!*, Esther Kustanowitz provides tips for weary teens who want to stay but are fighting drooping eyelids. One suggestion: relive the moment. Have someone read aloud the account of the giving of the Torah while picturing the "excitement of standing at the base of Mount Sinai, individuals together as a nation ready to receive the word of God... Imagine an ancient version of your contemporary self there, seeing and hearing the things that are recounted in the text." **[http://bit.ly/tikkun6]**

Have a great night!

Highway@rogers.com.

A marriage contract for Shavuot

Sephardi Window

Rabbi Ilan Acoca

In many Sephardi congregations, prior to the Torah reading on the first day of Shavuot, a ketubah is read.

This love song was modelled after *Shir Hashirim, The Song of Songs*, written by King Solomon, the book of the Bible that is a metaphor for the relationship between the Holy One, blessed be He, and the People of Israel. The poem, composed by Rabbi Yisrael Najara (1555-1625), is in the form of a marriage contract between Israel and the Torah.

Even though some of the meaning of this great poetic song is lost when it is translated, I'd like to share some excerpts from it.

• My Beloved went down to His garden, to His bed of spices,/ To delight in the princess, and to spread over her the canopy of His peace;/ "King Solomon made for himself a palace."

• My beloved, My doe, come with Me to My chamber, My hall,/ For your sake I have left all the legions above, and their host;/ "And I have betrothed you unto Me forever."

• Said the Awesome One,/ You Who from the time of love I have heard Him,/ And I love Him with an eternal love,/ "May He kiss me with the kisses of His mouth!"

• To go to the wedding canopy, agreed the dancer of the camps,/ And for her "We will do, and then obey"/ merited 600,000 crowns;/ "In the third month, from the time/ That Israel left Egypt."

• And the connection was strong/ With this nation, which He acquired at Sinai,/ And the Deed of Purchase and the Signature/ I read for My throngs,/"Behold! It is written before Me."

• On the Sixth Day I will read what is written in the Letter,/ A day on which to bequeath to His beloved ones the Torah,/ The living God did intend,/ "Six Days in the month of Sivan."

• ...That He should not travel far away,/ Or make His way in the sea,/ Without the Torah placed near His heart;/ "It should be with Him, and He shall read from it."

• Let the righteous see and rejoice,/ And let them enjoy their reward,/ Of a Testimony that is "longer than the land,/ And wider than the sea,"/ "And all is strong, and clear, and steadfast!

• And He established the Torah in Jacob with vigour,/ And He commanded to erect its fences/ So no one would break through!/ "And I established faithful witnesses,/ The Heavens and the Earth!

• Let the bridegroom rejoice with the bride,/ To take for his possession,/ And let the heart of the bride rejoice/ With the husband of her youth,/ And let her say to the one who sings His praises,/ "Happy is the People for whom it is so!"

This ketubah expresses the responsibility we have taken by accepting the Torah. Talmud Zevachim (116A) teaches that the Torah was hidden in God's treasure for 974 generations before He gave it to us. How fortunate are we to have gotten it!

Let us all realize the invaluable gift that God has given us. Without it, there would not be a Jewish Nation! This Book has kept us alive, and today we can proudly say: *"Am Yisrael Chai Vekayam!"*

Welcoming women into religious leadership

Four years ago, I attended a shivah minyan facilitated by Rabba Sara Hurwitz, the first woman ordained as a full member of the Orthodox clergy. As the elderly widow choked back tears and struggled through *Kaddish*, Rabba Sara held her tight.

That scene was enough to convince me of the critical need for female spiritual and halachic leadership. But the need is far broader than shivah.

The time has come for strong leadership on both sides of the mechitzah: for female rabbinic leaders to celebrate births with new mothers, to help women bensching *Gomel* after an illness, and to escort mourners into the sanctuary on the Friday night of shivah.

Even more than an empathetic shoulder during life-cycle events, we need strong, year-round female role models. Young girls should be exposed to female rabbinic leaders the same way male rabbis are role models for boys. They should see women who pray with intent, lead with conviction, and are respected for their scholarship, skill and compassion.

For too long women's voices have been excluded from religious leadership – and in Canada this is true in both Conservative and Orthodox communities. In too many cases, this is as true in communal leadership, as it is in halachic leadership. While the low-hanging fruit may be welcoming women to deliver sermons or sit on boards, it is incumbent on contemporary Jewry to welcome women's voices into the rabbinic and halachic conversation. Half of our community has, historically, been disenfranchised from the debates that shape halachic norms and religious practice, including laws of marriage and divorce, kashrut, Shabbat and holidays.

Class Act

Daniel Held

Enter Yeshivat Maharat. While the last quarter century has seen the growth of women's learning programs – teaching women Torah, Talmud and other content areas – until the establishment of Yeshivat Maharat four years ago, there was no institution in North American training Orthodox women to be spiritual and halachic leaders. Yeshivat Maharat's curriculum parallels that of other top-tier rabbinical schools – rabbinic and halachic study combined with training in education, pastoral care, homiletics and communal leadership.

Yeshivat Maharat's first graduates will be ordained in June. Already these women are in high demand. As Rabba Hurwitz recently noted, "People are thirsting for a new type of leadership, and what the future is evolving into is bringing women as spiritual leaders and halachic decisors." I have been excited to hear the list of synagogues and Hillels, schools and other communal institutions seeking the leadership of these highly trained and motivated women.

The ordination of these women is not without controversy. What religious roles may these women play and what is outside the bounds of their role? What title should they adopt – rabbi, rabba, maharat (an acronym for halachic, rabbinic and Torah leadership)? These debates, while important conversations on the local community level, are technical rather than adaptive challenges. Within the broad strokes of history, the particulars of job description and title will be footnotes to the story of expanded women's leadership.

It is in this context that I applaud Montreal's Shaar Hashomayim Congregation, which snapped up Rachel Kohl Finegold, one of Yeshivat Maharat's first three graduates. Rabbi Kohl Finegold and Shaar Hashomayim are blazing the trail of the future.

Camps open to people with special needs

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Two Ontario summer camps have partnered with Yachad, the Orthodox Union's (OU) agency for people with special needs.

At the Toronto day camp, Moshava Ba'ir (MBT), and at the sleep-away camp, Moshava Ennismore, near Peterborough, Ont., disabled children and adults will be given the opportunity to participate in social and educational programs.

The camps are divisions of the modern Orthodox Bnei Akiva religious Zionist youth movement and OU's National Jewish Council for Disabled.

At Camp Moshava Ennismore, campers with special needs, aged eight to 15, will have separate male and female bunks. There will be a high ratio of counsellor staff to participants, and campers with special needs will take part in activities with the mainstream campers.

Camp Moshava Ba'ir, a day camp for children, will introduce a vocational skills program that is intended to help local residents, aged 18 to 30, with special needs.

These participants will be integrated with the daycare staff at the camp. They will be given assignments based on their interests and skill levels, among them assisting with arts and crafts or sports programs, and will work under the guidance of a job coach.

Yachad will provide social programming for all staff.

"This involvement will enable adults with disabilities to be a staff member, just like any other staff, where they can learn important vocational and social skills," said Nachama Braun, Yachad summer program administrator.

The day camp, Moshava Ba'ir, and the sleep-away camp, Moshava Ennismore, are open to campers with special needs.

Vicky Shizgal, director of Camp Moshava, said, "The experience that Yachad has will ensure that the programs will be implemented successfully, which will further our goals of giving every Jewish child an opportunity to experience what Jewish summer camp has to offer."

Dr. Joe Goldfarb, director of summer programs for Yachad, which co-ordinates 16 camps in the United States, one in Israel and the pilot camps in Canada, said, "We are excited to expand Yachad's mission of inclusion within the broad Jewish community by participating in Moshava Ennismore and Moshava Ba'ir Toronto."

For more information on Camp Moshava Ennismore or Camp Moshava Ba'ir, contact yachadsummer@ou.org or call 212-613-8369.

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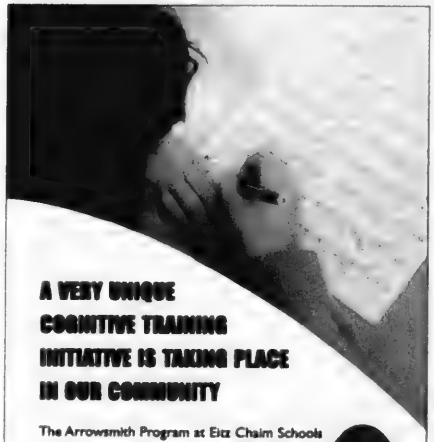
NOTICE RE:

2013 Annual Meeting

The **2013 Annual Meeting of the Jewish National Fund of Canada** will be held in **Tel Aviv, Israel at the Dan Tel Aviv Hotel on June 20, 2013.**



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The Arrowsmith Program at Eitz Chaim Schools has now entered its third successful year and our girls and boys have experienced tremendous personal and academic growth. The program is offered in two specially designed classrooms at Viewmount and Patricia campuses and each class is administered by a trained Arrowsmith cognitive instructor.

The Arrowsmith Program is a suite of cognitive programs developed from research in the field of neuroscience to address specific learning disabilities. After completion of the program, up to four years depending on severity, students can function without further special education assistance or program accommodations.

The Arrowsmith Program addresses the following:
Attention • Non-verbal learning / Social Auditory processing • Fine motor Mathematics • Social skills Comprehension Logical reasoning • Executive function Visual memory • Auditory memory • Dyslexia Working Memory

The Arrowsmith Program at Eitz Chaim offers these exercises four times a day and five days a week. The application of this regular and intensive routine differentiates the Arrowsmith Program from other initiatives. Each of our students is programmed for an individualized schedule of Arrowsmith cognitive exercises, Hebrew and General Studies.

For more information about the Arrowsmith Program please visit www.Arrowsmithschool.org or read the international best seller *The Woman Who Changed Her Brain* by Barbara Arrowsmith Young.

For admissions and general inquiries about Eitz Chaim's program please call 416-418-8523 or the Patricia Office at 416-225-1187.

Please note that all applicants to the Arrowsmith Program must also meet Eitz Chaim admission criteria.

Arrowsmith PROGRAM

drafted 416-609-8728

At the gates of Auschwitz

Poland honours CIJA for helping secure aid to preserve Auschwitz

Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf
Staff Reporter

The Polish government has awarded its highest honour to two members of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) who helped convince Ottawa to donate $400,000 to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation last year.

In May 2012, Prime Minister Stephen Harper pledged the money toward the restoration effort while hosting Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk during his state visit to Ottawa. Those funds recently flowed through to Poland.

On Monday, CIJA CEO Shimon Fogel and the centre's senior government adviser, Richard Marceau, were awarded Poland's Gold and Silver Crosses of Merit, respectively, in recognition of their "services to the development of the Polish-Canadian co-operation, and the remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust" by the Polish Embassy in Canada.

Through their government-relations work with CIJA, both Fogel and Marceau helped Polish officials reach out to Canadian cabinet ministers, opposition members and other decision makers in Ottawa after the Poles asked for their help securing funding for the foundation.

At the time of Canada's pledge to the foundation last year, the Prime Minister's Office released a statement declaring that the government "is committed to supporting Holocaust education, research and remembrance with a view to ensuring this heinous act is never forgotten or repeated."

Established in 2009, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation is a Polish non-governmental organization seeking to preserve the former Nazi concentration and extermination camp by raising 120 million euros ($154 million Cdn) to cover the site's conservation costs.

According to Polish Embassy spokesperson Andrzej Fafara, the foundation has now raised close to 97 million euros ($128 million) in donations as of May.

He also said it's "uncommon" for any non-Polish citizen to receive the award, but that his government was grateful for all the help provided by Fogel and Marceau in their roles as liaisons with Canadian senior officials.

While Canada's contribution falls short of major donations from other countries – Germany has given 60 million euros ($70 million), the United States pledged 15 million euros ($20 million) and Poland 10 million euros ($13 million), to name a few – the gesture is appreciated by Poland nonetheless, Fafara said.

Fogel said it's important for CIJA to help Canadian parliamentarians understand the need to preserve the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial site.

"Just as there has to be collective responsibility for the tragedy of the Holocaust, there's a collective responsibility for remembering it, sanctifying it and resolving to use those lessons going forward," Fogel said.

Asked what getting this award meant to him, Fogel said that as a child of survivors, the awarding of this medal is laden with meaningfulness and historic significance.

"Seventy years ago, Poles were looking for ways to help the Nazis advance their agenda to destroy the Jews. But who would have thought that today, Poles and a Canadian Jewish communal organization would be working together to create a lasting monument to those who were murdered? I find it very special," he said. "[Marceau] and I are privileged to have been able to assist."

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Mideast Jewish refugees to be studied by Ottawa

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The House of Commons standing committee on foreign affairs is scheduled to wrap up two days of study this week on the experience of Jewish refugees from Middle Eastern countries.

The committee was to have heard from eight witnesses by the time it concluded its session on May 9, including representatives of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC).

Sylvain Abitbol

In a news release, CIJA stated it has long called for a change to Canadian foreign policy "so that it correctly reflects the historic plight of Jewish refugees from Arab countries."

More than 850,000 Jews fled persecution throughout the region after Israel's creation in 1948, but "Canada's official Middle East policy neglects this fact, only accounting for Palestinian refugees," CIJA stated.

South of the border, the U.S. House of Representatives has already taken action on the file. In 2008, the House adopted a resolution that stated in part that a "comprehensive Middle East peace agreement... must address and resolve all outstanding issues relating to the legitimate rights of all refugees, including Jews, Christians and other populations."

In 2012, bipartisan Congressional lawmakers sponsored a bill to recognize the plight of Jewish refugees from Arab countries, as well as other refugees, such as Christians from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf. The resolution also called on the Obama administration to bring up the issue of Jewish and other refugees when mentioning Palestinian refugees at international forums.

At the time, JJAC vice-president Sylvain Abitbol stated, "Right now Jewish refugees are not on the international agenda. We have been called the forgotten refugees. After 1948, many Arabs from Palestine left their homes and yes they have been refugees. The difference is that we were never called refugees. We adapted to the places where we went, which was not the case for Arab refugees."

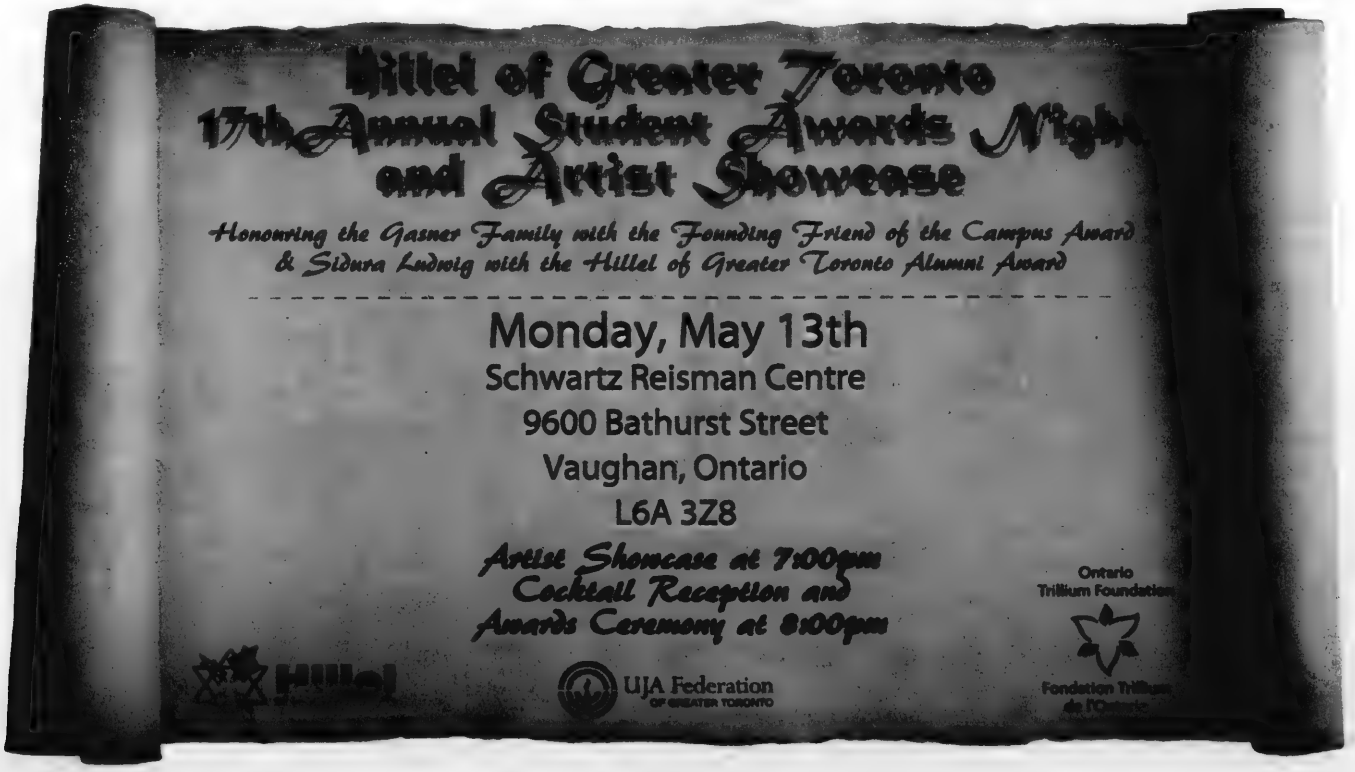
Abitbol, who served as co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress, said, "We're talking about recognition, about justice."

CIJA chair David Koschitzky applauded the foreign affairs committee for examining the situation faced by Jews who had resided in Arab lands.

"Two refugee populations were created as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict – one Palestinian and the other Jewish. Unfortunately, the plight of Jewish refugees has been completely omitted from Canada's Middle East policy while that of the Palestinians features prominently. It is essential that policymakers correct this inherent imbalance in Canadian policy. Equitable consideration of Jewish refugees from Arab countries is a necessary component for any just and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement."

Committee chair Dean Allison did not respond to requests for an interview.

Iraq is just one of the many Arab countries that Jews have left over the years.



May 31 deadline set on newspaper's future

Continued from page 1

With the help of management, Goldberg immediately embarked on a four-pronged strategy to establish a more secure economic underpinning for a renewed print edition of *The CJN*.

The strategy entails refurbishing and updating the paper's approach to subscriptions and subscription revenues, enhancing advertising revenues through new, long-term arrangements with current and prospective advertisers, establishing a safety net of funding to cushion the paper through periods of advertising revenue shortfalls, and streamlining the newspaper's current operations.

Goldberg told *The CJN* that he views this assignment as "absolutely vital to the well-being of the community. So many members of the community, of all ages, all backgrounds, affiliations, non-affiliations and from all corners of the country have spoken to us. And we are doing our best to respond."

Goldberg's sentiments were echoed by veteran *CJN* board member Lionel Schipper, who said that the "community has expressed its strong sentiment that *CJN*'s print edition should be saved. But that will only happen if members of the community come forward with support. I am delighted to say that the board's efforts to secure the necessary financial support have, so far, been very encouraging. I believe Marty will have the tools he needs to pull this off."

As he writes in this edition of the paper, Carr is also "optimistic that we will be able to obtain what we need to achieve our goal of maintaining a *Canadian Jewish News* print newspaper, including a viable publication for Montreal, as well as strengthening the Internet edition."

Alana Kayfetz and Rachel Singer, the young professionals who co-founded the savethecjn.com initiative that crystallized the community outcry at the prospect of the paper's closing, said their involvement in the paper's rebirth will not end with last week's rescue decision by the board.

In an email to *The CJN*, they wrote that "readers have spoken and told us that the *Canadian Jewish News* is a vital source of communication that touches all facets of the community. This is why we're launching Project CJN 2.0. With a grassroots approach, Project CJN 2.0 will strive to help implement a sustainable plan that will continue to serve the community for many more years to come."

Many observers noted the irony that it was the key participation of young adults, long presumed to have a waning interest in the paper, who, through social media, galvanized the community to try to prevent the closure of the print edition.

Goldberg has given himself a deadline of May 31 to announce whether there will be a new version of the printed *CJN*.

Jewish mysticism included in meditation retreat

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

A "mindfulness meditation retreat" that incorporates teachings from Jewish mystical tradition is set for May 23 to 26 at the Galilee Centre in Arnprior, Ont.

Sponsored by the True North Insight Meditation Center, the retreat will be led by Rabbi Jeff Roth, director of Awakened Heart Project, an organization that aims to refine contemplative Jewish practices, such as meditation and prayer.

The retreat is "an opportunity to deepen your own mindfulness practice regardless of any prior connection to Jewish practice," according to a True North press release.

"It is a model for how mindfulness can be integrated into other spiritual traditions and is open to people of all backgrounds and prior experience with mindfulness meditation."

Over the past 20 years, meditation has entered Jewish life in a way that's accessible to Jews of all denominations, as well as those not affiliated with one, True North says.

"Originally this was in reaction to meditation practices that came to the west from the east. But with an openness to spiritual wisdom from all sources that characterizes some contemporary Jewish circles, a new synthesis has been created that honours the practice teachings of mindfulness meditation."

Rabbi Roth, who hails from Esopus, N.Y., said in a telephone interview that the goal of the retreat is to teach participants to think in the moment and be aware of the thinking process that unfolds in the mind.

"This form of meditation takes away roadblocks – thoughts that prevent people from seeing reality," he said.

"This approach, when added to Jewish practice, creates an opening into Jewish mysticism and [toward the] direct experience of a divine presence."

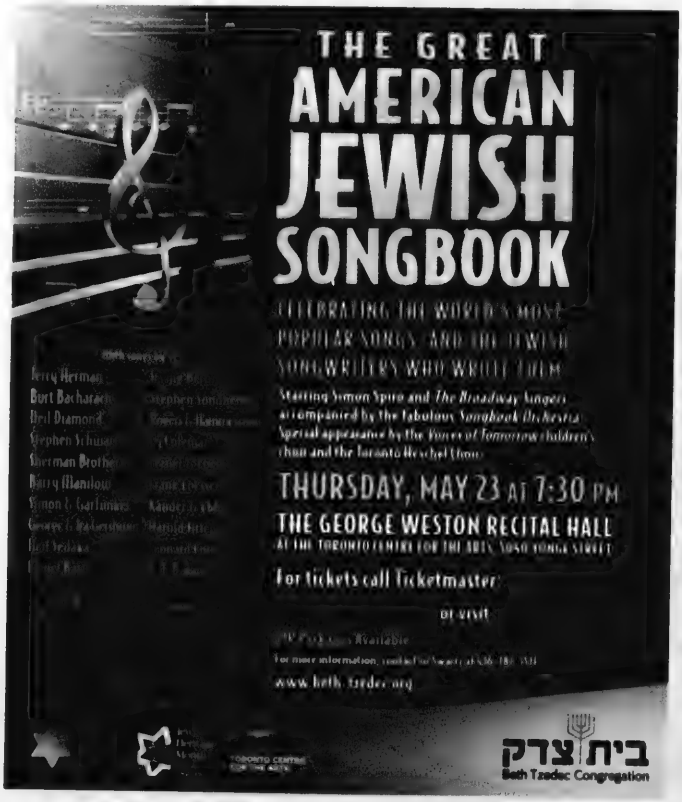
He said that mindfulness meditation gives people the tools to see what's going on in their minds and not get trapped in worrisome thoughts.

"At the retreat, we will create an atmosphere in which one can [learn] and practise these methods."

The retreat begins at 3:30 p.m. on May 23 and concludes after lunch on May 26.

Participants will take part in daily periods of prayer, chant and meditative movement. Daily instruction in meditation will help guide both beginning and advanced practitioners. The weekend will also include Shabbat observance.

For more information or to register, visit www.truenorthinsight.org.



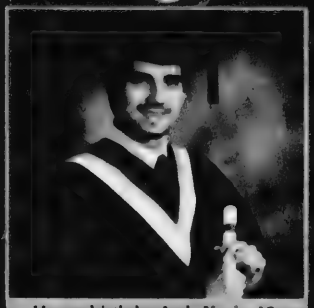
MUSICAL MOMENT: Children at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Nursery School joined the Daytime Adult Choir for a recent intergenerational program. The two groups practised for several months in anticipation of their performance in the MNJCC lobby.

BLUE TEAM: Robbins Hebrew Academy elementary students celebrated Lag b'Omer with a sports-filled colour war led by Grade 5 students. Teams competed in three activity rotations, culminating with a cheer-off and a flag presentation. Pictured, from left, are Samara Glazer, Martine Glazman, Abby Priemer, Mikaela Matias and Claire Lipton.

HOLIDAY FUN: Louis-Riel Petit and Sam Pepper celebrate at a Lag b'Omer celebration at Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin campus in Thornhill on April 29.

Mazel Tov

מזל טוב



Happy birthday Josh. You're 18, and you're graduating from high school. Enjoy every moment of the new adventures that await you. Love, Mom & Dad.

Mazel tov on the engagement of Stephanie Nightingale & Zachary Simbrow. Thrilled are parents, Karen & Ben Nightingale and Rhoda & Jeff Simbrow.

Mazel tov Danielle Gallowitz on your graduation from the University of Guelph-Humber 2012 with a BAA in media studies/PR. Love, Mom & Dad.

Mazel tov Lindsay Gallowitz on your graduation from the University of Guelph 2013, B.Sc. in Biomed Good luck at Waterloo School of Optometry. Love, Mom & Dad.

Cassandra Eva Shoshana Ushky, born April 14, is welcomed by her parents Dimi & Ronny and brother Benjamin-Jacov. Mazel tov from, bubbie Annie and Uncle Eddy Ushky.

Betty Colt of Toronto recently celelebrated her bat mitzvah at Temple Sinai in Palm Desert Calif.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

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Social Networking @ The Canadian Jewish News for the :-) generation

What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: Due to upcoming holidays, deadlines will change. May 17 is the deadline for the issue of May 30. May 27 is the deadline for the issue of June 6. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ex. 269; fax 416-391-0829 or email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, May 9

ISRAELI SECURITY

Yossi Alpher discusses "The Changing Face of Israeli Security," Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. 416-322-5559; www.peacenow-canada.org.

GIRLS GONE GLAM

Canadian Hadassah, Yasmin chapter, presents Girls Gone Glam, an evening of shopping, music, auctions. Tickets: visit www.chw.ca/toronto or email yasminchapter@gmail.com.

ONLY YESTERDAY

Toronto Workmen's Circle hosts a book launch for *Only Yesterday: Collected Pieces on the Jews of Toronto* by **Benjamin Kayfetz** and **Stephen Speisman**, 7:30 p.m., 471 Lawrence Ave. W. www.nowandthenbookstoronto.com.

AKA DOC POMUS

Beth Emeth screens the movie *AKA Doc Pomus* 8 p.m. $36. Pre-show reception, 6:30 p.m. For tickets, 416-633-3838.

TITANIC

Donny Zaldin and **Barbara Rusch** discuss "Titanic: From Myth to Memorial and the Jewish Connection," Temple Har Zion, 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 11

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation, a Conservative, egalitarian congregation, meets in Oakville at 10 a.m. www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

ROLE MODELS WHO MATTER

Dena Libman discusses "Role Models Who Matter to the Next Generation," at Beth Tzedec Sisterhood Shabbat.

Sunday, May 12

YAD SARAH

Canadian Friends of Yad Sarah are holding a fashion show at PI Fine Art, 1180 Caledonia Rd., 7:30 p.m. RSVP yadsarahtor@bellnet.ca or 416-781-6416.

SOCCERTHON

Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro are holding a soccerthon, 4-8 p.m., Trio SportsPlex, 601 Cityview Blvd., Woodbridge. Email cfobis@rogers.com or 289-597-0500.

BAKE SALE

The Sisterhood of the Thornhill Community Shul is holding an auction bake sale, 3-5 p.m., 949 Clark Ave. W.

MORNING AT THE OPERA

Beth David Brotherhood presents a Morning at the Opera with members of Opera York, 9 a.m. $10 includes breakfast.

BALLROOM DANCING

Ballroom dancing classes are being offered Sundays at Stashover-Slipia Synagogue, 11 Sultana Ave., 1:30 and 2:45 p.m. romancing.the.dance@gmail.com.

Monday, May 13

THE NEW NORTH

Sergei Plekanov discusses

Continued on page 27

HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE
Musical Heritage Concert Series 2013

Divahn: An Eastern Serenade

Wednesday, May 22, 2013 - 8:00 p.m.

GALEET DARDASHTI, singer and vocal innovator, leads Divahn's bold all-woman power-house ensemble infusing traditional and original Jewish music with a modern and edgy twist.

DIVAHN has engendered an international following the world over and shared the stage with the world's most renowned master musicians.

TICKETS: ADULTS $36 • YOUTH (18 & UNDER) $18
FOR INFORMATION AND
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416.789.3291 EXT. 224
mlrusak@holyblossom.org

www.holyblossom.org
1950 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario

Continued from page 26

"The New North: Environment, Economy and Security in the Arctic," Temple Emanu-El, 2 p.m. 416-449-3880.

BAKE SALE

A bake sale benefiting Small Wonders will be held at 122 Bannockburn Ave., 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (Parking at 157 Falkirk St.). Email bakesale@smallwonders.ca or 416-623-2682.

FOOTNOTE

Beth Tzedec book and film club discusses the film *Footnote*. Viewing at 10:30 a.m.; dessert at 11:50 a.m.; review at 12:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225 or library@bethtzedec.org.

AUDITION

Medina Theatre Ensemble holds an audition for *The Second Time Around*, 2 Neptune Dr., boardroom (buzz #121), 7:30-9:30 p.m. RSVP 416-638-2716 or 416-785-0344.

THE RABBIS AND JESUS

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "What Did the Rabbis Teach About Jesus," 8:35 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca; 416-789-0020 .

Tuesday, May 14

JEWISH EDUCATION

"The Challenges of Jewish Education" is the keynote presentation for Shavuot with speakers from Camp Ramah, the Toronto Heschel School, Leo Baeck Day School and Centre for Jewish Education, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 10 p.m.

CHOOSE LIFE

"Judaism, Suicide and Assisted Suicide" is the topic at Shaar Shalom Synagogue's Leyl Tikun Shavuot. Services at 8 p.m.

OTHER NEWS

CELEBRATE MOTHERS

For a minimum of $25, you can send cards to honour the women in your life, while helping women in shelters on Mother's Day. Funds raised will also support Act to End Violence Against Women. 905-695-5372 or www.canadahelps.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Jewish Information Service is looking for a volunteer for the information desk at the Lipa Green Centre. Shift is 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesdays, until October and then Mondays. Call **Barbara** 416-631-5843 or bbarak@ujafed.org.

Baycrest welcomes youths between the ages of 13 and 24 to join the summer volunteer program. Provide companionship and assist with creative arts, fitness, outings and administrative work. 416-785-2500, ext. 2572; www.baycrest.org/volunteer.

Volunteers needed to deliver kosher meals on wheels. Pick up from Baycrest or Pride of Israel Synagogue. Mileage reimbursed. Call Circle of Care 416-373-4100.

REUNION

Hillel Academy of Ottawa, Class of 1963 is holding a reunion May 19. Send an email to: ibmsubwaymilty@gmail.com.

QUILTS OF ISRAEL

The Ailsa Craig Community Quilt Festival presents Quilts of Israel, Ailsa Craig Recreation Centre, 155 Annie Ada Shipley St., Ailsa Craig, Ont. There will be over 100 quilts from Israel and Israeli quilters teaching workshops. May 20-25. Visit: www.ailsacraigquiltfestival.ca.

RENT A SPARE ROOM

List your spare room or basement apartment with the Accommodation Registry at Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto. Help is available for renters as well. 416-635-5600 or email jinfo@ujafed.org.

SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE

Psychologist **Rabbi Eliezer Schnall** is the scholar-in-residence May 17-18 at Bnai Torah Synagogue. To reserve 416-226-3700, ext. 21, or email office@bnaitorah.ca.

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Friends of Yiddish hold their annual meeting, May 22, 7 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. RSVP by May 16 to 416-458-1440 or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca

ISRAELI IDOLS PERFORM

Idan Amedi and **Roni Daloomi** (Israeli *Idol* winners) perform for Peace of Mind's Benefit concert for Israeli soldiers, May 28, Beth Tzedec, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 416-804-0144 or 416-500-0924.

JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH

Exhibits marking Jewish Heritage Month will be on display at Dufferin Clark Library, 1441 Clark Ave. W., Vaughan and Bathurst Clark Resource Library, 900 Clark Ave. W., Vaughan.

JF&CS GROUPS

All programs require registration and are open to all members of the community. To register, call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2 to 11. Starts May 22.

When You're About to Separate, What to tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. May 23, 6:30 p.m., Lebovic JCC.

Supporting Self-Reliance in Teens with ADHD: A workshop for parents. May 28, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups to bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Seniors Cultural Club meets Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell. 416-630-9444.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors Club. Kosher food, card games. 416-256-1892.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Crawford Lake, May 14; Hairdresser/barber, May 16, 10 a.m.-noon; Casino Rama, May 22; Dance with live music, May 26. Tuesdays, fitness, 10 a.m., Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m., social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. May 9, **Margaret Furman** discusses exercise, 1:30 p.m. May 12, Comedy Workshop with **Neil Berger,** 1:30 p.m. May 14, **Ephraim Pell** of the Israel Stamp Club, 10 a.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Jewish archives presents early Toronto collections. Bring photos/memorabilia. May 9, 1:30 p.m.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Information meeting for Spirituelle Divas, May 9, 7:30 p.m.

Mah-jong games, Monday afternoons; Yiddish conversation, Mondays, 1:30 p.m.; Analyze This with **Kevin Courrier** starts May 22; Four Great Operas with **Iain Scott** starts June 4; Provocative Female Artists with **Osnat Lippa** starts June 13; Folk dance, Wednesday,s 10 a.m., Duplicate bridge, Thursdays, 12:30 p.m.; Shalom Singers are looking for new members, Thursdays, 10 a.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Baruch Sienna teaches a course on "Reading Jewish," Thursdays starting May 23, 7:30 p.m. Ext. 154.

Adam Nayman discusses four controversial film directors, Mondays 7-9 p.m. May 13, **Roman Polanski**.

Music at the MNJCC. Women's Chorus, Mondays, 7:30 p.m.; Daytime choir, Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Klezmer Ensemble, Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. MNJCC Community Choir performs June 5 and June 6, 8 p.m.

Structure and Photo by **David Trautrimas** is in the gallery until May 21.

Downtown Tikkun Leil Shavuot, May 14, 8 p.m.-6 a.m. Special program for children and teens. Ext. 154.

Tickets on sale now for MNJCC 60th anniversary dance, June 13, 7:30 p.m. $36. Ext. 0

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m., Sundays at 8 a.m. **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., Vaughan. 905-303-1821. Call ext. 3037 to register. www.srcentre.ca.

Health Series: May 21, **Sue Merritt** discusses protecting your heart and brain from cardiovascular disease, 7:30 p.m.; June 4, **Dr. Rana Singh** provides an introduction to naturopathic medicine, 7:30 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

Fundraiser slated to fight neurological disorder

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

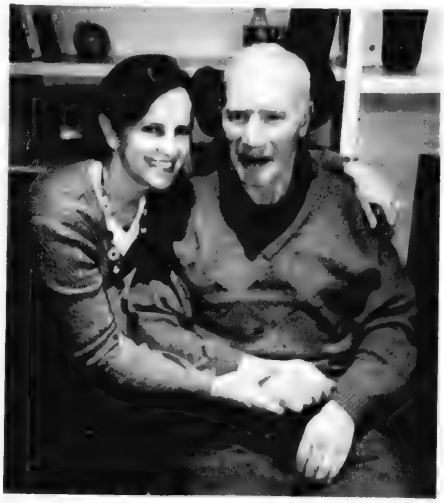
A benefit concert will be held at Holy Blossom Temple for the Friends of Stephen Rivers Care Project, and to support research into multiple system atrophy (MSA), a degenerative neurological disorder.

Stephen Rivers, 64, a Toronto psychologist originally from Ottawa, was diagnosed with MSA three years ago.

As his illness progressed, friends of Stephen and his wife, Lindi, 53, a cantorial soloist at Holy Blossom, began providing cooked meals for the family – Stephen has a 23-year-old son, and together the couple has two daughters, 19 and 16. Friends also began staying with Stephen when he could no longer be left alone.

Lewis Molot, a professor in the faculty of environmental studies at York University, said the group of friends started the project last summer "when we realized how exhausted Lindi had become providing many hours of personal care.

"We wanted to help Steve, but we also wanted to ensure that Lindi remained strong enough to manage Steve through his illness, and still have something left for herself and her daughters."



Lindi and Stephen Rivers

He said that Lindi and Stephen's friends from around the world have rallied, and have raised money for in-home personal care and physiotherapy equipment.

Lindi said that although Stephen was officially diagnosed three years ago, there were "soft signs" for two to three years previously.

They were shocked with the diagnosis, she said, "and we went through a period of grieving. Now, we are coming to terms with reality. Stephen said, at first, the diagnosis was worse than cancer, because at least with cancer there is a treatment plan. He only has symptom management.

"It started with a lack of balance and with some voice issues. We noticed he had trouble singing at the Shabbat table," Lindi said.

"Since then, it has been a process of adaptation. He started with a cane, but he had lots of falls. Then he tried a walker, and now he is in a wheelchair because his legs are getting weaker and weaker."

Stephen said that another symptom of his disease is "emotional incontinence. My emotions are right out there on my sleeve. I've always had a sense of humour, but now things seem extra funny, or on the other hand, extra sad. I've tried to keep my sense of humour but it is getting harder and harder."

They are both very frightened, he said. "We don't know from week to week what the next challenge will be."

Lindi said that what has helped the family to keep going is the outpouring of support from the community. "Friends, the Holy Blossom community and our family have been unbelievable with meals and funds to help with Stephen's care.

"As Steve's illness progresses we have to keep adding help. We are eligible for only 14 hours a week of help from the Community Care Access Centre."

She said when they were approached about the concert, they were initially hesitant, "because it put us in the spotlight. I realized though, that so many people want to help but don't know how. This is a good vehicle."

Their one condition, Lindi said, is that part of the money raised at the concert be earmarked for research into MSA, through the movements disorder clinic at Toronto Western Hospital.

For information about the Friends of Stephen and Lindi Rivers in Concert, on June 2 at Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m, call 416-789-3291.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Somer Rumm	Apr 19/13	3600 Yonge Street
Tamara Rose Bernstein	Apr 18/13	315 Chelwood Drive
David Solomon	Apr 19/13	79 Old Forest Hill Road
Irving Norman Arnold	Apr 18/13	55 Prince Arthur Ave.
Albert Sherman	Apr 20/13	645 Castlefield Avenue
Harry Diamond	Apr 20/13	49 Dunloe Road
Ralph Leo Summerfield	Apr 19/13	645 Castlefield Avenue
Carolyn Rona Ekstein	Apr 21/13	7300 Yonge Street
Edith Howard	Apr 21/13	8 The Donway East
Freda Benovitch	Apr 21/13	6101 Bathurst Street
Rebecca Kahn	Apr 22/13	10 Dell Park Avenue
Mary Hecht	Apr 23/13	892 Bathurst Street
Irwin Igra	Apr 24/13	60 Waterloo Avenue
Murray Menkes	Apr 24/13	1 Post Road
Frida Lebovici	Apr 25/13	7 Townsgate Drive
Molly Consky	Apr 27/13	425 Walmer Road
Joan Soble	Apr 25/13	278 Bloor Street East
Selma Vaz	Apr 25/13	7440 Bathurst St.
Taiba Ric	Apr 27/13	42 Roseborough Cres.
Dan Mourin	Apr 26/13	35 Balmuto Street
Sid Honest	Apr 28/13	384 Wood Duck Lane
Bernice Posen	Apr 28/13	

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Benchetrit, Albert	April 14/13	3560 Bathurst St
Srulovicova, Ida	April 16/13	485 Patricia Ave
Sepia, Jimmi	April 17/13	326 Major Mackenzie Dr E
Cargman, Sydney	April 17/13	38 Silas Hill Dr
Kagan, Lioudmila	April 19/13	601 Clark Ave. W
Middlestadt, Beatrice	April 19/13	546 Steeles Ave W
Jacobson, Sally	April 20/13	306 Finch Ave. E
Gazer, Lawrence	April 22/13	7 Townsgate Dr
Bedder, Bernie	April 22/13	7300 Yonge St
Seitelbach, Arie	April 22/13	95 Heritage Estates Rd
Swartz, Murray	April 23/13	18 William Carson Cres
Birshtein, Beila	April 23/13	120 Promenade Circle
Benayon, Michael Mesod	April 23/13	Private
Alicheh, Sol	April 23/13	484 Steeles Ave. W
Green, Arthur William	April 23/13	65 Skymark Dr
Goldberg, Leon	April 24/13	333 Clark Ave. W
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Vera, Hilary, Todd and family, Monika and family

Call 10 days before issue date to advertise in this section

Ryerson students help survivors tell stories

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Mary Gale, left, and Ruth Krongold with the memoir they penned together. *[Cara Stern photo]*

Mary Gale's family had no idea she was Jewish. After the Holocaust, she was scared to tell people her religion, or even her birth name, Miriam Zimmerman. She didn't even tell her son when he converted to Judaism and made aliyah.

But now, thanks to the Sustaining Memories Project, she has put her story in writing.

The project is an extension of the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs program, which collects and shares survivors' stories. The problem was that not all survivors were able to write their own stories.

Through a partnership with Ryerson University's Chang School of Continuing Education, survivors meet with mature students – 50 years or older – who listen to the stories, transcribe the conversations and turn them into memoirs.

Ruth Krongold was Gale's writing partner. She listened to Gale's stories, and then worked with her to "put the pieces in the puzzle together."

The stories described how Gale spent decades after the war hiding her Jewish identity. It wasn't until she had a heart attack that she told her youngest child, Anita Stern, that she was Jewish.

When she turned 80, she visited Poland with her daughter, and saw the spot where her father was murdered in 1944. She described it as an incredibly emotional experience, and it was the catalyst for the sharing of her story with her family.

Krongold said she wanted to help with the project after attending an Azrieli Foundation presentation during Holocaust Education Week a couple years ago. There, she learned about the foundation's collections of stories and decided she wanted to get involved in collecting the memories.

> *'As long as there are Holocaust survivors like Mary who want to tell their stories, we should be listening, we should be recording it, we should be compassionate witnesses to their experiences'*

"As long as there are Holocaust survivors like Mary who want to tell their stories, we should be listening, we should be recording it, we should be compassionate witnesses to their experiences," she said. "I thought it was important as a human being to hear it."

Last year was the pilot year, and Elin Beaumont, outreach and communications manager for the program, said she was pleasantly surprised when 18 people signed up to take part in it.

This year, 19 more survivors shared their stories. They gathered at Baycrest Terraces on May 2 with their families and were presented with printed and bound copies of their memoirs. That was the first time the family members got to see the story.

In the future, Beaumont said she would like to expand the project outside of the Toronto area to include survivors from communities all throughout Canada.

The memoirs created through the Sustaining Memories Project will be considered for distribution to libraries, educational institutions and Holocaust-education programs, as is the case with the stories completed from the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs program.

Stern said the program has been a huge help for her mother. Although Gale was still a bit nervous about telling the world she was Jewish, Stern said the two of them had been discussing the May 2 event for weeks.

"I said to her… 'This is it. There's no going back,'" Stern said. "I think this is a turning point for her."

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NOTICE OF
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AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
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Nathan Disenhouse, President, JNF Toronto
To RSVP, please call 416.638.7200 x142 or email kalene.buckstein@jnf.ca
*All donors in good standing to the Jewish National Fund are invited to participate and have voting rights.

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Why we need to save *The CJN*

The great poet and writer Samuel Johnson once opined that "the two offices of memory are collection and distribution." Indeed, then newspapers are for many the official vehicle that both collect memory and distribute it so that we are all better informed.

Much has been said and written about the possible demise of a veritable institution in this country, *The Canadian Jewish News*. There was hardly a gathering of Jews anywhere I travelled this week and last week, both inside and outside Toronto, where the discussion did not turn to this distressing news.

And the questions, though obvious, nonetheless beg for answers. What happened? How did the board of *The CJN* allow this to happen? What can we do?

Before answering the last question, let's examine the first two.

In the Canadian Jewish community, we seem all too often to take for granted that which has been around for a long time. The organization that I formerly headed, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), was formed in 1919. It spoke on all matters of social justice, human rights and antisemitism. In many ways, it seemed to be more respected outside the Jewish community than within it. Nevertheless, it was also understood to be our conscience and soul. It was very much the voice of Canadian Jewry. But two years ago, in a dramatic re-shaping of Canadian Jewry's organizational life, it was suddenly gone, as T.S. Eliot might say, "not with a bang but a whimper."

Bernie Farber

Even today, at functions and cocktail parties or other gatherings, I am asked about the goings-on at the CJC. When I explain that it no longer exists, I get blank stares and questions of incredulity: "What happened? How can this be?"

Yet here we are today, facing the potential shattering loss to Canadian Jewry of *The CJN*. However, this time, there seems to be a different feeling in the air. There is a clear recognition that with the potential loss of *The CJN*, we lose a large piece of who we are as a community of Jews. There will be no communication vehicle left in the country that, for all intents and purposes, is independent, practises professional journalism and unites the Jewish community from coast to coast.

This will have an impact not just on the average community member, but on Jewish communal organizations as well. Be it ORT, Hadassah, JNF or the myriad of acronymic Jewish groups that counted on *The CJN* to get their information out or dispense their own views of the world, that car, if plans to dismantle the paper continue, will be without fuel.

My friend and colleague, Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, which absorbed and replaced the CJC, certainly understood the issue well when he explained recently in an interview, "Absent *The CJN*, it's going to create serious challenges for us to ensure an adequate level of awareness of what we do, how we do it and ways [people] can become more directly engaged in the advocacy process."

Sadly, there is more to this potential loss than meets the eye. Jews have always been people of the book and voracious readers with many opinions. The development of a Jewish press in North America and Canada specifically spoke to a community that grew along with its ability to speak out freely without fear.

As far back as the early 1900s, there was an open and healthy Jewish press in Toronto and Montreal, where the vast majority of Jews lived. *Der Yidisher Zshurnal* (*The Jewish Journal*) was Toronto's first Jewish community daily, published six days a week in Yiddish, the language of eastern European Jews. Similarly, the *Adler* (the *Eagle*) fulfilled the same role in Montreal. And over the years, many other Jewish journals and magazines in both English and Yiddish continued to offer new immigrants – and later their children – news about our community. Whether it was the *Jewish Standard*, the communist-inspired *Proletarisher Gedank* (which later changed its name to *Der Veg – The Way*), the *Canadian Jewish Review* or the *Kanader Naies* (*Canadian News*), the competition, editorial stands and provision of community information rarely ceased.

Today, for perhaps the first time in our young history as a Jewish community in Canada, we may be without a trusted journalistic Jewish voice.

To be sure, voices are being raised. To my utter delight and surprise, the strongest of these voices seem to be emanating from a new, younger generation of readers. Twenty-something folks like Rachel Singer and Alana Kayfetz (ironically the niece of the late Ben Kayfetz, one of Canada's most prolific Jewish journalists and community professionals from days gone by) are putting words into action. Utilizing a 21st-century communications device, the Internet, they have developed a "Save the CJN" campaign which to date has gathered more than 3,000 digital signatures and close to 50,000 page views.

Playwright Arthur Miller once intoned: "A good newspaper is a nation talking to itself." Indeed, *The CJN* talked to a nation of Canadian Jews for more than 40 years. To let it die without a bang would be a disservice to who we are as a people. Perhaps if we stood up this time and as my late father use to say "open a mouth," we can save us from ourselves.

Bernie Farber is former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress and current senior vice-president at Gemini Power Corp.

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LAG B'OMER PARTY: Toronto city councillor James Pasternak, centre, joined thousand of guests April 28 at the annual Lag b'Omer family festival in Earl Bales Park, organized by Chabad, the Jewish Russian Community Centre and Tzivos Hashem Canada. Pictured with him are student performers and the JRCC's Rabbi Mendel Zaltzman.

Law's encounter with the Holocaust

Lorne Sossin

Osgoode Hall Law School at York University and its library recently hosted the only Canadian showing of *The Face of the Ghetto: Pictures by Jewish Photographers from the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1944*, an exhibition of photographs taken during the German occupation of Lodz, Poland, during World War II.

The remarkable exhibit did not depict the violence and suffering of ghetto life, but rather the defiance of a community determined to continue individual and community life. For example, one photo highlighted life in a school; another focused on care for the elderly; one photo documented Jewish policemen and firemen in the ghetto, while yet another featured a wedding. The ghetto was indeed a place of disease and tears but also of resilience and resistance.

But what do these images have to do with the law and legal education?

At the launch of the exhibit, Prof. Jan. T. Gross, of Princeton University, author of several books, including *Neighbors*, spoke of the devastating experience of Jewish communities being victimized and plundered by their neighbours in Poland (and across Europe) with whom they had lived among for centuries. In many cases, trials followed only years later based on eyewitness testimony from those who could no longer remain silent.

The legal process became in some places the only forum in which the truth could be told. These trials of individuals grew into trials of communities – as Gross wrote in his study, *Golden Harvest*: "One Jew killed by one perpetrator – but in a public manner, with the approval and encouragement of a crowd of onlookers – represents a collective deed, implicating all those present."

Last month, Devin Pendas, a professor at Boston College and Fellow of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, spoke to a packed house at the law school about the possibilities and limits of law to address the irreparable loss and suffering of the Holocaust. In trials throughout Europe in the 1940s and 1950s, courts grappled with how to treat concentration camp guards who made life and death decisions on a whim: Nazi bureaucrats who never saw Jewish communities but were responsible for countless thousands of deaths and collaborators in occupied territories who were sometimes themselves victims of Nazi atrocities.

Pendas noted how courts tended to focus on individual acts of torture and murder but had no basis in their legal culture to come to terms with genocide. For example, one camp guard received more than 100 life sentences as a perpetrator for individual murders that had been documented by witnesses and a further two-year sentence for being an "accomplice" in the deaths of tens of thousands others. Later on the same day, a panel discussion at the law school poignantly explored attempts to bring to justice those responsible for the massacres in Rwanda in the 1990s.

The story of law's encounter with the Holocaust is not simply history, but rather an ongoing struggle to bring dignity to victims, and accountability to those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is as relevant in 2013 as it was in 1945.

This Lodz Ghetto exhibit served as a catalyst for talks, workshops, films and discussions throughout the hallways and student lounges of the law school. One student mentioned to me a conversation he had with an elderly man with no connection to the university who had made his way to Osgoode to see the photos. The student and some of his friends directed the man to the library. A short while later, he returned, sat with the students and told stories of his father who had lived in the ghetto. The student described the encounter to me as a moving and unexpected element of his legal education.

Many members of the Osgoode community have personal connections to the Lodz Ghetto, as do I. My youngest daughter, Leah, is named for my great-grandmother who died with her husband, siblings and all but two of her children (who had emigrated to Toronto, the youngest of whom was my Grandmother Fay).

As I looked at the pictures in the exhibit, it is possible I saw people who knew and lived alongside my family, and perhaps even unidentified cousins. Growing up, I learned of the ghetto only as a place of deprivation and death. Seeing the photographs brought that community, and the spirit and courage of its residents, to life.

The exhibit also offered us an opportunity to reflect on the values and goals of legal education. Through art and culture, law is humanized. We focus not on abstract principles and constructs but on the stories of those touched by injustice.

As many in the Jewish community know, universities may sometimes be the venue for speakers and events that provoke, and even offend. Academic freedom, however, must be seen through the lens of our core values of respect and inclusion, just as those values must be seen through the lens of academic freedom. While there may be issues that from time to time test the strength of the university's relationship with our own community and our broader communities, the university must serve as a catalyst for dialogue and reflection.

The Face of the Ghetto exhibit represented an important landmark in that regard. It was amazing to see how extraordinary depictions of ordinary life 75 years ago and half a world away could have such a sustained impact on our community today.

Lorne Sossin is the dean of Osgoode Hall Law School at York University.

Faces of the Ghetto

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Cookbook will leave you asking for 'More Please'

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The idea for *More Please*, the cookbook produced by Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto's Parent Teacher Council, was born in the kitchen of one of its members about 2-1/2 years ago.

The almost 400-page, 900-recipe hardcover cookbook has become the largest project ever undertaken by the council.

Jody Pasoff, who chaired the cookbook committee along with Ann Rastin and Dina Farber, said that after they embarked on the project, it quickly became a labour of love.

"We turned each of our houses into a studio, and we tested, tasted and rated the more than 1,000 recipes that were submitted by parents, grandparents, teachers and administrators, friends and nannies."

Rastin said they rated the recipes using four levels – wouldn't feed a dog, edible, family worthy and fit for the queen. "Only recipes that we would feed to the queen made it into print."

Despite using recipes fit for a queen, however, they also wanted to include recipes that are easy to cook, with ingredients that are easily accessible.

"We want people to open the book, choose a recipe, and find most of the ingredients in their cupboard. Associated is a diverse community, and we have included recipes from around the world."

Their families were their guinea pigs, Pasoff said. "One day we made 26 chicken recipes, and on another, 65 people turned out to test 73 cookie recipes. We spent many days cooking along with 14 other people."

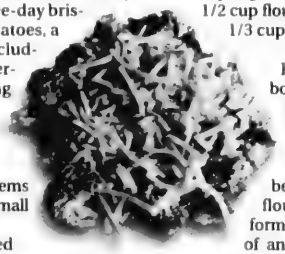
They consulted with Simcha Wines in order to pair the main courses with an appropriate kosher wine, she said. "They paired the wines and the recipes thoughtfully, and kept the wines reasonably priced."

The entire book, from testing to editing to layout to photography to publishing, was done by committee members, Rastin said.

The "buzz" around *More Please* has been unbelievable, Pasoff said. "We have already raised $70,000 for the school. All the money will be spent on things desperately needed by the school, such as a scoreboard for the gym at the Kamin campus."

The book is available in Judaica stores and at Indigo Books.

Along with favourites such as dairy free butter chicken, three-day brisket and Friday night potatoes, a number of recipes, including the following, are perfect for the upcoming Shavuot holiday.



BROCCOLI SALAD

2-3 bunches broccoli, stems peeled, chopped into small pieces
1 cup red onions, chopped
1 cup mayonnaise
2 tbsp. white vinegar
1-2 tbsp. sugar, to taste
1 cup dried cranberries or raisins
1 cup pine nuts or sunflower seeds
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup grated cheddar cheese, old or medium, optional

In a large bowl, combine broccoli, mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar, cranberries, pine nuts, salt and pepper. Mix well.

Transfer to a serving bowl. Cover and refrigerate until needed. Sprinkle with cheese at serving time if desired. Yields 12-16 servings.

DELICIOUS EASY SALMON TERIYAKI

8 salmon filets
sesame seeds, to garnish
Marinade:
6 tbsp. dry sherry
6 tbsp. brown sugar
4 tbsp. water
2 tbsp. soya sauce
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 1/2 tsp. ginger, minced
2 tsp. garlic, crushed

In a large bowl combine sherry, brown sugar, water, soya sauce, oil, ginger and garlic. Mix well. Place salmon fillets in marinade. Let stand 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400. Line a baking dish with parchment paper. Remove salmon from marinade and place on prepared baking dish. Keep marinade.

In a saucepan, boil remaining marinade until it becomes thick and syrupy. Brush it on the fish. Sprinkle with sesame seeds to coat well. Cook for 10-15 minutes uncovered, or until the fish flakes easily with a fork.

Yields 8 servings. Serve with Dalton Safsufa Sauvignon-Viognier.

CARAMELIZED PEAR CHEESECAKE

1 cup flour
1/2 cup unsalted butter
2 egg yolks
3 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese
3/4 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
2 tbsp. unsalted butter
3/4 cup sugar
6 pears, peeled, seeded and sliced
Topping:
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup flour
1/3 cup unsalted butter

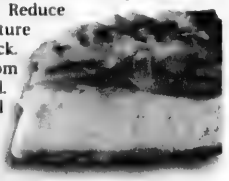
Preheat oven to 350. In a bowl with a pastry cutter or 2 knives cut 1/2 cup butter into 1 cup of flour forming tiny pieces.

In a separate bowl beat 2 egg yolks. Mix with flour pieces until dough forms a ball. Press into bottom of an ungreased 9-in. springform pan. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly.

In a mixer, combine cream cheese with 3/4 cup sugar. Beat well. Gradually add 3 eggs and vanilla. Beat well. Set aside.

Once crust has cooled slightly, pour in cheese mixture and return to oven for 40-50 minutes or until set.

In a large skillet over low heat, melt 2 tbsp. butter. Carefully add 3/4 cup sugar allowing it to brown. Do not burn sugar. Add pears. Cook uncovered for approximately 15 minutes or until pears are tender. Reduce until mixture is quite thick. Remove from heat and cool.



In a bowl combine 1/4 cup sugar and 1/2 cup flour. Using a pastry cutter or 2 knives, cut in 1/3 cup butter until mixture is crumbly.

Once cake is done, remove from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Spread with pear mixture and sprinkle with topping.

Preheat oven to broil. Place under broiler until browned. Refrigerate overnight before serving.

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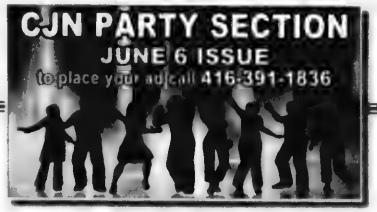

China rebukes Israel for Syria strike

The Times of Israel

SHANGHAI, China — As Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived in Shanghai Monday hailing Israel-China trade relations, Beijing appeared to be rebuking Israel for attacking its neighbour to the north.

"We oppose the use of military force and believe any country's sovereignty should be respected," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told reporters in a briefing, avoiding mentioning the Jewish state by name. "China also calls on all relevant parties to begin from the basis of protecting regional peace and stability, maintain restraint and avoid taking any actions that would escalate tensions and jointly safeguard regional peace and stability," Hua said.

The comments came a day after the Israeli Air Force reportedly struck targets around Damascus that stored a shipment of advanced Iranian missiles en route to Hezbollah terrorists, in the second such attack in three days, raising the ire of Syria, Hezbollah, Iran and much of the Arab world.

Asked if China would urge Netanyahu to stop airstrikes, Hua said the Israeli prime minister had yet to meet Chinese leaders. Netanyahu was due in Beijing on Wednesday, following Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's departure from the city a day earlier.

Netanyahu began his five-day China trip by checking out technological innovations in Shanghai.

Standing next to a wall displaying the logos of the companies operating in a high-tech park, Netanyahu expressed optimism regarding future business opportunities for Israel and China.

"We see here the logos of many of the world's leading companies," he said. "I hope that we will soon see on this wall the logos of many Israeli companies. This is the goal – to expand bilateral economic co-operation and significantly increase Israeli exports to China."

In a meeting with Israeli business leaders, Netanyahu said it was his job to represent their interests to the Chinese government.

Meeting with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People, the seat of China's legislature, on Sunday, Abbas reviewed the history of their peoples' relations stretching back to the 1960s and said the two shared the "same views on many world problems."

"I appreciate China's high position in the world nowadays," Abbas said in opening remarks at the meeting, which was followed by the signing of agreements on technical co-operation and cultural exchanges.

China recognized a Palestinian state in 1988, four years before establishing diplomatic ties with Israel.

China's Foreign Ministry said last week it would be willing to help set up a meeting between Abbas and Netanyahu if the two men wanted. Talks between the Israeli and Palestinian sides have been deadlocked for four years, and there was no indication a meeting would take place.

China has traditionally maintained a low profile in Middle East diplomacy, but in recent years has tried to play a more active role in the region as part of its quest for markets, resources and diplomatic influence. Beijing has sought stable relations with both sides in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, but has been criticized, along with Russia, by many for strongly opposing international intervention in Syria.

TimesofIsraelcom

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Canada courts Israeli business leaders

Viva Sarah Press
CJN Israel Bureau

TEL AVIV — Canada's Minister of Natural Resources Joe Oliver was in Israel last week to try to woo technology corporations here to collaborate with Canada in the fields of offshore natural gas, unconventional oil and gas, and science and technology.

Oliver's visit comes as Israel is moving closer to its goal of energy independence by tapping in to its offshore natural gas fields.

On May 2, natural gas exploration partners Delek Drilling and Avner Oil Exploration announced that the Leviathan field, located in the Mediterranean Sea off the Haifa coast, contains 19 trillion cubic feet of natural gas – 11 per cent more than their original estimate of 17 trillion.

The partners also announced that the Tamar gas field could yield about 13 million barrels of natural gas condensate, one of the raw materials used by the petrochemicals industry to refine fuels.

Speaking to *The CJN*, Oliver highlighted Canada's role as a secure energy supplier, and its commitment to energy diversification and modernizing major resource project approvals.

He said Canada wants to help Israel with technology and know-how in the energy field.

"Israel has tended to look to bigger countries like the United States, China and India, but what we'd like to do is to bring to bear expertise in an area which is going to be crucially important for Israel's security and growth," Oliver said in an interview in Tel Aviv.

Accompanied by a Canadian trade delegation and university academics, Oliver met with Israeli business leaders and policy experts to further explore trade and investment opportunities between Canada and Israel.

"On a number of fronts – conventional and unconventional oil and gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency – there are tremendous opportunities for Israel and Canada to work together, share expertise, transfer technology and create jobs," Oliver told Israeli business leaders. "Canada is open for business, and we want to expand our trade and investment with Israel, creating jobs, growth and long-term prosperity for Canadians."

Though Canada is by far the richer in natural resources, Oliver pointed out – more than once – that Israel's "startup nation" characteristic is highly sought after.

"Israel is very advanced," Oliver said in the interview. "Israel is strong in science and technology. They've got more PhDs per capita than any country in the world. What I wanted to do is to get the best and brightest of our two countries to look at areas of science and technology which are important to both countries."

While in Israel, Oliver also announced a call for proposals under the Canada–Israel Energy Science and Technology Fund (CIESTF).

Earlier this year, Natural Resources Canada announced $5 million over the next three years through its ecoENERGY Innovation Initiative to support this fund, which will also receive funding from the government of Israel on a project-by-project basis. Selected projects will address key challenges facing Canada's energy industry, and apply combined know-how to improve the efficiency and sustainability of this sector. Eligible projects will be led by industry and may include academic partners in both countries.

"This fund encourages the development of innovative energy technologies and processes, enabling the responsible development of unconventional oil and gas resources," Oliver said. "These projects will help create jobs, address shared environmental challenges and strengthen the economies of both countries."

The creation of CIESTF, managed and delivered by the Canada–Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation, will see Canada and Israel pursue further co-operation to advance shared energy interests.

Oliver said that "you can't time innovation," but he would like to see collaboration efforts between Israel and Canada come to fruition in the next few years.

"We want to reinforce a strong and diplomatic relationship in commerce. This is an area where Canada has experience and expertise and can add value," he said.

Oliver called for a reciprocal visit by Israeli businesses and government officials to Canada. "There are real opportunities for Israeli companies to come to Canada and see and meet with Canadian venture capital and investment firms and meet with Canadian companies to develop its resources."

Canadian Minister of Natural Resources, Joe Oliver, left, and Israeli Minister of Tourism, Uzi Landau in Jerusalem *(Mati Milstein photo)*

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1,000 people in Senegal mark Israeli Independence Day

JTA

DAKAR, Senegal — A crowd of 1,000 people celebrated Israel's 65th anniversary in the predominantly Muslim nation of Senegal.

"Israel very much values its warm ties with Senegal, which is an island of stability in an unstable region," Israel's ambassador to Senegal, Eli Ben-Toura, told the crowd of religious leaders, businessmen, artists and diplomats who gathered last week at Dakar's Grand National Theater to celebrate Israel's Independence Day.

Ben-Toura told *JTA* that Israel has trained hundreds of Senegalese farmers in advanced agricultural techniques over the years.

"Usually when African governments approach Israel, it's either about agriculture or defence systems," he said. "But we want to go further and believe that cultural exchange is also a major element."

The embassy arranged a modern dance performance by Ido Tadmor, the artistic director of the Israel Ballet, and 40 local dancers.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry is installing two experts in agriculture in Senegal as well as a depot service for equipment, Ben-Toura said. Israeli researchers are also trying to eradicate snail fever, a parasitic disease, in the country's north.

In December, the Senegalese government granted an oil exploration license to Elentilo, a mining company owned by the Israeli businessman Jacob Engel.

The Islamic insurgency that erupted last year in neighboring Mali has not affected Senegal's more liberal and pro-western society, Ben-Toura said, "but there is major concern and action on the part of Senegalese authorities to prevent radical Islam from trickling in."

Senegal severed its relations with Israel in the 1970s under pressure from Arab countries, along with most other African nations. Relations were restored in 1994, though Senegal does not have an embassy in Israel.

"The government is interested in opening one. There's recognition it needs to happen," Ben-Toura said.

Security concerns behind airstrikes on Syria, Israel says

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — The Israel Defence Forces' Northern Command head calmed fears that the weekend airstrikes against Syria have brought the country to the brink of war, while at the same time, Lebanon increased its military readiness along the border with Israel.

"There are no winds of war," Maj.-Gen. Yair Golan said on Monday as he took part in an annual fun run for the Golani Brigade, one of Israel's four main infantry brigades.

"There is no need to go into hysterics. Everything is calm, the residents of the north can sleep in peace," he said. "Do I look tense?"

The IDF reopened Israel's northern airspace for civilian flights after air traffic was brought to a standstill for a half a day following Sunday's airstrike on Syria. It was originally announced that Haifa's airport was to be closed until Thursday.

Syria issued harsh warnings that Israel should not dare to launch any further attacks after two airstrikes over the weekend apparently targeted Iranian-made missiles at facilities near Damascus. The Fateh-110 missiles were reportedly being transported to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Reports said the weapons storage facilities were hit by missiles fired from Israeli aircraft flying over Lebanon.

Israel Radio reported Monday that Lebanon put soldiers stationed along the border with Israel on alert, and local media said that Israeli Air Force planes were again spotted over the country. On Sunday, Lebanon called on the United Nations and the international community to pressure Israel over continued violations of Lebanese airspace.

An unnamed western government source claimed Sunday that Israel's alleged airstrike in Syria that day targeted sensitive military installations, including those staffed by members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. The report, carried by pro-Israel news site *The Tower*, was unconfirmed.

According to unnamed Israeli and American sources, Israeli planes struck sites outside Damascus early Friday, and again early Sunday, targeting weapons transfers from Iran to Hezbollah.

An Israeli official told the *Los Angeles Times* on Sunday that both strikes were carried out to thwart weapons transfers from Iran to Hezbollah, which would have given the Lebanese terror group a new missile capability.

"We are not taking sides and we're not interested in interfering in the internal affairs of Syria," the senior Israeli official said. "But we have to make sure these weapons do not fall into the hands of Hezbollah, because the minute that happens, it will be hard to track and monitor them. That's the only reason we interfered. If we don't take action now, we will be on the receiving end of those missiles. We have to act to guarantee our security, and that applies to Syria and Iran."

Also Sunday, Iranian army ground forces commander Ahmad Reza Pourdastan said Tehran was ready to support Syria and offer it aid in case of further Israeli strikes.

"Syria has a powerful army, and with the structure and experience it has against the Zionist regime, it can definitely defend itself and there is no need for intervention by other countries," Pourdastan said, according to the Iranian semi-official *Fars* news network. "But, if they do need training, we can help them."

TimesofIsrael.com

Jews have no claim to Israel, Scottish church says

JTA

NEW YORK — The Church of Scotland published a paper denying that "scripture" provides a basis for Jewish claims to Israel.

The paper, "The Inheritance of Abraham," rejects, "claims that scripture offers any peoples a privileged claim for possession of a particular territory." It also states that "reconciliation can only be possible if the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and east Jerusalem and the blockade of Gaza are ended."

The report was published online by the Church and Society Council of the Church of Scotland ahead of the church's general assembly on May 18. Its introduction said it's the council's "latest reflection on the 'questions that need to be faced,' as the political and humanitarian situation in the Holy Land continues to be a source of pain and concern for us all."

While the 10-page report does not mention the upcoming meeting, its final chapter, titled "Proposed Deliverance," calls on the church to "urge the U.K. Government and the European Union to use pressure to stop further expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank."

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities said May 3 that the paper is "an outrage to everything that interfaith dialogue stands for" and "reads like an Inquisition-era polemic against Jews and Judaism."

"The arrogance of telling the Jewish people how to interpret Jewish texts and Jewish theology is breathtaking," the Jewish council said.

The council further declared that the paper "closes the door on meaningful dialogue" and called on the church to withdraw it ahead of its forthcoming General Assembly.

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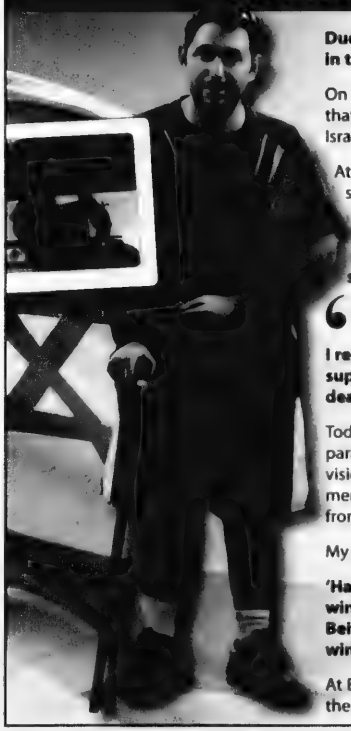

Dudi Saidof, a 24-year-old, was serving in the Border Police.

On August 11, 2003, Dudi's unit got word that a terrorist was trying to infiltrate into Israel. **The country was on high alert!**

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Nazi influence in the Arab world

Rafael Medoff
JNS.org

Nazi Germany's effort to recruit supporters in the Arab world is attracting new attention among scholars.

With the 70th anniversary of a Palestinian Arab leader's sabotage of a plan to rescue Jewish children from Europe coming up next month, Israeli scholar Edy Cohen spoke exclusively to *JNS.org* about his current research on the role of Nazi and Axis propaganda in the Middle East. Cohen, 41, is on the staff of the Israel State Archives.

During the Holocaust years, Haj Amin el-Husseini, better known as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, lived in Berlin, where he recorded pro-Nazi radio broadcasts that were beamed to the Arab world and recruited Bosnian Muslims to join an all-Muslim unit of the SS.

Seventy years ago, on May 13, 1943, Husseini caught wind of a plan to permit 4,000 Jewish children, accompanied by 500 adults, to travel to Palestine in exchange for the release of 20,000 German prisoners of war. Both the Germans and the British had agreed to the exchange, but the Germans backed down when the Mufti objected.

The Mufti was the most prominent Arab figure to support the Nazis, but he was not alone. "My research tracks the effort by the Germans, Italians and Japanese to spread their propaganda and influence in Palestine and various Arab countries," said Cohen, who was born and raised in Beirut and immigrated to Israel in 1995. "They worked hard at it and, to a significant extent, they succeeded."

Cohen has been combing through Arabic-language Nazi and Axis leaflets and radio broadcasts that were collected and analyzed by Haganah intelligence in the 1930s and 1940s.

Some of the leaflets found by Cohen feature stark headlines such as "Kill the Jews and the British!" Some were printed on the back of facsimile British pounds or American dollars, so that when they were dropped by German planes over Arab regions of Palestine, they looked like money and immediately attracted attention.

According to Cohen, some of the Arabic-language Nazi propaganda promised that those who attacked Jews would be rewarded by being given "the most beautiful of the Jewish girls" after Palestine's Jewish community was vanquished. "That sort of language makes one think of the promise that Muslim terrorist leaders today sometimes offer – that those who die while killing Jews will receive 70 virgins in heaven," Cohen said.

The text of the leaflets and broadcasts were composed by Nazi authors, and then translated into Arabic by members of the Mufti's entourage in Berlin. Some of the Mufti's men in Germany were more than writers: several parachuted into Palestine in 1944 with vials of poison that they intended to dump in the Tel Aviv water system. They were intercepted by the British police before they could carry out the attack.

Haj Amin el-Husseini with Nazi SS officers in November 1943 *(German Federal Archives)*

Cohen found an internal memo from British police headquarters in Jerusalem in 1939 reporting, "The Arab population in Palestine are listening to the Berlin broadcasts in Arabic most attentively, particularly in town and village coffee shops where large crowds gather for the purpose." The report stated that the "uneducated classes are undoubtedly being influenced" by the Nazi propaganda.

In 1945, the activists known as the Bergson Group successfully lobbied the government of Yugoslavia to indict the Mufti as a war criminal, because of atrocities committed against Allied soldiers and civilians by members of the Bosnian Muslim SS unit, known as "Handschar," that he helped create. The Yugoslavs never took steps to extradite him, however.

Husseini fled Berlin during the final days of the war but was briefly detained by the French authorities and placed under house arrest in a Paris villa. In response to Arab pressure, the French permitted the Mufti to stage a faux escape, and he found haven in Cairo. Later he moved to Beirut, where he died in 1974.

Earlier this year, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas stirred controversy when, in a PA television broadcast, he listed the Mufti's name among a number of "martyrs and heroes" who have died while fighting Jews or Israelis.

Rafael Medoff is founding director of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, in Washington, D.C.

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Bunker buster upgrade

U.S. officials reportedly told Israel that the United States has improved weapons capable of destroying Iran's underground nuclear site in Fordow. The *Wall Street Journal*, quoting unnamed U.S. officials, reported that the United States had assured Israel that advanced features added to its bunker buster bombs vastly improved its ability to destroy underground facilities. The paper reported that the United States hopes the improved Massive Ordnance Penetrator, or MOP, will convince Israel to hold off on unilaterally attacking Iran and give Washington more time to address Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program diplomatically.

Borders 'precondition' rejected

Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, has reportedly refused to accept the 1967 border as the basis for a final Israeli-Palestinian border prior to negotiations. Livni told U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry that Israel would not agree to the 1967 borders as a precondition of peace negotiations with the Palestinians, *Maariv* reported. Rather, she said, the border issue must be resolved through talks. U.S. President Barack Obama has called for resumption of negotiations "on the basis" of the 1967 borders, a reference widely interpreted as allowing for an agreement in which Jewish settlement blocs become Israeli territory in exchange for other areas. Earlier this week, the Arab League for the first time publicly cited the possibility of "comparable," mutually agreed and "minor" land swaps between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Google recognizes 'Palestine'

Google has changed the title on the homepage of its Palestinian edition from "Palestinian Territories" to "Palestine." In a statement to the *BBC* last week, Google said it was "following the lead" of several bodies, including the United Nations, in adopting the change across its products. In November, the United Nations granted Palestine the status of "non-member observer state." The Palestinian Authority welcomed Google's decision, the *BBC* reported. Israel considers any formal use of the word Palestine as pre-judging the outcome of currently stalled peace talks.

Clashes erupt after murder

Israelis and Palestinians clashed in the West Bank more than a day after the murder of a Jewish man by a Palestinian attacker. Jews threw rocks at passing Palestinian cars. Jews and Palestinians threw rocks at each other in the northern West Bank on May 1, according to reports. Eviatar Borovsky, 31, a father of five from the Yitzhar settlement, was stabbed to death on April 30 as he waited for a bus at the Tapuach Junction. The stabber then took Borovsky's gun and began shooting at Border Guard officers. The officers returned fire, injuring the alleged Palestinian perpetrator, who was taken to an Israeli hospital to be treated for his wounds. Some 15 Jews were arrested for violence against Palestinians in the immediate aftermath of the stabbing. *Files from JTA*

Architecture business takes Diamond around the world

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Jack Diamond's architecture firm is downtown, but his business takes him around the world.

A couple of weeks ago, he was in his corner office, chatting with a prominent public figure about the proposed casino for Toronto – he's dead set against it. The day before, he flew in from St. Petersburg, Russia, where he was consulting about his design for the city's opera house, the New Mariinsky Theatre.

Architecture is now an international business. Firms from around the world were invited to bid on the project, but it was Diamond Schmitt Architects, the firm he co-founded, that was selected, based on its design, he said.

Jack Diamond

The St. Petersburg theatre is one of many of Diamond's projects that span the globe. Among the firm's completed designs are Jerusalem City Hall; Israel's Foreign Ministry building; the Sidney Harman Hall, the Harman Centre for the Arts in Jerusalem; plus other designs in Bulgaria, France, Ireland, China and the Caribbean.

As for the New Mariinsky Theatre, "it's a major project," he said. "It's the first opera house built in Russian since the czars."

Given that in Russia, concerts, operas and ballets are not an occasional diversion but a way of life, with hundreds of performances a year, Diamond and his team had to design not just the acoustically sophisticated hall, but also the production facilities where the opera's "back office" work is conducted.

In the end, said Diamond, "It's the most advanced opera house in the world."

Diamond's reputation and his accomplishments are well recognized in the architecture community. He's won numerous awards as testimony to that. Most recently, he was named recipient of the 2013 Lifetime Design Achievement Award from the Ontario Association of Architects. The award is presented to those firms that demonstrate "the best in architectural design and innovation."

World Architecture magazine has voted Diamond Schmitt one of the top 10 firms in the world in the cultural sector.

And in 2009, the firm was recognized by Deloitte LLP, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, KPMG and the Queen's University School of Business as one of Canada's 50 best managed companies.

The awards are nice, but the accolades that are most important to Diamond are those of his clients. And he believes he's earned those not just through designs that are pleasing to the eye, but they've got to work.

He's quite clear in distinguishing himself from other high-profile architects who relish in designs that are bold but not necessarily practical. He believes he has carved out a niche as someone who can deliver attractive properties, but at the promised cost and on time.

It's a competitive industry and Diamond believes "there are several ways in which we've succeeded." In building the business, "we're not slotted in any particular industry, because if that industry dies, you're dead."

Another important part of the company's business model is to not restrict oneself to a single country's economy. "That's why I've worked in several countries."

Over the years, he witnessed architectural firms overly reliant on one sector of the economy fall on hard times when that segment dried up. "I was determined that we would not be slotted or dependent on one sector or market," he said.

Winning bids on such projects demands design excellence, he continued, as well as cost control and on-time delivery.

It's important to oversee construction standards and the quality of materials so costs don't get out of hand, he said.

The firm employs five people just to ensure that materials and construction are done up to specifications in working drawings and other documentation.

"It's a tough game," Diamond said. "Contractors often tried to claim extras when they're not justified."

Diamond, a native of South Africa who earned his architecture degree at the University of Capetown, immigrated to Canada in the early 1960s. He worked as an academic for six years while he got his business up and running. It took him five years to score his first project at York Square. "In those days you got work through connections... social networks." Today, a computer program called MERX notifies firms of available projects.

It's a more level playing field, he said.

He also developed an intriguing theory about Jews and architecture. Jewish history, he suggests, is full of tensions between the spiritual and the material worlds. Architecture also has its contemplative, thoughtful side, but it must be geared to the practical social dimension.

Architects must design a building that "elevates life to something higher than the mundane," while dealing with budgetary and construction constraints, he contends.

Given its international reputation and the quality of the projects it tackles, Diamond Schmitt receives numerous applications from hopeful architects.

Diamond said the firm, which consists of 120 people, goes out of its way to "empower" people, soliciting their input on others' projects and constantly upgrading everyone's skills. "The bench strength here is unparallelled," and turnover is extremely low, he said.

A weekly lunch and learn lecture series aids in team building, as does a soup day in which each member of the firm, twice a year, prepares a fresh soup on the premises that employees share.

The result of these management practices can be seen in the bottom line. Diamond Schmitt has "been doing remarkably well... I must say we are satisfied with the financial aspect of the firm," he said.

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Disparate people linked during terrorist threat

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

A terrorist threat in Jerusalem sets off a chain of events that weave together the lives of an American journalist, an Israeli war hero, a Christian-Arab grocer, a Palestinian farmer and a budding terrorist.

This is the setting of *A Vision of Angels* (Owl Canyon Press) by Timothy Jay Smith, an award-winning author who lived in Jerusalem for two years.

Tensions run high from the beginning of the book. The action takes place during the week leading up to Easter, which coincides with Passover.

A suicide bomber on Jaffa Street leaves 10 dead and 15 injured; Palestinians are protesting their forced removal from a settlement in Ramallah; and an Israeli raid on a mosque during a mullah's provocative speech causes a mass stampede. And now, Israeli intelligence gets wind of a planned bomb attack in Jerusalem on Easter Sunday.

Smith populates his book with colourful characters. David Kessler is an American journalist who wants to give conflict a human face. He previously worked in Somalia, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan, and now finds himself in Israel covering the Mideast conflict. He is old fashioned enough to still use film for his pictures.

Major Jakov Levy is an Israeli war hero, "the saint of Sinai," who, under pressure from the chief of staff to keep the potential terrorists out of Israel, closes the border with the Gaza Strip.

"Another bomb and we may have to close down the National Tourism Office," he's warned.

Meanwhile, at home, he is embarrassed by his 22-year-old son, Mishe, who's a peace activist.

Issa is a grocer who works in the Old City. He's a Christian, married to a Muslim and finds himself unwittingly caught in the stampede outside the mosque as he tries to rescue his father-in-law.

Amin Mousa is an Oxford-educated Palestinian farmer. Mousa is an informant, striking a deal with Jakov to provide information in exchange for passes to let his fruit trucks get through checkpoints without delay.

Mohammed is a 15-year-old whose brother was a Hamas fighter killed by Israeli soldiers. He now wants to help Hamas stage its next attack, determined to prove himself.

The author provides vivid, colourful description. You could almost smell the over-ripe tomatoes stacked in crates and hear the buzzing of flies that surround them.

The suspenseful plot moves very quickly. Hamas militants, unable to smuggle their bomb across the closed border, devise a plan to smuggle it out in David's car, but he's unexpectedly detoured on the way.

One of the cell members confesses to this plot, and the race is on to find David and retrieve the bomb, before the terrorists can get it.

Like his journalist character, Smith tries to give the different sides of this conflict a human face. The stories of all these characters and their families are slowly interwoven together before a climactic ending that is ultimately one of hope.

A Vision of Angels will be in stores in early July.

Book helps kids understand what death means

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

Discussing death with young children can be brutal, but it's a discussion that has to happen eventually. It's a crucial conversation, too, for it arms kids with information they will need in order to process what death means.

It can be helpful to impart this information with a good book on hand, and *Stones for Grandpa* (KarBen, 2013) by Renee Londner beautifully handles the pain and anxiety surrounding death, conveying the power of memory as a source of comfort and permanence.

Londner wrote *Stones for Grandpa* after the death of her husband, using the voice of a young boy. The book begins a year after the death of the boy's grandfather, as he makes his way to the cemetery to unveil the tombstone. "I still miss him," the child reflects. "Mommy says the first year is the hardest."

He goes through his memories of his grandfather, using the Jewish holidays as his benchmarks. "It was the first Chanukkah without Grandpa spinning his lucky dreidel," he recalls.

Each holiday features vibrant illustrations by Martha Aviles depicting celebrations and milestones where his grandfather once took an active role, but over the past year was dearly missed.

He takes out a memory box his mother gave him after his grandfather's death, containing favourite photographs and meaningful memorabilia. The box triggers more memories of special moments the two of them shared – starwatching, tying knots and learning to overcome fear.

Though he relishes the memories, the child is afraid of their transience. "What if my memories get lost?" he asks his mother.

"Memories of someone you love never get lost," she responds.

The story returns to the cemetery and the unveiling ceremony, where visitors are placing stones on the gravesite. The air is filled with laughter and tears as everyone shares stories.

The book ends on a positive note, as the child begins to understand that his memories go far beyond the memory box, that they're contained inside him and will never disappear. He understands that life goes on after someone you love has died, and that while it's okay to miss them and feel sad about their absence, it's also possible to draw strength and joy from your memories of them.

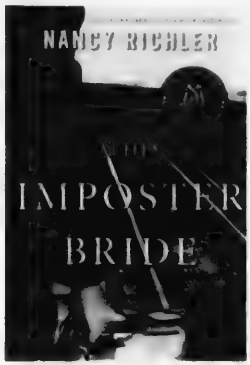
Stones for Grandpa offers a carefully written, thoughtful resource for parents teaching their three-to-seven-year-olds about death in a particularly Jewish context. For kids who have experienced the loss of a loved one, this book may offer solace and ideas for how to cope as they move forward.

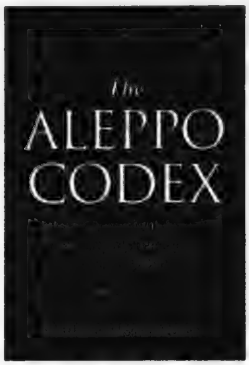
Nancy Richler wins top book award

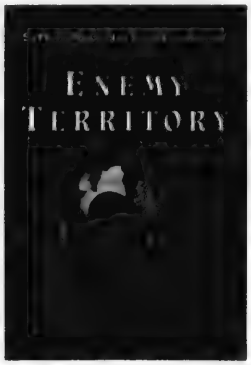
Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

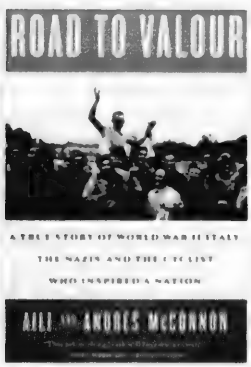
Montreal's Nancy Richler, Jerusalem-based Torontonian Matti Friedman and Victoria's Isa Milman are amongst the winners of the 2013 Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards announced May 2.

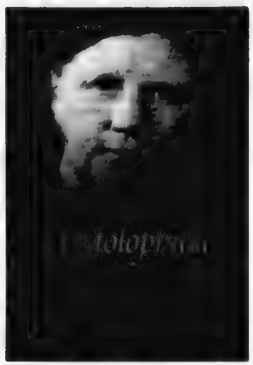
Richler won in the fiction category for her third novel *The Imposter Bride*. Richler's story of love, loss and betrayal tells the story of a daughter's quest to understand the mother who abandoned her soon after her birth in Montreal. The jury praised the novel as both deeply Canadian and Jewish. It was also shortlisted for the 2012 Scotiabank Giller Prize.











Times of Israel reporter Friedman won in the history category for *The Aleppo Codex: A True Story of Obsession, Faith and the Pursuit of the Ancient Bible*. Part history and part whodunit, Friedman's book chronicles the Codex's remarkable and controversial journey from 10th-century Tiberias to Syria, and eventually Israel.

Milman's *Something Small to Carry Home* is the winner in the poetry category.

Other winners include Sharon E. McKay in children's literature for her novel *Enemy Territory*. This is her 12th book. She has won close to 20 awards including the Arthur Ellis Award and UNESCO International Youth Library Award.

The winner in the Holocaust Literature category is Montreal-based scholar Julija Sukys' *Epistolophilia, Writing the Life of Ona Simaite*, praised for presenting a new type of reading of Holocaust texts.

L.Ruth Klein won the scholarship award for her book *Nazi Germany, Canadian Responses: Confronting Antisemitism in the Shadow of War*.

Aili and Andres McConnon won in the biography category for *Road to Valour: A True Story of World War II Italy, the Nazis and the Cyclist Who Inspired a Nation*.

Pierre Anctil rounds off the winners in the Yiddish category for his book *Jacob-Isaac Segal 1890-1954 Un, poete Yiddish de montreal et son milieu*.

The awards ceremony will take place on June 6 at the Bram and Bluma Appel Salon at the Toronto Reference Library in Toronto.

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Tuesday, May 21
Musical Potpourri
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Wednesday, May 22
Divahn: An Eastern Serenade
Holy Blossom

Thursday, May 23
The Great American Jewish Songbook
Toronto Centre for the Arts

Sunday, May 26
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Vintage comedian deserves the accolades of his many peers

Sheldon Kirshner
Staff Reporter

"There's no one like Mel," says a gushing admirer in reference to Mel Brooks, the standup comedian, screenwriter, film director and Broadway producer. "He's one of a kind."

Brooks, in fact, is not unique. But after 60 years in show business, he is indisputably one of its most talented figures.

Having earned a slew of major awards, he's one of only 14 entertainers who has won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony. So Brooks, who always craved attention and recognition, richly deserves the accolades of his peers.

He gets it in Susan Lacy's PBS biopic, *Mel Brooks: Make a Noise*, which will be broadcast on May 20 at 9 p.m. It covers just about all the bases, but comes up short in dealing with his childhood and early career.

There is precious little about his youth in Brooklyn, where he was born and where he was known as Melvin Kaminsky, the son of European immigrants. There is even less about his halcyon Borscht Belt days, when he refined his craft in front of Jewish vacationers in upstate New York resorts.

Nonetheless, *Mel Brooks* is fairly satisfying as biopics go.

Brooks, sitting in an empty room and prompted by the interviewer, recalls his entry into the business, his modus operandi as a comedian, his involvement in a myriad of projects from *Blazing Saddles* to *The Producers*, and his 40-year marriage to the Italian-American actress Anne Bancroft.

He speaks rapidly and funnily and, in some instances, he resorts to self-deprecating humour to describe himself as "arrogant" and "obnoxious."

Brooks says he was destined to be an entertainer when, at the age of nine, he attended a Broadway show, starring the irrepressible Ethel Merman, and loved it.

He discloses he learned the art of comedy writing on *Your Show of Shows*, which starred Sid Caesar. He specialized in "life sketches" and focused on both the bizarre and the commonplace, he notes.

After his first marriage broke up, he adds, he cried incessantly and considered suicide.

In an aside, Brooks says he feels "terribly Jewish" and likes being Jewish, but offers no elaboration.

He also makes a point of saying he writes for himself, not others.

In discussing *Blazing Saddles*, Brooks agrees it shattered Western movie conventions. In reflecting on *Young Frankenstein*, he says he insisted on filming it in black and white to achieve a greater degree of authenticity.

He debunks his skills as an actor, but calls himself a "smart comedian," a description that is bang on.

Mel Brooks in stellar form

He says he parodied Adolf Hitler in *The Producers* out of a desire to ridicule the Nazi dictator. Nathan Lane, the star of that mega Broadway hit, says it succeeded because it was that "rare" production when "all the right people come together at the same time."

Lacy throws in scraps of information from his boyhood. Brooks grew up in "real poverty" after his father died and his mother had to scrounge around for a living. "I loved my mother," he says softly.

The late Bancroft, in an archival clip, speaks fondly of their courtship ("the man never left me alone, thank God") and sweetly says that Brooks looked like her father and acted like her mother.

In closing, he gratefully acknowledges having received every possible award, except, of course, The Woman of the Year prize.

Ha-ha.

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

BORN TO KVETCH AUTHOR PLANS TO TRANSLATE CLASSIC YIDDISH NOVEL

Joseph Opatoshu was one of the Yiddish language's most significant writers, but few readers have had the opportunity of reading his work, a situation that Toronto author **Michael Wex** is hoping to change. Opatoshu is "like the Yiddish equivalent of **Hemingway** or **Fitzgerald** in terms of influence, but he hardly exists in English," Wex lamented.

A Yiddish maven and author of the 2005 bestseller *Born to Kvetch* and other books, Wex is hoping to bring new attention to Opatoshu by translating into English his 1921 novel *In the Forests of Poland*, which he describes as "the most important Yiddish novel of the 20th century."

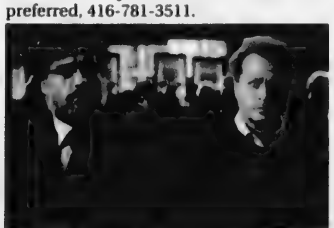
The new translation "will change everybody's views of Jewish life in Poland," he said, adding that his own plan to fund the translation project may transform the way such forgotten classics are translated in future.

This week Wex intends to enlist financial support for the translation from lovers of Jewish literature through an online funding campaign on the Indiegogo website. His eventual goal is to publish the translation as a cost-free PDF or e-book. "I'm going to try to finance it as an Indiegogo project. The contributors will basically be making a present of the book to anyone with access to a computer or e-book reader."

Indiegogo is an international "crowdfunding" site where people attempt to raise money for film, music, art, charitable and other projects and causes. Wex's Indiegogo site was slated to go live on May 7 and remain active for a month.

• • •

Film Club Screens *Footnote*: The film and book club of the Beth Tzedec Max and Beatrice Wolfe Library is screening the 2011 Israeli dramatic film *Footnote*, dealing with the rivalry of two great scholars, a father and son; the film was an Oscar nominee for best foreign film. 1700 Bathurst St., Monday, May 13, film 10:30 a.m., dessert 12:30 p.m., review by **Heather Kassel** at 1 p.m. $20 at the door; RSVP preferred, 416-781-3511.



***Footnote* screens May 13.**

BBC Cancels Broadcast: The British Broadcasting Corporation is being criticized for its last-minute decision to cancel the broadcast of the Israeli documentary film *Exile: A Myth Unearthed*, about the Jewish exodus from Jerusalem in 70 CE. The film, by director **Ilan Ziv**, was featured in the Toronto Jewish Film Festival in April and has also been shown on Canadian television.

The film hypothesizes that many Jews stayed in Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple and are the ancestors of some present-day Palestinians. According to a story from *JTA*, the BBC said the film did "not fit editorially" with its season and its professed theme of exploring the history of archeology.

Simon Plosker of the watchdog agency HonestReporting suggested the BBC dropped the documentary so as not to upset anti-Israel elements "by showing a film with such a heavy concentration on Jewish history in the Land of Israel." The BBC has often come under fire in the past from supporters of Israel for its coverage of the events in the Middle East.

• • •

Names in the News: Legendary music promoter **Bernie Finkelstein**, author of the engaging memoir *True North: A Life in the Music Business*, is one of four finalists for this year's National Business Book Award, a prestigious literary prize worth $20,000. The other contenders are **Chrystia Freeland** for *Plutocrats*, **Douglas Hunter** for *Double Double* (about Tim Hortons) and **Amanda Lang** for *The Power of Why*.

• • •

Theatre Scene

• **Maya Rabinovitch**'s play *I Will Not Hatch!*, which focuses on a wild episode on an airplane involving a suspected terrorist, continues at the Berkeley Street Theatre until May 11. 416-368-1110, www.canadianstage.com

• **Adam Seelig**'s small theatre company, One Little Goat, presents *The Charge of the Expormidable Moose* by Quebec playwright **Claude Gauvreau**, performed in English translation; the seven-person play is regarded as a masterpiece of Montreal's radical artistic movement. Tarragon Theatre Extra Space, 30 Bridgman Ave. May 10 to 26. $28, 25, $20. www.OneLittleGoat.org, 416-531-1827.

Arts in Brief

• Toronto Workmen's Circle and Now and Then Books present the launch of *Only Yesterday: Collected Pieces on the Jews of Toronto*, by **Ben Kayfetz** and **Stephen Speisman**. The launch features a presentation by the book's editor and *CJN* columnist **Bill Gladstone**. 471 Lawrence Ave. W., Thursday, May 9, 7:30 p.m.

The BBC is being criticized for cancelling the broadcast of the Israeli documentary *Exile: A Myth Unearthed*, a film about the Jewish exodus from Jerusalem.

Admission free, everyone welcome. www.nowandthenbookstoronto.com

• Love 'em or Hate 'em, a series of discussions about four controversial film directors by **Adam Nayman**, opens May 13 with **Roman Polanski**. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, $12 drop-in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation presents violin prodigy **Itamar Zorman** of Israel, accompanied by pianist **Liza Stepanova**. The concert takes place in a private residence in Thornhill, Thursday, May 23, 7:30 p.m. Suggested minimum donation, $100 per person. www.cicfweb.ca, 416-932-2260.

• • •

At the Galleries

• The Art Gallery of Ontario presents works by legendary photographers **Irving Penn, Arnaud Maggs, Richard Avedon** and many others as part of the Contact Photography Festival. The exhibition, *Light My Fire*, showcases photographic portraits created over a 150-year period. Currently on view.

• Petroff Gallery is closing its doors at 1016 Eglinton Ave. W. and "going virtual" as of June 18, with a planned new firm, Petroff Design, slated to begin operations in the fall. A retrospective celebration takes place at the gallery on Thursday May 30, 5 to 10 p.m. The gallery owners are **Sara Levine Petroff** and **Steven L. Petroff**.

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Israel moves up in IIHF ranking after gold medal win

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Israel knocked off tournament favourites China and New Zealand, won four out of five games and captured the gold medal at the International Ice Hockey Federation's (IIHF) Division II B tournament in Izmit, Turkey recently. With the win, Israel is promoted into Division II A next year.

Israel entered the tournament after a disappointing result last year, in which they finished fifth. But led by the top line of Oren Eizenman, Daniel Erlich and Max Birbraer, the Israelis cruised to the gold medal.

They secured top spot even before closing out the competition with a loss to Mexico. Israel finished ahead of Bulgaria, Mexico, New Zealand, China and Turkey.

"That's the best club we've have," said head coach Jean Perron. "I'm not talking about talent. I'm talking about team discipline, hard work and the way the guys played together, the chemistry. It was very good."

Perron, who coached the Montreal Canadiens to a Stanley Cup win in 1986, has served as coach of the Israelis for several years, leading them to a gold medal in 2005.

Over the years, the success of the Israeli national team depended on which top players were available at the time. Going into Turkey, IIHF observers saw the team as an unknown entity. But with Erlich, who played for the University of Western Ontario after seasons with the Barrie Colts and London Knights of the OHL, Eizenman, who has played in the AHL and the BCHL and Birbraer, a New Jersey draftee who played in the British elite league, the team was poised to surprise.

"We started the tournament by upsetting the good clubs, China and New Zealand," Perron said on the phone from Quebec. "That gives you confidence."

"From then on we had good goaltending and a good environment for the guys too."

Perron said the Israelis took hold of the tournament by excelling on the power play. In five games the Israelis scored 19 goals in 42 man-advantage situations, for a stunning success rate of 45.24 per cent.

"They tried to run us, we stayed disciplined and capitalized on the power play," Perron said.

Eizenman, who centred Erlich on right wing and Birbraer on left, said Perron changed their line for the power play. He and Birbraer played the points, while Erlich was joined by Sergei Frankel and Daniel Mazour up front. "There was a lot of puck movement... It was one of the biggest factors in winning," Eizenman said.

"We drew a lot of penalties, just from our speed and creativity," he added. "I think we were clearly the best team in the event, from goaltending to defense."

Avishai Geller, who played forward on the team, recruited Erlich for the event. "In the last minute I decided to go and it turned out to be a great experience," he said.

Perron "gave [the top line] lots of leeway to do what we wanted... We all played really high-level hockey and we knew what to do."

While Israel continues to rely on North American-trained players, Perron believes the hockey talent being developed in Israel itself is getting better year by year. He singled out young defensemen Raanan Moscovich, Shai Maaravi and Evgeni Margoulis in particular. He credited assistant coach Dusan Kralik, a former Czech national junior player, for preparing the defense and getting the most out of the young players.

Israeli Avihu Sorotzky was named best goalie of the tournament. Erlich and Eizenman were first and second in scoring, with Erlich notching 7 goals and 16 assists for 23 points while Eizenman got 8 goals and 10 assists for 18 points. Erlich scored 11 points in a 13-2 rout of Bulgaria.

Though Israel and Turkey are experiencing somewhat chilly relations, that did not manifest itself in the tournament. Everything was run in a first class manner, Perron and Eizenman said.

Only one minor incident occurred. As the Israeli national anthem was being played after the victory over China, some fans began heckling. Arena personnel escorted the fans out of the venue and afterwards, officials of the Turkish hockey federation personally apologized for the slight, Perron said.

For more about Oren Eizenman, see Heebonics on page 46.

100 shoot hoops for needy Israelis

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

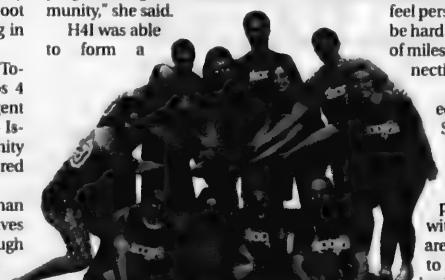
More than 100 players from across the GTA, as well as from Dundas and Hamilton, got together recently at the Kimel Family Education Centre in Vaughan, Ont., to shoot hoops and raise money for Israelis living in poverty.

Hosted by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Community Connect, the Hoops 4 Israel (H4I) event raised $45,000 for indigent and unemployed residents of Bat Yam – Israel's fastest growing Ethiopian community where 40 per cent of youth are considered at-risk.

Since 2007, H4I has raised more than $550,000 and directly enhanced the lives of hundreds of Ethiopian-Israelis through sports and educational programs. This year, participants were divided into 18 male teams and six female squads. In addition to the main 3-on-3 competition, there was a free throw challenge for fans to win great prizes.

Ashley Kochman, Lesley Suchter, Amy Wilchesky, Alex Baker and Laura Anava were crowned women's champions. Mateusz Zio, Igor Lebov, Jacob Anidjar and Isaac Maresky were tops among the men.

In 2013, the H4I committee took their event to the next level, seeking not only to benefit Israeli children but local Torontonians as well, said Jessica Taylor, manager of innovative initiatives at Community Connect. "The Hoops 4 Israel team has begun to 'Live the Cause' as we create opportunities for young adults to get involved directly in programming for children in our community," she said.



H4I was able to form a partnership with JCC Chai Sports, and together they hosted two free basketball workshops that brought together more than 60 kids in grades 1 through 8 and 20 volunteers.

"At Hoops 4 Israel, our cause is kids," said Lisa Winberg, one of the H4I committee members. "We wanted to come up with a Live the Cause event that would allow the young professionals involved in H4I to interact and engage with children in a meaningful way."

She said Live the Cause is important "because it is a way for young professionals to feel personally connected to the cause. It can be hard to feel a bond with a child thousands of miles away, so we sought to build this connection locally."

The basketball clinics were promoted through the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, Jewish Family & Child and Chai Lifeline in order to reach kids who may not otherwise be able to participate in such recreational programs. "By connecting volunteers with kids in our local community, we are bringing the spirit of Hoops 4 Israel to life and ensuring that the passion for basketball and making a difference continues to grow," Winberg said.

Aside from hosting the tournament, Community Connect volunteers also ran a stem cell and bone marrow drive at the venue. Players and spectators were encouraged to get a simple cheek swab to see if they could be potential donors.

The Israeli group Hadag Nahash provided musical entertainment and a local dance troupe put on a special cheerleading break.

For more information, visit www.hoops4israel.com.

Leipsic led league in regular season

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

As the Portland Winterhawks prepared to face off against the Edmonton Oil Kings for the Western Hockey League (WHL) championship, Portland forward Brendan Leipsic stood fifth in playoff scoring.

Not too shabby, but that paled in comparison to his regular season exploits: the Winnipeg-born skater led "The Dub" in points, scoring 49 goals and 71 assists for 120 points in 68 games. He finished tied with teammate Nicholas Petan at the top of the scoring derby but earned the title with three more goals scored (in three fewer games).

Heading into the final round of WHL playoffs, with the winners to advance to the Memorial Cup, the five-foot-nine 170-pound centre had 20 points – seven goals and 13 assists in 15 games. Teammate Ty Rattie led Western league playoff scorers with 31 points.

The Nashville Predators selected Leipsic in the third round, 89th overall, in the 2012 NHL Entry Draft. That same year he was named Manitoba Jewish Athlete of the Year.

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50 ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
65 ACCOMMODATION/SWAP/EXCHANGE
67 HOUSE SITTERS
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75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
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175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT OF TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT OF COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES EXCH./SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LANDLOTS FOR SALE
210 LANDLOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
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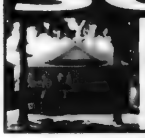

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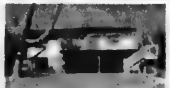

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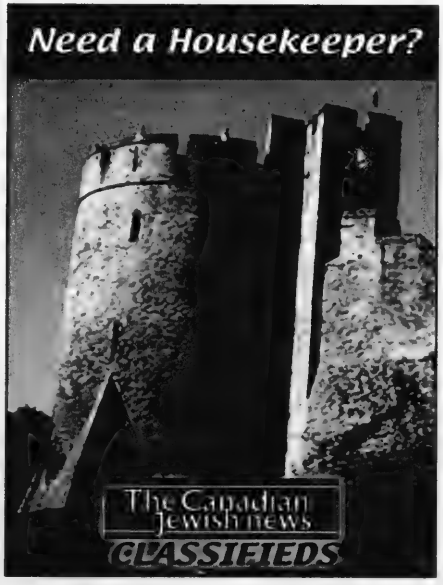

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Ottawa fights bid to take UN agency from Montreal

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The federal government, the province of Quebec and the city of Montreal, are rallying to prevent the city from losing the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a United Nations agency, to Qatar.

The Gulf emirate is making an aggressive bid to become the new world headquarters of the ICAO, which has been located in Montreal since its founding in 1947.

Qatar's fellow Arab states are reportedly coalescing to help Qatar obtain the needed 60 per cent majority among the ICAO's 191 member countries.

Long dissatisfied with the Harper government's strong support of Israel, they are said to be especially motivated on this issue because of anger over Baird's meeting with Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni in east Jerusalem during his Middle East trip last month.

The lease is due on the ICAO's downtown University Avenue premises in 2016, and Qatar is expected to formally present its proposal by May 13 so that it can be considered at the ICAO general assembly to be held in Montreal this fall.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird "will fight tooth and nail to keep the ICAO in its rightful home of Montreal," said his press secretary, Rick Roth.

Roth told *The CJN* that Baird spoke to Qatar's prime minister, Hamad bin Jassem Al-Thani, twice in the last week to express Ottawa's opposition to the Qatari bid.

"He has contacted counterparts in other countries seeking their support," Roth said. "And he is working with representatives of the provincial and municipal governments, because all three levels of government have a role to play."

A senior government source, who wished to remained unnamed, told *The CJN* that the way Qatar has gone about this demonstrates why it's not a suitable host for a UN organization.

"Look at how Qatar has come and put this bid together at the 11th hour. It raises serious concerns about them buying off countries with bribes and bags of cash – something any country that respects the rule of law would never do. We will continue to promote a principled foreign policy."

Oil- and gas-rich Qatar has reportedly sweetened its bid by offering to build a new ultra-modern facility in Doha, its capital and largest city, and to subsidize the agency's operations.

The ICAO oversees standards related to civil air transport and its development worldwide.

The presence of the ICAO brings both prestige and considerable economic benefits to Montreal and Quebec.

Roth noted that the ICAO provides 600 direct and 1,200 indirect jobs to the city, and more than $100 million in spinoffs. Its University Avenue building, which opened in 1996, was constructed especially to accommodate the growing agency and is now the hub of the growing Quartier International.

Roth said Baird phoned Montreal Mayor Michael Applebaum and they have agreed to work together with the province, business and other interested sectors to promote the city as the best place for the ICAO.

"By every means at its disposal, Canada will fight to highlight the benefits and advantages of staying in Montreal," Roth said. "The ICAO has been in Montreal for as long as the UN has been in New York. It's a natural home."

On May 2, Baird received unanimous consent from the House of Commons for a motion endorsing Montreal as "the rightful host" of the ICAO's headquarters.

The U.S. representative on the ICAO's governing council, Duane Woerth, said his country will opposed any relocation. Peter Subissati, director of political and public affairs at the Israeli consulate, said Israel's position is that the ICAO should remain in Montreal.

Support for the status quo has also come from the industry. On May 2, Aéroports de Montréal (ADM), which manages Trudeau and Mirabel airports, delivered an impassioned plea against any move, noting the economic benefits and that the presence of the ICAO has attracted other international bodies in the field of civil aviation to Montreal.

"If the ICAO's headquarters were to move to Qatar, this would severely penalize Airports Council International [a body that represents all the world's major airports, which recently moved to Montreal] and the many other aviation-related organizations established in Montreal," stated ADM president and chief executive officer James Cherry.

"We are an aviation and aerospace city, and the headquarters of the ICAO must remain in Montreal where it belongs."

The National Airlines Council of Canada, which speaks for Canada's major airlines, also came out against any change.

The International Transport Workers Federation has forcefully voiced its opposition, raising the matter of the emirate's repression of human rights.

Convicted terrorist speaks at UBC

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — University of British Columbia students who attended a May 4 conference held by the Social Justice Centre, a campus club sponsored by the school's Alma Mater Society, listened to the voice of a convicted terrorist when Leila Khaled addressed the conference via Skype.

Khaled, 68, was convicted of terrorism for carrying out hijackings in 1969 and 1970 for the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). She has been called the "poster girl of Palestinian militancy."

Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, said UBC abdicated its responsibility to stop Khaled from having the opportunity to "poison the minds of Canadian students."

He added: "Her presence, even if only by video, adds to the real risk of students being influenced by radical ideologies, especially at a time when home-grown Canadian terrorism is a major concern."

The Social Justice Centre is a resource group of the AMS and completely independent from the university, said Lucie McNeill, director of public affairs at UBC.

"The university does recognize its responsibility in creating a safe and respectful environment for all on our campuses. The AMS does not represent the University of British Columbia," she said.

"It should be clear that UBC as an institution does not in any way sponsor or support the views expressed at events like this one. UBC is merely providing a safe environment for free speech and respectful debate."

But Dimant said that giving Khaled a platform at a UBC affiliated event is "absurd. Given recent events such as the arrest of two individuals in connection to a plot to bomb a Via Rail train, the horrific Boston Marathon attacks and the continuing investigation into the radicalization of youths from London, it is the responsibility of the university, as well as every Canadian, to speak out when it comes to security and safety."

Neither the AMS nor the Social Justice Centre responded to calls for comment before *The CJN*'s deadline.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Eizenman takes hockey skills to Japan and Korea

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There are some aspects of hockey that don't necessarily translate well into other languages.

For instance, how do you say "faceoff" in Japanese?

Or "switch sides" in Korean? How about, "fore check?"

And then there are the more nuanced aspects of the gentleman's game that crop up now and then, such as "face wash" and, "you wanna go?"

Despite spending the last year playing for the Nippon Paper Cranes in the Asia League Ice Hockey – that's how it's described on its web site – Oren Eizenman admits he hasn't picked up all the subtler hockey expressions in the Japanese language. He understood some of his coach's instructions, like when he was asked to switch sides when he played the point on a power play. But for the other stuff he had to rely on the team interpreter, who attended practices and even has a place behind the bench during games.

"It's a very interesting dynamic," Eizenman said.

Having an interpreter at the bench is one of the nice perks provided by the Paper Cranes, making his hockey experience in the Asia league that much more enjoyable.

Truth be told, games in Asia are less gritty and abrasive than the ones played in North America. The ice surfaces are larger, making for games that stress skating, passing and skill, not in-your-face intimidation. "It's a very fast game with less contact" than the North American variety, he said.

And that suits Eizenman just fine. A natural centre, he has staked out a career on style and finesse, though playing in the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL) and the American Hockey League (AHL), he wasn't afraid to dig for the puck in the corners.

In the season just concluded with the Nippon Paper Cranes – they take their name from their corporate sponsors – he scored 13 goals and added 25 assists for 38 points in an injury-hampered season.

The year before with High 1 in Seoul, South Korea, he scored 63 points in 36 games. The seven-city league has teams in Japan, South Korea and China.

Before his Asia adventure, Eizenman,

Oren Eizenman bears down on the puck.

28, enjoyed a lengthy career in the ECHL and the AHL. Name a place and he's been there. He's played for Connecticut Whale, Syracuse Crunch, Milwaukee Admirals, San Antonio Rampage and the Manitoba Moose in the AHL. His longest stint was 33 games with the Whale in 2010-11. But, as he reminds, it was only one phone call away from a call-up to the Whale's NHL affiliate, the New York Rangers.

In the ECHL, he spent most of his time with the Fresno Falcons and the Stockton Thunder. Career wise, in 148 ECHL games, he scored 58 goals and added 104 assists for 162 points. In 82 AHL games, he scored six goals and added nine assists.

A dual Canadian and Israeli citizen, he's also represented Israel at IIHF tournaments, usually playing on the top line. For more about this year's event in Izmit, Turkey, see our sports page.

Playing in Seoul and Kushiro, Japan, has been a blast, he said. "It's been a great experience to go and live in those places for a couple of years."

There are only two North American skaters permitted on each team, so for Eizenman to make the cut is a testament to his ability. "It's a difficult league to get into. It's a really coveted job in the hockey world," he said.

The upside for those who make it is that the pay is even better than in European pro leagues. There, North Americans can earn high five figure or six figure salaries, tax free, along with free accommodation and use of a car, plus other benefits.

So how did he end up in the Far East?

"Originally, I did go because when I left North America, I was looking anywhere and the financial offer came from a team in Seoul. I thought it would be interesting to live in Asia.

"At first, I went in blind, but I had heard good things."

Eizenman was pleased with the hockey experience. Everything there is top quality, he said.

A drawback in both countries, he continued, is that "not everybody speaks English. I tried to learn the language but it is very different."

Making the situation even more intriguing is that the Cranes' head coach named him assistant captain, even though he could barely speak Japanese.

"They saw that I'm a lead-by-example kind of player," he said. And he served as an antidote to a malaise that sometime plagued the team. "The team had a tendency to get down if things were not going so well and get into a downward spiral… If the team saw that Oren was not worried, so they didn't worry either."

At the cultural level, Eizenman admits the adjustment was at times difficult, but "I learned a lot about their cultures. I learned a lot about myself and grew from the experience."

One of the big differences in Japan was a pervasive deference to authority. The coach's word was law and even young players had to do what the older ones demanded. That's a far cry from the Canadian attitude, let alone the Israeli one, which is, ahem, not that impressed with authority.

Eizenman's teammates on the Cranes came to know him as both an Israeli and a Canadian, but few had a clue about Jewish people. "People couldn't even comprehend what Judaism is," he said.

His teammates were curious and he did his best to explain it to them. "I became really close to almost all my teammates. People ask, how did you communicate? There's a way to use the basic words in their language and they use the basic words in your language."

Eizenman has also come to believe the truism that 90 per cent of communications is non-verbal.

And that just proved another truism, that sport transcends different cultures, so that you don't have to know how to say "face wash" in Japanese to get along.

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Creative matchmaking

Sustainable Jew

Fred Winegust

It was Oct. 30, 1971. I was 13 years old, and I was about to lose something I enjoyed every day. The folding of the *Toronto Telegram* was my first exposure to the end of a newspaper. And now, almost 42 years later, we are about to lose something unique: *The CJN*.

I experienced the biggest laugh of my life while watching the 1982 movie *Airplane II*. One of the characters was talking about something important that was in all the papers – the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Canadian Jewish News*. *The CJN* had made it to mainstream Hollywood.

In my university days, I wrote for, and was co-editor of, the Jewish student newspaper, *Images*, a joint effort of Jewish students from the University of Toronto and York University. Secretly, I had a desire to write for *The CJN*.

In the summer of 2010, *CJN* editor Mordechai Ben-Dat was looking for something a bit different for a monthly column to occupy the inside back page of the paper. I spoke to him about the topic of the environment and sustainability, and from that conversation, the Sustainable Jew was born.

When the column started to appear on a regular basis in January 2011, my hope was that by facilitating a better understanding of the various sources of greenhouse gas pollution, the column would inspire personal, community and business action toward becoming "Sustainable Jews."

Over the last 2-1/2 years, I wrote about various aspects of sustainability.

I shared stories with you about many interesting people with diverse experiences and backgrounds, in our community and in Israel.

I spoke on the topic of sustainability at a number of local Jewish day schools, and watched as students and staff of these schools worked together to bring new ideas forward and tried to make a difference to our world.

Some synagogues began to take action on sustainability. Some looked at ways to generate money by taking advantage of the then-lucrative solar-energy programs offered by the Ontario government. Other synagogues and organizations began to look at their own operations and found ways to reduce energy consumption and hold the line on cost increases as energy rates fluctuated.

Another new opportunity is about to open through creative matchmaking. I recently attended a session, sponsored by the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Fund, which brought together representatives from the Canadian oil sands industry and representatives selected Israeli companies with expertise in treating wastewater and other byproducts of the resource extraction process. The opportunity to improve our world is enormous.

The end of *The CJN* will save trees and the energy used to create new and recycled newsprint. But *The CJN*'s ability to inform and engage the community will be missed.

I want to thank my family, my loyal readers and Mordechai for the opportunity to write for paper. May we continue this journey for tikkun olam in the electronic edition of *The CJN* or its eventual successor.

Winegust@gmail.com

CHERRY SALMON

2 c pitted canned cherries
1/4 c margarine • 1/3 c red wine vinegar
2 tbls honey • 1 tbls cornstarch
1/3 cold water • 4 salmon fillets, about 1" thick
Salt & pepper to taste

Place cherries, margarine, vinegar, honey in saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce to simmer; cook until mixture has reduced, about 10 min. While sauce is simmering, whisk cornstarch and water together in small bowl; stir into cherry mixture. Bring back to simmer, stirring until thickened, about 5 min. Remove from heat.

Preheat broiler; sprinkle salmon with salt and black pepper; place skin sides down on broiling pan. Broil 30 sec.; remove from broiler and spoon the cherry glaze generously over fillets. Continue back under broiler, until salmon is opaque 8-10 min. Remove, reglaze with cherry sauce once or twice more during cooking. Let salmon stand before serving. Spoon extra cherry sauce before serving.

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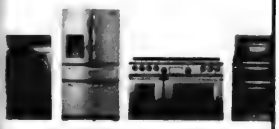

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The CJN's French-language reporter in Montreal, Elias Levy, writes about:

Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy, who recently spoke in Montreal as the guest of the Metropolitan Montreal Chamber of Commerce.

Hungarian-born Holocaust survivor Magda Hollander-Lafon, who lives in Belgium. She will talk about her book on her concentration camp experiences, May 13 in Montreal.

Exclusive to cjnews.com

A local Muslim women's group is reaching out to the Jewish community for greater dialogue through the screening of a documentary film that offers the perspective of those people of faith struggling against the hijacking of their religions by extremists.

Shaheen Ashraf, left, seen here with Deena Roskies, is realizing her dream of a Montreal première for the film *Out of Cordoba*, which carries a message of tolerance.

Ode to The CJN

Dedicated to Meyer and Dorothy Nurenberger, founders of The CJN

Urban Writer

Avrum Rosensweig

Shabbat dinner was winding down, and the family's guest excused herself from the table. She lay down on the couch in the den and adjusted the pillow so her head was propped up sufficiently to read *The CJN* – her favourite publication.

"The Six Day War was a military miracle," she read. The entire issue covered the war. She learned about Jewish bravery. She also learned that community members had lined up to give their jewelry to the United Jewish Appeal for the war effort. The guest dozed off and *The CJN* slipped onto the floor.

Monday morning came. Oded gulped down his breakfast. Shoe sales were dipping, and he had to make it to work early. On the way out, he noticed *The CJN* on the floor in the family room. He put it in his briefcase. The subway was busy, but he found a seat.

Oded opened *The CJN* and flipped to Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut's commentary. He had known little about the "Boat People" from Vietnam, other than that Canada was embracing them as refugees. Rabbi Plaut eloquently weaved a story about a family that had arrived in Toronto the week before, sponsored by the Jewish community. The man smiled and stuffed the paper in his briefcase.

The woman took a break from her sewing machine. She had filled her quota of shoes and wanted to review the advertisements in the Jewish newspaper the boss brought to work every week. She took a seat in the lunchroom. She read: "Good family in the Manor looking for full-time help. Hours and pay excellent." Her sister had just arrived from Italy. She tucked the ad into her pocket and would show it to her sibling later on.

Time wore on. The young man was tired. He dropped by the cafeteria and noticed *The CJN* on a table. Not a week went by when he wouldn't read Canada's national Jewish newspaper cover to cover. He was interested in everything from the community's relationship with the government to features on the NHL's only Jewish hockey player. He rolled up the paper and took it home.

That night he opened *The CJN*. The headlines shouted out: "Soviet Jews coming home." He read about Operation Exodus, a Jewish Agency program to bring hundreds of thousands of Jews from the former Soviet Union to Israel. He read with nachas about the Israel Defence Forces and the American Joint Distribution Committee rescues in Azerbaijan and Odessa, and the courage of Jews assisting with Operation Exodus. It reminded him of *CJN* articles years earlier about the Raid on Entebbe. It was late. The man fell asleep. *The CJN* slipped to the floor.

Marky's restaurant was closing. Conversion was under scrutiny in Israel again. Canadian Jewish Congress was no more. The man's sister sipped her coffee and flipped through *The CJN*. A personal ad caught her eye. She was looking for a shidduch. Rosh Hashanah was here again, and she quite liked the honey chicken recipe she saw in the paper. Shaarei Tefillah was advertising seats. She saw an article about the community's gay and lesbian High Holiday services. She circled it and made a mental note to tell her brother.

June 27, 2013. It was a cool Montreal morning. The elderly Jew waited for *The CJN* to arrive. The day would be long and sad without it.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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No Place Like Home

The Canadian Jewish news

Making the most of confined quarters

Small spaces seem larger with convertible and custom furniture

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

The trick to making a small condominium liveable is to make the most of the available space, says decorator Maureen Weigen-Liebovitz.

She advises planning the use of the space before moving day, especially for people downsizing, because often their older furniture may be be too bulky for their new home.

"It's important to make sure the scale of furniture is a good fit with the condo. The proportion has to be right for the space."

All the space must have a clear function, and sometimes a single space may have multiple functions, she says, explaining that much of the furniture being designed for condos often has a variety of uses.

She points to Resource Furniture's (www.resourcefurniture.com) Goliath console table, which measures 19 by 39 inches, but converts to a 9-1/2-foot dining table with five leaves.

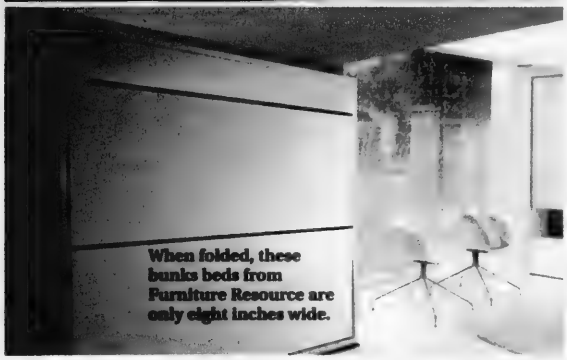
Seamus Butterly, a sales associate at Resource Furniture (416-901-7555), says all the furniture pieces in the showroom (366 Adelaide St. E.) have more than one function to maximize space.

The company, which is based in New York, specializes in wall-bed units, and Butterly is quick to demonstrate the speed at which a room changes.

"It goes from home office to guest bed in two seconds," he says. As he pulls a lever, the desk swings into the wall and down comes a fully made bed.

He notes that the furniture is manufactured in Italy, and each piece is customized. Buyers can choose from an array of colours and finishes, such as oak veneer, paint or melamine, with varying price points.

The units are also modular, so features such as cupboards and additional shelving can be added.



When folded, these bunks beds from Furniture Resource are only eight inches wide.

"The Italians have been making these units for 50 years. They use the best mechanics. We're known as the Mercedes of wall bed systems."

He says empty nesters tend to choose higher-end designs and finishes, while the simpler melamine styles appeal to first-time homebuyers.

Resource Furniture also offers designs for children's rooms that include bunk beds and desks that convert to twin beds.

Weigen-Liebovitz (www.decoratingvision.com) stresses the importance of measuring a room before considering wall-bed units, because they won't fit into some of the smaller condo bedrooms However, she says there are other space-saving solutions for beds beyond conventional convertible couches.

Urban Mode (www.urbanmode.com), a contemporary furniture store in the Queen and Bathurst area (145 Tecumseth Ave.), offers a variety options for duo purpose beds. The store carries a Canadian brand of ottomans in a 28-inch width that convert to single, double and queen size beds.

According to Myrlene Sundberg, co-owner of Urban Mode (416-591-8834), furniture pieces such as these ottomans

Continued on page B4

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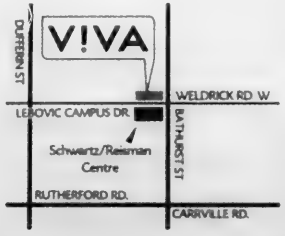

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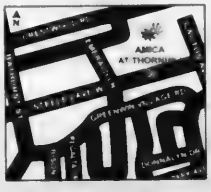

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Furniture helps alleviate the squeeze

Continued from page B2

have to do "double duty" in small homes that use the same space for multiple functions.

"These ottomans are very versatile and can be used for home offices, living rooms or dens," she says.

"I have a woman from Rockport, Me., who is ordering them for her cottage to use at the table as a bench. When the kids visit, the ottomans can be pulled out to be used as beds."

There's also a large selection of fabrics to choose from so these ottomans can be matched with any decor, she adds.

Urban Mode also carries a cigar lounge that becomes a queen size bed, as does a sectional couch with chaise lounge.

The store also has beds with storage space instead of a box spring, Sundberg says. "This is the perfect area to store out-of-season clothing or extra linen. It can all be customized."

BoConcept (www.boconcept.ca), a Danish company located at 230 Adelaide St. E., also carries a line of multi-purpose sleepers, including ottomans that convert to beds. They come in multiple sizes, with a wide selection of fabrics in varying prices.

Design consultant Larkin Vipond says ottomans are popular, but a 68-inch double-seated sofa bed is one of BoConcept's (647-352-8802) best sellers. "It slides down into a queen-size bed. You never have to pull it out."

The store also has a coffee table with a height and width that doubles in size so that it turns into a dining room table that's approximately 55 by 28 inches. Another space-saving coffee table has a shallow storage area with lids that flip up and become small workspaces. Vipond says it's ideal for using a laptop while you sit on the couch.

BoConcept also carries a selection of dining-room tables that expand in size. These extension tables have built-in leaves that extend the tables so that they practically double in size: the 36- and 55-inch tables become 72 and 95 inches, respectively. BoConcept's 18-inch wide console table doubles in width to become a small dining room or work table.

A similar style Canadian-made console table can be found further north at Shelter (416-783-3333), a modern and contemporary furniture store (www.shelter-furniture.ca) at 885 Caledonia Rd. Design consultant Nicole Howard, says this flip-top table console table measures 18 by 48-inches closed and doubles in width to become a work or small dining table.

"It's a great solution to space saving. You can use it as a console table in a foyer or behind a sofa, or it can be used as a desk. It's whatever you make it."

Shelter sells couches that can be customized for small spaces. Buyers can choose from a variety of finishes. "You pick a size and a fabric swatch and depending on the manufacturer, leg and arm finishes and cushion fills are customizable."

Apartment-size sofas are about a foot shorter than standard couches, which are about 90 inches in length, and people generally choose a smaller depth for a less bulky look, says Sundberg of Urban Mode. The store also has a range of sofa styles and fabrics to choose from.

BoConcept also offers a selection of sofas in a range of depths. Most of their couches are modules so the lengths of their sofas are very flexible.

Pieces that do double duty can help maximize small spaces.

Both BoConcept and Urban Mode sell modular shelving for wall units that can be adjusted in size. Such wall units are important design features for maximizing vertical space in small condos, says Weigen-Liebovitz.

"Many condos have lots of windows, but little wall space, so you have to take advantage and make the best use of whatever vertical space you have for practical reasons. You need to plan for storage."

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And Anita Latner of Anita Latner Realty Inc. specializes in finding that perfect property in Muskoka for you.

"I always say that if your house is your castle, then your cottage is Camelot," Latner said. "It's the last best place to be."

Latner started coming up to Muskoka almost 50 years ago, making the trip with her family to go to their cottage.

Now Latner lives up there and gets to do what she loves, having now sold properties in and around the area for close to 25 years.

"When I took the real estate exam years ago, I had no desire to sell houses," Latner said. "It was always my desire to be in the country.

"It's just a different lifestyle."

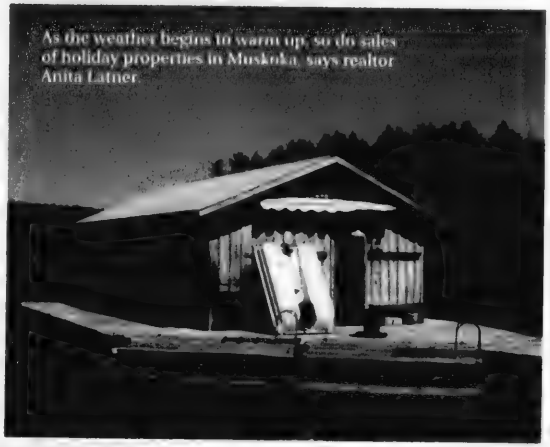
The cottages themselves range from rustic to palatial, and are priced accordingly.

"It depends on the amount of shoreline that you want, and what [body of water] you want to be on," Latner said. "On Lake Muskoka, Lake Joseph and Lake Rosseau, you can find a teeny bit under $1 million, but not much, and upward from there."

As the cottages grow, so too does the need for their space.

"Some of the high-end places, you want 300 to 500 feet of shoreline," Latner said. "One hundred used to be big, and now 200 is nothing special.

"You need 300 to 400 feet for some cottages, and then some of it is the land, exposure and view."


As the weather begins to warm up, so do sales of holiday properties in Muskoka, says realtor Anita Latner.

As the weather begins to warm up, so, too, do cottage sales, as Latner says that there are only about six months in which most properties are purchased.

And although it's a little farther than some of the cottages in Simcoe County, Latner believes that the Jewish population's migration north of the city of Toronto cuts down on the drive.

"I like to joke that Centre Street [in Thornhill] is halfway to Bracebridge," said Latner with a laugh. "It isn't, but the more people live in the suburbs, the less distance it is.

"Some people feel it's worth the drive, and our scenery is unbelievable."

Latner finds that many people are spending more time at the cottage in lieu of a big property in Toronto, and instead typically split their time between Muskoka in the warmer months and Florida during the colder ones.

"They're up at the cottage for longer, and incorporating more country-club activities," said Latner, noting that there are now plenty of golf courses in the region. "If you've worked hard all your life, it's nice to cut back and enjoy that lifestyle."

It's also a great meeting place for the different generations to spend some time with each other.

"You'll maybe go over to someone's house for Friday night dinner or the High Holidays, but here, it's a whole week or weekend with your family, and a chance for everyone to be there together," Latner said.

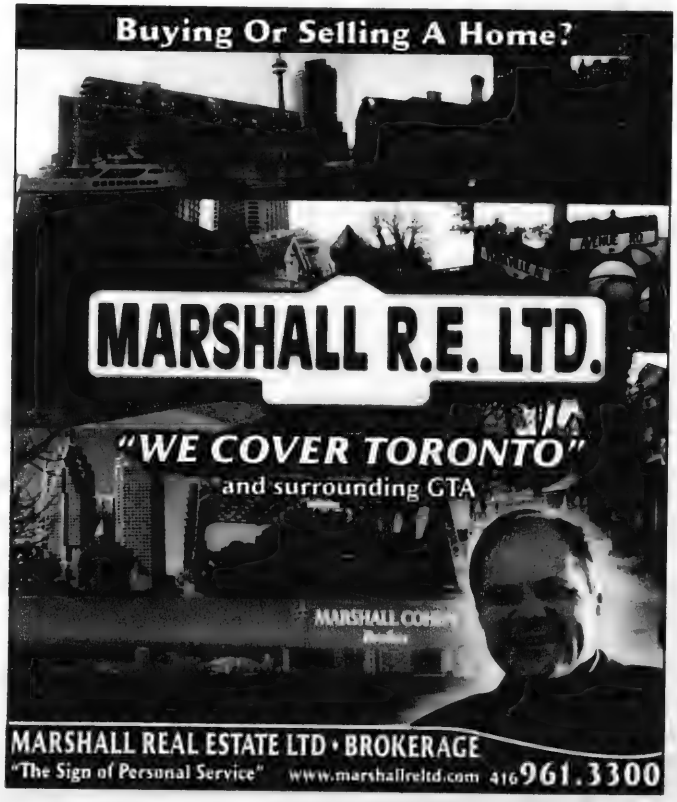
There aren't many more fun places to do it at, either.

"If you ever went to camp, the closest you're going to get to that experience again is a cottage in Muskoka," Latner said. "It's so much different with a recreational property.

"When I go out with my contemporaries up here, I still feel like a kid at camp."

To get a better idea of what properties are available for purchase, you can find Latner online at www.anitalatner.com, where listings are displayed on the website.

You can also reach her by phone at 1-705-687-2879.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Riobel Mizo Kitchen Faucet
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Metris 110 Single Lever Faucet
The contemporary Metris range features a minimalist design and is the perfect complement to any situation. Priced in Chrome.

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Brushed Nickel $269

Newform Ergo Faucet
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Rubinet Wall Niche
Rubinet introduced a new concept for shampoo and soap containers at a recent Interior Design Show. The reaction and comments were exceptionally positive.

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12" x 24" Wall Niche, available in chrome or Satin Nickel

Victoria + Albert Cheshire Tub
Classic beauty. Freestanding tub cast in volcanic limestone and resin. High gloss finish makes for easy cleanup. Generous proportions allow ample room to sit back and soak. Ball and claw feet options. 68 7/8" x 31 1/2" x 26". White, drain extra.

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Choosing flooring? Dominion Rug adds a personal touch

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

Choosing the perfect flooring for your home can be a daunting task, especially if it is your first time. You want to reflect your personal preference and decorating style, but you also want quality products that are within your budget.

Luckily, Dominion Rug & Home (416-485-9488) has the selection and expertise to help make your choice easy.

Founded in 1947, it sells quality carpets and rugs, as well as hardwood, cork and luxury vinyl flooring.

Founded in 1947, Dominion Rug sells high quality carpets and rugs in addition to hardwood, cork and luxury vinyl flooring. In their new location at 52 Samor Rd. near Dufferin Street and Lawrence Avenue, the store offers products that have been sourced by experts and imported from all over the world.

"We carry contemporary styles and are always on top of the latest trends" says Ben Baum, the owner of Dominion Rug & Home since 1984. "Our store has evolved over the years to keep up with the current market. Its like the fashion industry – nothing stays the same for very long."

Dominion Rug & Home works with top-notch technicians and designers to create their high-end products. The company is one of only 100 carpet showrooms in North America to be a member of the International Design Guild, which means it is affiliated with the highest-end designers and allows the company to get exclusive products at better prices.

Staff will work with customers to stay within their specified budget and help choose the right carpets and colour schemes for their needs. The store showroom is user-friendly and set up by category to help people quickly find what they are looking for. Samples can be borrowed so that the purchasers can see how something would look in their home.

The latest trends include grey carpeting, which is "the new neutral," according to Baum, as well as colourful area rugs.

"Blue, purple and emerald green are the new hot colours," he said. "People are getting braver and want that pop of colour."

Luxury vinyl, a material that mimics the look of hardwood, marble or slate floors, is increasingly popular because it is so easy to maintain. "It has no moisture problems so it's an excellent product for basements," Baum said.

Customers of Dominion Rug & Home can expect fast service, and a technician will measure your home and give you a quote within a week.

What really makes Dominion Rug stand out from other businesses is its customer service.

"You always hear people talk about the golden standard of customer satisfaction. We go beyond that and follow the platinum rule," Baum said.

"We add a personal touch that only a family company like ours can offer. We truly care about our customers and don't just want to sell them a product – we want to take care of them."

Baum is proud of his team of staff who collectively have more than 100 years of experience in the area. One employee recently celebrated his 52nd anniversary with the company.

"We really know what we're selling. We can make the right recommendations for our customers so they trust us and develop a lifelong relationship with us."

Grey carpeting is the new neutral.

Sunrise Tour of Homes
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Marsha.Pinkney@sunriseseniorliving.com
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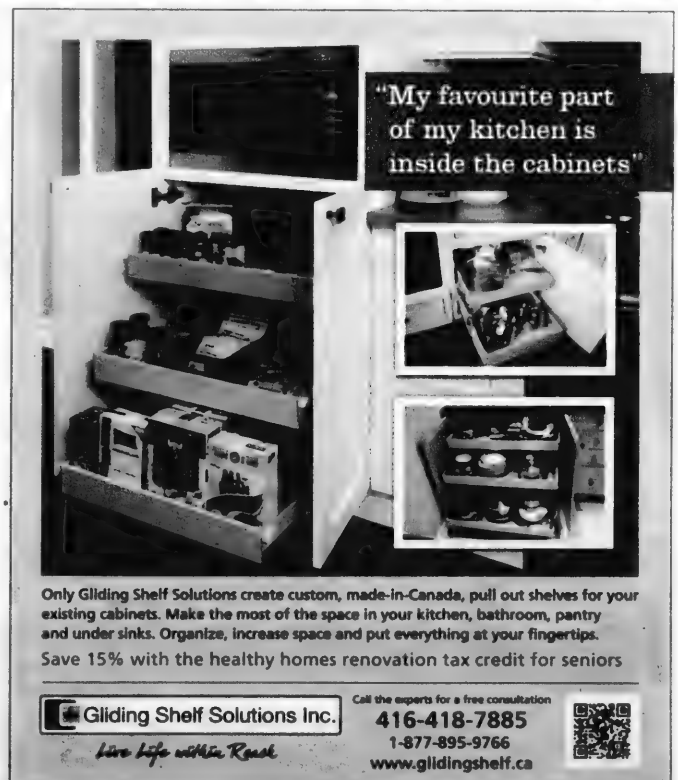
We can't wait to see you. For more information, and to reserve your spot, contact us at 905-731-4300 or Marsha.Pinkney@sunriseseniorliving.com today!
Learn more at SunriseSeniorLiving.com/Tour
THORNE MILL ON STEELES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Adenat does it all – before and after you move in

Multi-faceted real estate and building firm takes care of everything

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

It's an ever-changing real estate market out there, but Adenat is always ahead of the curve.

It's a multi-faceted company that can take care of everything involved with buying, leasing or maintaining your home, from the initial listing to removing snow from your driveway.

"We had so many listings of our own, it just got easier to manage it ourselves, rather than have other agencies doing it," said Adenat's founder and president, Israel Schwartz.

This year, most of their work, especially with new properties, has dealt with leases.

"In 2013, on the rental side, the market has gone up a lot," Schwartz said. "Most first-time buyers can't buy, so they're into rentals."

This is also the case for those who are well-established.

"At the high end, many people are sitting on the fence," Schwartz said. "There isn't much ability to buy new homes, so they rent them."

Schwartz believes that one reason behind this is the increasing costs involved, particularly when it comes to adding the harmonized sales tax (HST) to the mix.

Giving an example of purchasing a piece of land for $850,000 and then building a 4,000-square-foot home for $1 million, the HST addition increases the cost from $1.85 million to about $2.1 million, before even adding in things such as the agent's cut.

"In order to sell a $1.85-million project, you have to go over $2.6 million to get any money at all from it," Schwartz said. "HST kills the builders and makes for much more expensive homes."

It's even done so in the Clanton Park area between Wilson and Sheppard avenues west of Bathurst Street, which is what Schwartz considers "the last pocket that still has reasonable lots at reasonable prices.

"Adenat spent significant amounts of money and developed in the area," Schwartz said. "In the end, we didn't sell any homes except for one of them.

"They're all under rental now."

Adenat is looking to address the need for more living space for young couples in Toronto, but one of Schwartz's plans – which will be ideal for the Orthodox community – is a couple of years away.

"I still have two acres in the Bathurst and Wilson area, and when I put it together, I think I can add a significant amount of condos to an area that needs them badly," said Schwartz, who also hopes to erect an Orthodox-friendly hotel and community centre on the site.

"I'm still working on the zoning and planning now, but I think that will bring a fresh new residence to the area."

One of the advantages of working with Adenat is that its staff can do pretty much everything you'll need, even well after the sale. The company has its own tradespeople to work in your home, as well as a separate Custom Kitchen division.

"There are over 2,000 rental units in the Jewish areas, whether basements, homes or apartments," Schwartz said. "How many plumbers do you need? Or carpenters, or drywallers, or electricians?

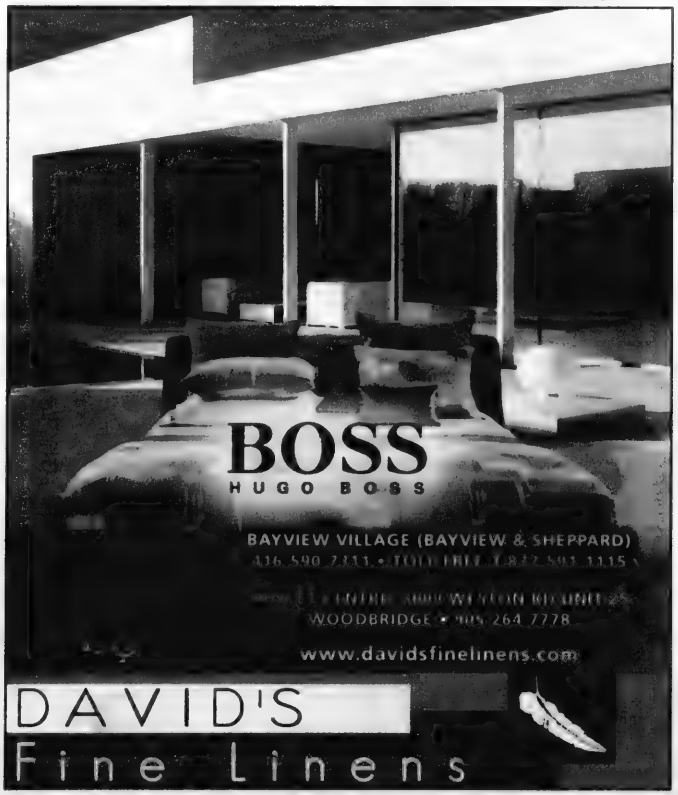
"You might as well own your own kitchen company instead of calling out every time you need to do something," he added. "[With all of the different handymen] on staff, it's basically very harmonized."

And even if you don't rent or buy from Adenat, their kitchen company is still up for hire, with more than 15 years of experience under their belts.

"You do it yourself, you build it up yourself, and the only complaints you can have are with yourself," Schwartz said. "It's much more efficient."

Adenat can be found online at www.adenathomes.com, and appointments can be arranged with Adenat's custom kitchens department by calling 416-784-4440.

Adenat builds, sells, leases, maintains and renovates homes.



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Dragon Condos is steps from everything

Chinatown building right in the heart of downtown T.O.

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

A new, ultra-modern condominium building in the heart of Toronto's Chinatown is creating a buzz.

Dragon Condos, in the preconstruction phase by Ideal Developments, features 10 stories of stylish living with retail on the ground floor. Located at 270 Spadina Ave., at Dundas Street West, it has 95 luxury suites.

Communal amenities include a rooftop patio revealing striking city views, a theatre lounge with a projector and AV entertainment system, a party room with caterer's kitchen, island bar and fireplace and a fitness centre offering a cardio, yoga, weights and aerobics area.

Twenty-four hour concierge service welcomes you home, and each suite also comes with a limited-edition bicycle so homeowners can easily reduce their carbon footprint.

Dragon Condos is sublimely located in downtown Toronto. Situated in the heart of the vibrant Chinatown, it has all the conveniences of downtown living.

It is close to Kensington Market, the Fashion District, the University of Toronto, Ryerson University, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Eaton Centre, while theatres, cinemas, restaurants and shopping close are also close by.

The streetcar stops just steps from your front door, providing seamless access to the subway, Go Transit and Via Rail. Hospitals such as Mount Sinai and Toronto Western are also close by.

"More than 75 per cent of the suites already have been sold," says Ben Murray, project manager for the company.

"Given the culturally rich neighbourhood that surrounds Dragon Condos, the recreation opportunities and eclectic shopping, we're confident the remaining one-bedroom and two-bedroom plus den suites will sell fast, too."

The remaining one-bedroom suites are 550 square feet and starting at $344,900, and the two-bedroom plus dens are 850 square feet, starting at $529,900.

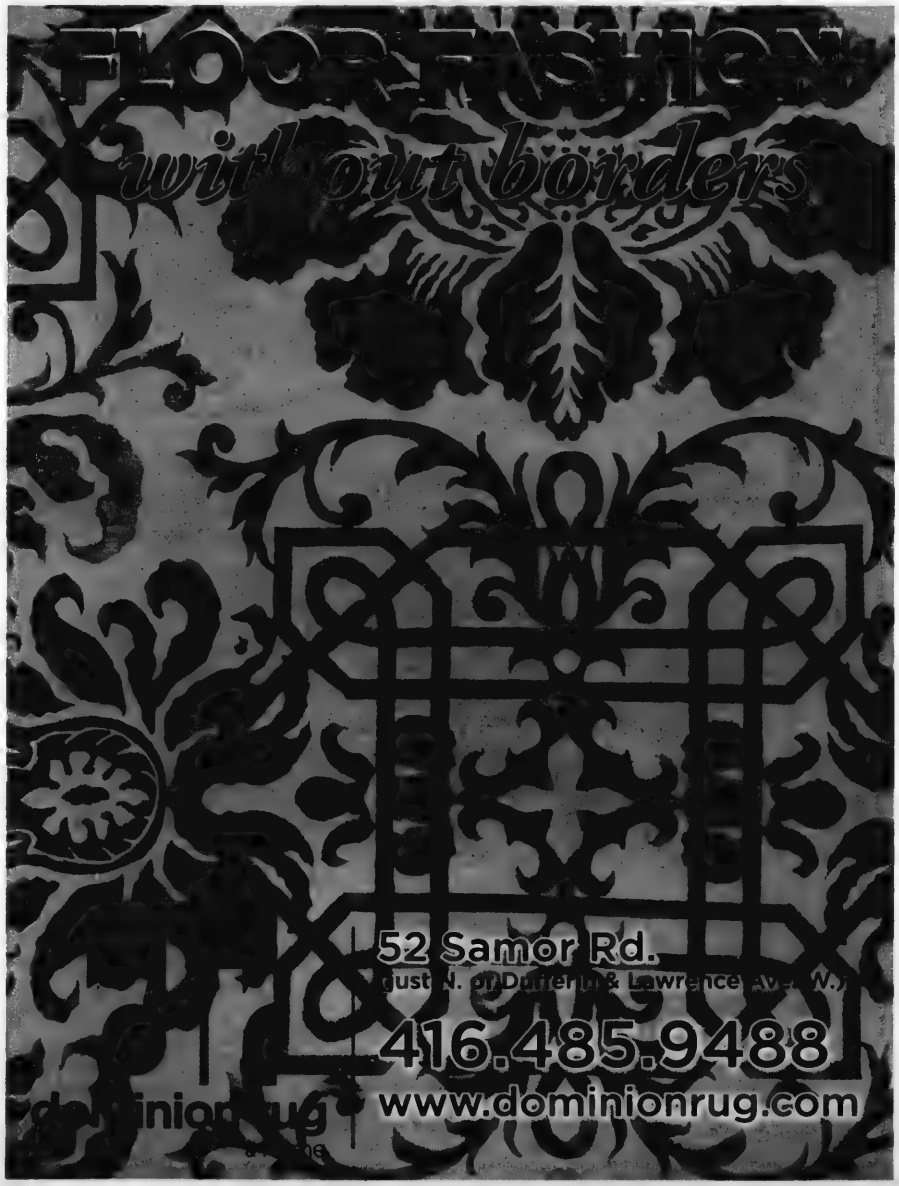
The project is in the preconstruction stage, and the estimated completion date is spring 2015.

This is the second multi-residential project for Ideal Developments. The first was Markham Gates, a stacked townhouse project with 44 units at Markham Road and Sheppard Avenue East in Scarborough.

The company, founded 12 years ago, has focused on custom homes, additions and renovations.

For more information, visit the Dragon Condos sales centre at 270 Spadina Ave., call 416-847-7999 or click on to www.dragoncondos.com.

The Spadina streetcar will be just outside your door.



Space Solutions helps to maximize your closets

Compiled by CJN Staff

Whether you need a new closet system or already have one to maintain, Harry Levinson, senior designer at Space Solutions (660 Eglinton Avenue E., 416-322-5575, spacesolutions.ca), offers some tips on keeping your closet spaces organized.

"When you're ready to take control of your closet, simply call Space Solutions, and we'll help you transform your closet," Levinson says.

"We've been making small closets big since 1986."

Here are some of his suggestions.

• Sort, sort, sort: Empty your closet and create piles for each type of clothing item – shirts, pants, skirts, work-out wear, etc. Also sort accessories you keep in your closet, such as ties and belts, scarves and shoes.

• Purge, purge, purge: You will probably find things you haven't worn in years – styles have changed, and maybe there are things that no longer fit. Decide whether you still need to hold on to them. If they're in good shape but you don't want them any more, consider donating them.

• Take inventory: After paring down your stuff, you should have a good idea of how much of what types of storage you need. Double-hung rods for shirts and other short-hanging items can allow you to compress the space needed and free up more real estate. Full-length hanging for longer items such as dresses or pants can allow for shelf space above or shoe storage below. Consider drawers for sweaters, sleepwear, lingerie and other such items.

Pullout shelves for shoes and handbags can take advantage of your closet's depth without sacrificing its width. Ties and other hanging accessories can be mounted on open walls, backs of doors or even on the sides of any shelf towers, and these can often slide forward for easier access.

• Design: Once you've assessed your needs, consider an amazing closet system from Space Solutions, making use of all the available space in your closet and greatly improving its functionality.

Some other closet tips:

• Use hard-to-reach corners for out-of-season or special-occasion clothes.

• Custom jewelry trays can make great in-drawer accessory organizers.

• Using the same type of hanger for all garments lets things hang more evenly and makes them easier to sort and find.

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Ortal fireplaces from Israel are sleek and modern

Available in Canada from The Fireplace Specialist

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

Israeli innovation is nothing new, but in the world of fireplaces, it's a bit of a surprise for a country not known for its chilly climates.

But thanks to Ortal Heat, Israel is producing some of today's most exciting home fireplace solutions. And whether you're building a house or upgrading your current space, Ortal fireplaces are now available in Canada through The Fireplace Specialist (905-761-6984; warmth.com).

According to The Fireplace Specialist's Maggie Leighton Costelloe, Ortal has been selling its fireplaces "in Europe for quite some time and are now introducing them in North America." The designs are "very sleek – contemporary and modern."

Ortal is also the first company to offer a three-sided borderless glass fireplace: "normally, there would have to be metal trim to hold each piece of glass in place." This design allows for uninterrupted enjoyment from several areas of the home at once.

A unique design feature even lets you incorporate a fireplace in ways you'd never imagined. The Fireplace Specialist sales manager Satesh Beharry says art and even electronics aren't a problem over an Ortal fireplace. "Most fireplaces don't allow you to use drywall, wood, anything combustible on top," he says, but with a built-in air cavity to channel heat away from the area above the fireplace, "the wall above the fireplace stays at room temperature at all times."

Ortal offers 65 different models, ranging from 15 to 77 inches wide, in single-sided, double-sided and three-sided varieties. Turnaround time, from order to delivery, is four to six weeks.

The 30-year-old company – family-owned and based in Hod Hasharon in central Israel – says its products meet current safety standards not only in North America (CSA), but also in Europe (CE) and Israel, perhaps the only company to do so. And despite the modern look and design, and high efficiency ratings, you won't have to sacrifice old-fashioned warmth and comfort: every Ortal fireplace is also designed to maximize radiant heat – the cozy feeling of curling up fireside.

With more than 25 years' experience installing fireplaces in the GTA, The Fireplace Specialist can work with new construction or come into an existing home, co-ordinating with homeowners, contractors, designers, architects and others involved in the project.

More than just installation, The Fireplace Specialist offers comprehensive design services to perfectly suit the space and home in which the fireplace will be a lasting centrepiece.

"We do full-featured walls," says Costelloe, "including wall units, to make the fireplace a focal piece in the home... It can be the entire wall, including granite, marble. We work with the client to give them exactly what they want."

The company is well-known for fireplace makeovers, she adds. "We take an old, ugly fireplace – we don't necessarily have to rip it out, especially if it's a wood-burning brick fireplace. We can take that and make it over so it looks like a brand-new fireplace."

Turnaround time from order to delivery is four to six weeks.

Other clients opt for a conversion from wood to gas. "It's quite beautiful," she says. One of the biggest surprises when clients have converted a fireplace is how often they actually end up using it. "People don't realize how much they're going to enjoy their fireplace." Where clients might have used a wood fireplace once a year, with no wood to store and transport, and no cleanup afterward, "they just press the remote control" to get far more enjoyment out of it.

"The key compliment we get from our clients... is the quality of our service," says Beharry. The company does a yearly followup to make sure the fireplace is working well. And if there is ever a problem, they'll take care of it. "Homeowners call us six years after a job has been completed, and we're there within days to service our unit if there's anything wrong."

Beyond Ortal, The Fireplace Specialist carries other quality brands, including Montigo, STUV woodburning, Lennox, Heatilator and Bio Fuel, as well as electric fireplaces and outdoor fireplaces and fire features.

While the company's Vaughan showroom is a great place to get inspired and start planning, visits are "primarily by appointment," Costelloe says, so clients can receive a consultant's undivided attention.

Please call 905-761-6984 or visit warmth.com for more information.

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Planning can lessen the stress of moving

Elaine Cohen
Special to The CJN

Although moving is arduous, you can alleviate stress by planning ahead. Calendars serve as excellent tools. Set reminders for everything from cancelling subscriptions to packing priorities. When a task is completed, cross it off the list.

• Change of address notification

Make a list of government departments and agencies, schools, clubs, corporate and charitable organizations, utilities, Internet and television providers, health professionals, friends, relatives, neighbours and other contacts.

Use online links, email, the telephone and snail mail to inform your contacts of your address change. Attend to this chore soon after leasing the apartment or acquiring a home. For a fee, Canada Post (www.canadapost.ca) will redirect mail for either six months or a year. Ideally, mail should bypass the former address and arrive at the new premises.

But don't rely on Canada Post to do all the work. Go online, phone and send changes of address to ensure important documents such as driver's licences and car registration renewals, tax refunds, credit cards, financial statements, contracts, and bank statements arrive on time.

• Packing timeline

While some things can't be packed until the last minute, out-of-season clothes and sports equipment can be taken care of ahead of time. Check each box off the list and enjoy a feeling of accomplishment.

Collect clean cardboard boxes at stores or buy them from a local supplier. Make sure to have plenty of wrapping paper, bubble wrap and tape on hand. Packing supplies can also be ordered online.

To prevent newsprint stains and to avoid re-washing, wrap dishes and other fragile items in tissue, clear wrapping paper or tea towels. For lamps, ornaments and other large breakables, artwork and accessories, bath towels and blankets provide a protective buffer. Make use of big garbage bags and Styrofoam chips or filler for extra protection. Surround box seams with tape. Don't overload boxes.

Make sure to get small boxes as well as big ones. Last spring, Montrealers Burt and Annie Bettman, both graduate students, each packed large boxes with a slew of binders, books and research material. Burt was about to cart them, but after lifting one heavy bundle he decided otherwise.

"We had to empty the large cartons and repack everything in small boxes," he said. "Books may be easy to stack in a box, but it doesn't take many to weigh you down. Since then, we always use small boxes for books and binders."

Annie noted that large boxes came in handy for linen and clothes. The couple kept track of every item in each box by numbering the boxes and placing "fragile" labels on them. They helped the movers by colour-coding boxes to indicate where they should go in their new apartment. They also tracked the contents of each box in a notebook.

"It was a great time-saver, because we didn't have to dig into each box to find things," she said. "We simply referred to our notepad."

The recently married couple also received wedding gifts, and they prevented breakage by leaving each gift box and wrappings intact.

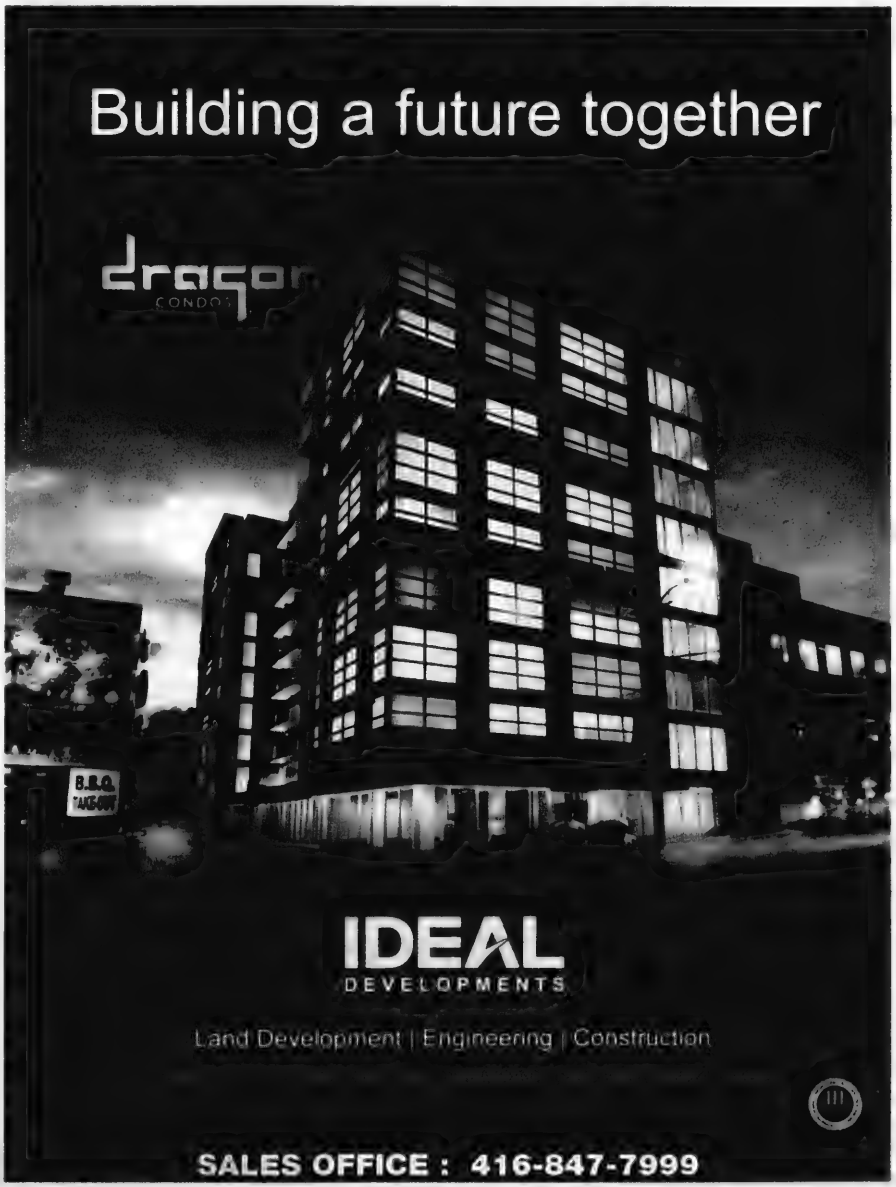
Don't assume that the movers will tape up bureau drawers and cart dressers filled with clothes. "Since we were moving to the 17th floor in a downtown highrise, we had to make sure the drawers were emptied. To fit in the elevator, the dressers had to be turned sideways," Burt explained, adding that under other circumstances, it may be possible to leave contents intact.

Before hiring a mover, get references and information about insurance. Efficient, reputable movers alleviate stress and get the job done right. Don't assume a mover will transport a piano, house plants or large mirrors. Also, find out if the mover reassembles furniture at the new dwelling.

Arrange to board or have someone take care of pets. According to veterinarians, cats and dogs, the latter in particular, often need time before they become comfortable in a strange environment. They miss their familiar scents and surroundings, but eventually they adapt and are content just to be with their owners.

Depending on finances and circumstances, it may be helpful to hire movers to do the packing and crating as well as the moving. However, don't wait until moving day to make that decision. Packing and crating is carried out before the actual moving day.

Get the dimensions of your rooms and make a mock layout of how furniture will be placed, according to the measurements and shape of each room in the new quarters. Don't assume every purchase will fit. One couple recalls being so enchanted with the location, view and size of their rooms, and the sunshine streaming in their new nest, that they overlooked the dimensions in the bedroom.



What makes a retirement residence a home?

We asked the GTA's finest seniors communities for answers

One of the most common fears people have about moving into a seniors residence is that their new abode won't feel like the home they've lived in for so many years, the place where they built a life and raised their families.

But today's retirement residences are designed and run with modern, active seniors in mind, and here they'll tell you why you'll feel right at home in your new surroundings.

Amica offers comfort and understated elegance.

Amica Retirement Residences

Welcome to Amica's Retirement Residences.

The moment you step through the doors of an Amica residence, there is a sense of comfort and understated elegance. At any given time in our active and engaging communities, there are residents and guests coming and going, or simply enjoying the company of friends and neighbours in one of the many amenity areas that are perfect for entertaining. Just like a welcoming home should be! Amica is a premier retirement destination for discerning seniors who appreciate our unmatched services and all-inclusive retirement lifestyle. Come see for yourself, and make yourself at home. Visit www.amica.ca for more information and discover an Amica close to you, or call Amica at Thornhill at 905-886-3400 today.

• • •

Canterbury Place

Sunshine streaming through the windows will welcome you to Canterbury Place Retirement Residence and invoke a sense of warmth, whether you're relaxing in the comfort of your suite or enjoying a game of cards with friends. Experience our chefs prepared home cooking or invite the family for your own personal summer barbecue on the terrace. Stay home and be entertained so you can get to know your neighbours.

Your family will feel comfortable the moment they enter the bar and share a cappuccino with you while watching a ball game on the big screen.

Welcome home… to Canterbury Place!

Have your family over for a barbecue at Canterbury Place.

• • •

The Dunfield

At The Dunfield we say, "Why retire when you can 'un-retire'? Who wants to retire with so much to enjoy?"

A place you can call home is one that offers choices, not limitations. At The Dunfield you can choose to take it easy or participate in a plethora of inspiring activities. It is all about living life to the fullest, a whole new way of looking at retirement living.

"Un-retirement" – the new attitude. At the Dunfield.

Host family and friends at The Dunfield

Continued on page B15

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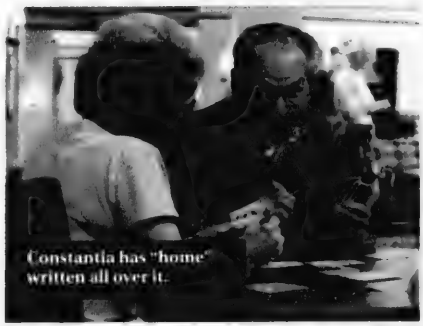
'I wish my home was this nice'


Constantia has "home" written all over it.

Continued from page B14

Constantia

The biggest compliment you can pay a retirement residence is, "It doesn't feel like a retirement residence. It feels like home."

That's how Constantia was designed. From the elegant suites to the sumptuous dining area, spacious grounds and rooftop terrace, every element of Constantia has "home" written all over it.

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Baycrest - Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community

Located one block north of Baycrest, a nine-storey, 120-suite life-lease condominium designed for active and independent seniors, 65 years old plus.

This elegantly styled building offers a 24-hour concierge, senior-friendly design features, a personal emergency response button, games room, lounges, party/social room, fitness facility, library and rooftop terrace. With easy access to Baycrest outpatient and day programs, residents also enjoy a membership to the Joseph E. and Minnie Wagman Community Centre (www.baycrest.org/care-programs-14.php), which provides a wide range of exciting and enriching programs. Complimentary shuttle bus around the Baycrest campus is provided

Reuben Cipin offers independent

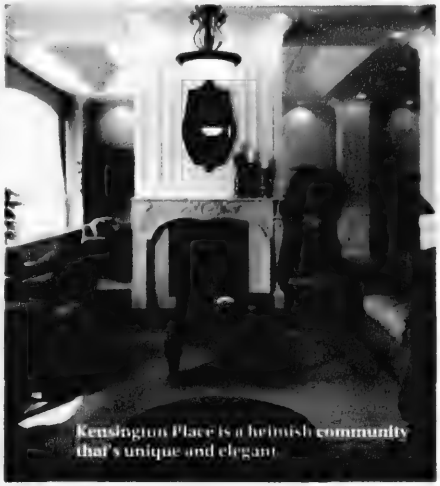
• • •

Kensington Place

Kensington Place is Toronto's finest kosher retirement residence with a heimish community that is unique as well as elegant.

Our in-house services, menus and many of our speakers cater to the Jewish culture and religion.

Our monthly calendar is filled with social, cultural, physical, religious and recreational activities.


Kensington Place is a heimish community that's unique and elegant

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Continued on page B16

Home & Cottage Lighting Sale

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Sun.: 12 pm - 5pm; Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat: 9:30 am - 6 pm; Thurs: 9:30 am - 9 pm

Keep active, make friends in your new home

Continued from page B15

Hazelton Place

Hazelton Place offers a world of choices.

The finest in retirement living in the heart of Yorkville, Hazelton Place offers you a world of choices each and every day. Hazelton Place provides the variety of activities that many individuals seek, with the independence of personal choice. Our facility offers fine dining, including a private dining room; spacious lounges with fireplaces; games room; garden patio; a hair salon; library with computer; a therapeutic spa and underground parking. Attention to individual needs and wellness are a priority at Hazelton Place Retirement Residence. Programs and services are tailored to lifestyle preference and health-care requirements. Monthly rates start at $3,495, including three meals a day, recreation programs, housekeeping and 24-hour emergency nursing response.

• • •

V!VA Thornhill Woods boasts Jewish-inspired cuisine, open-seating dining room.

V!VA Thornhill Woods

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• • •

Four Elms

Four Elms is the finest in retirement living!

Quality, variety and elegance define the living experience provided at Four Elms Retirement Residence. You will have a feeling of comfort and warmth, and a sense of belonging the moment you step through the doors. With its premier location near the heart of Thornhill, there are many activities within walking distance.

Enjoy the shops and restaurants nearby or spend a leisurely afternoon in a café. Whatever is your pleasure, Four Elms is a wonderful place to live and enjoy life.

Call today to book your personal tour, 905-738-0905, 1500 Steeles Ave. W., Thornhill, www.fourelms.ca.

• • •

The Terraces of Baycrest

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A retirement residence with unparalleled access to health professionals specializing in geriatric care and research on brain health to help you age gracefully.

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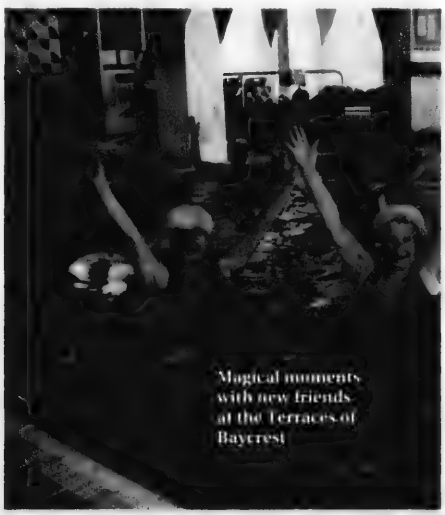
Magical moments with new friends at the Terraces of Baycrest

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Retirement living: 'I should have done this sooner'

Active senior happy with move she previously resisted

Ruth Goldsmith
Special to The CJN

If you shudder at the thought of moving into a retirement home, think again. It may not be such a bad idea.

Most people are determined to age gracefully, and remain independent and active until... well, until the end, which of course we don't talk about.

No missed meals because she was too exhausted to bother cooking

We tell ourselves that we are going to be different: vibrant, active and busy.

Even after I retired and became a widow living alone, I resisted the idea.

I remember thinking "Maybe one day, but not now, not yet – some time in the distant future, whenever that is."

I was typical of my generation, determined to stay active and involved.

But slowly, one by one, my friends began to deteriorate, and I found myself spending my days visiting them, taking them on errands or serving their needs.

It began to be harder for me to keep going and take care of the ordinary tasks of daily living. The "some time in the future" became the "here and now."

I knew I had to make a change.

I would visit friends in a nursing home and was horrified by the silence and listlessness of the residents. Even the retirement homes I would visit were disappointing, rigid and more like an impersonal hotel than a real home.

I knew that one of these days I would end up in a place like that, but not now, not yet.

But as time went by, I learned that the secret to successful aging is accepting that change is inevitable and will happen to everyone sooner or later. So I decided to deal with it ahead of time.

One day I read an ad in *The Canadian Jewish News* about a new retirement home close to where my daughter and her family lived. Sheer curiosity prompted me to investigate.

They offered a free trial stay for a few days, and I decided to take advantage of the offer. The warmth and understanding that emanated from the staff and residents changed my life forever.

I had a delightful time. It was a pleasant holiday, with friendly people, comfortable surroundings and the best possible fitness and exercise programs.

I returned home and realized that I was missing out on the good life, so I made the decision to move.

Maybe this aging process wasn't going to be so bad after all.

My family and friends were shocked.

"You moving? But you're fine!"

"Yes," I replied, "but for how long?"

I decided to make the move while I was still able to make my own decisions on where and how to live. I decided to deal with the issue while I was still in charge.

Just as I have prepared a will and powers of attorney, or downsized to an apartment, why not prepare for a comfortable, serene old age with as high a quality of life as possible?

I found a moving company that handled all the details, who packed, unpacked and disposed of my surplus belongings. It was so simple.

Moving into a retirement home was rather like learning to use a computer. The hard part was learning the basic skills.

The first computer lesson was the hardest, just like the first meal at my retirement home.

I walked into the dining room and faced a sea of unfamiliar faces. I wondered, "What am I doing here?"

Then the hostess took me to a table, and before I knew it, I had met a new group of friends.

I am now eating well, exercising, socializing and keeping my brain and body active with programs on a daily basis.

Without even realizing it, I am keeping all those resolutions I used to make about eating well, relaxing and just plain enjoying daily life. All the advice I had been ignoring all my life was suddenly easy to do.

I was amazed at how quickly I adjusted to my new surroundings and to new people. To my pleasant surprise, I found the experience rejuvenating. No more worries about shopping in bad weather. No missed meals because I was too exhausted to bother cooking. And no lonely weekends when my family and friends were too busy to make time for me.

She's finally keeping all those resolutions.

At first I thought it might be too expensive to live in a retirement home, but after I settled in, I found that my overall budget was about the same.

No more groceries, household help, taxis, restaurant and prepared meals, or even movies any more. But the quality of my life was incomparable.

Even my fear of the future abated.

The inevitable decline in my ability to function would be taken care of. Whatever changes come my way will be looked after.

But not now. Not yet.

I'm too busy enjoying life

Two years later, I still wonder: what took me so long?

Ruth Goldsmith is a former CJN advertising representative and a happy resident of a local retirement home.

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2 to 4 p.m.

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This event will feature condominiums currently for sale and offer a first look at our newly renovated lobby which will be completed mid-May.

3D Rendering of our new lobby

For more information, please contact:
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Laurie@twoneptune.ca

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Enjoy Muskoka at Touchstone Resort

Five-star property offers fractional ownership

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

There's nothing like the beauty of Lake Muskoka, a destination Ontarians have long been flocking to for replenishment and a respite from their harried working lives.

The choice of accommodation at the lake just reached a new level with the completion of the residences at Touchstone Resort, a five-star property that offers fractional ownership.

The resort, designed to accentuate seaside architecture, features an infinity pool on the Muskoka waterfront, a spa where services incorporate the flora and minerals indigenous to the lake, a fitness centre and a casual restaurant, Taste, offering contemporary cottage cuisine.

Touchstone, located on the lake between Bracebridge and Port Carling, is close to Bracebridge's downtown core, which offers galleries, museums, shops, restaurants, banking, theatre and a sportsplex.

> *It's like owning a cottage, but without the work and the cost.*

The Bala Musuem is a few minutes' drive, as is Gravenhurst, with the Steamship Segwun and the Opera House. The area comes alive with festivals such as the Muskoka Lakes Music Fest and the Bala Cranberry Fest.

But all year long, there's plenty to do in and around Touchstone.

In summer, boating, sailing, biking, swimming, tennis and golf are popular, while spring and fall are great for hiking and biking.

Touchstone is close to some of Ontario's best downhill and cross-country ski hills and trails for winter activities.

On May 10, Gordon's Estate Services will open bidding in an online auction for the residences at Touchstone, with 75 fractions available, each one sold in eighths.

The auction will occur in three stages. The first is for the Grand Lodge Studios, with reserve bids ranging from $4,500 to $5,000. Reserve bids for the second stage, for Grand Lounge two-bedroom spa suites, will range from $14,000 to $27,500, and the third stage, for three- and four-bedroom Grand Muskokan beachside cottages and villas, will range from $22,500 to $25,000.

Residences go beyond the cottage concept.

The advantage of an online auction is that potential purchasers can bid from the comfort of their homes "without feeling intimidated or rushed," says Manson Slik, partner/broker at Gordon's Estate Services.

Open houses are available for each stage on May 11 and 12, June 8 and 9 and July 5 to 22.

"This private, exclusive lakefront paradise will be home to no more than 40 families at any given time," says Slik.

"It's like owning a Muskoka cottage without the work and the cost. But these residences are so beyond the cottage concept. The studios feel like a luxury hotel room, while the two- to four-bedroom waterfront units are in self-contained lodges."

To participate in online bidding, pre-register at touchstoneauction.com with a credit card on hand.

"Your credit card won't be charged unless you're a winning bidder, in which case charges will only be for a deposit," Slik says.

For more information, visit www.touchstoneonlakemuskoka.com, call 416-953-0380, or email touchstoneresort@gmail.com.

See, taste, learn, then choose appliances at Caplan's

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

The kitchen is the most important room in your home – it's the only room that every member of the house uses every single day. Often, a kitchen is more than just a place to find food, but also a centrepiece for the home. A modern kitchen creates the kind of atmosphere that draws people into the room, and by investing in high quality large appliances like the ones sold at Caplan's Appliances (416-767-1655, www.caplans.ca), homeowners can make their kitchen beautiful.

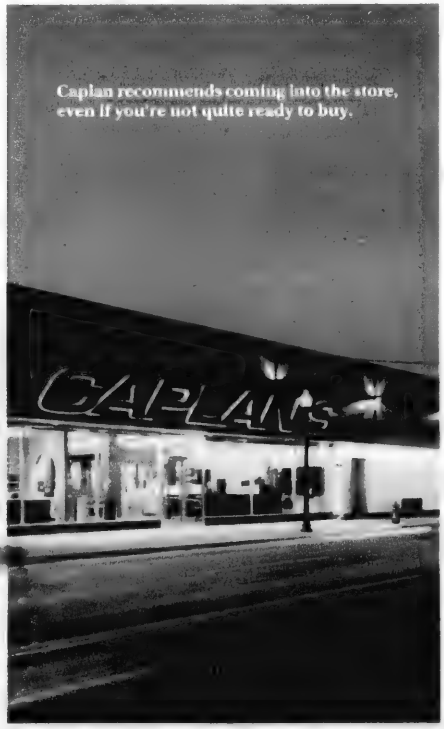
Caplan's, located at 1111 Weston Rd., is a third-generation family business that has been around for over 60 years. The company specializes in premium brands including Bosch, Dacor, KitchenAid, Viking, Miele, SubZero and Wolf. The appliances are presented in designer kitchen galleries, and the store employs chefs that do cooking demonstrations.

"It's a way for the customers to see how the appliances work," said Robert Caplan the store's president. "We want to show people what we're all about."

Across the street from the main store, Caplan's has a gallery that sells Miele appliances. A full-time chef cooks seasonal foods there to demonstrate how the appliances work.

"The idea is to educate our customers, so they'll learn to love the products as much as we do," Caplan said. "We want our customers to really love our products and to get the most enjoyment from them."

For customers thinking about buying new appliances, Caplan recommends coming into the store, even if you're not quite ready to buy. "Come see us, absorb as much information as you can, and then go home and think about it."



Caplan is very proud of his sales team, most of whom have over 20 years of experience with the products. "We're some of the most highly trained people in the country," he said. "We want to help you pick what's right for you, and we can find the right products at any price point."

Some trends in appliances right now include steam cooking or convection cooking. "These are two fast cooking methods that are more effective and safer than gas ovens," Caplan said. Putting panels on items like refrigerators and dishwashers so that they blend in with cabinetry is also popular. "It creates a more streamlined, modern look," Caplan said. "It's very European looking."

Another unique feature of Caplan's Appliances is its presence in social media. They have an active Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/caplans) where they post recipes, design ideas and tips for cleaning and maintaining appliances. They also advertise special promotions and invite group members to events held at the store.

Caplan's also has a series of YouTube videos featuring staff members demonstrating how appliances work. "This allows people to browse our store from the comfort of their homes," Caplan explained. "We're always looking for ways to make shopping with us a better experience."

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Adventures in real estate

Local agents relate some of the oddest, most difficult and just plain funny moments they've encountered in their careers

Helen Winer
Sales Representative
Alan Newton Real Estate Ltd. Brokerage

Once, at an open house, the owners' dog was put on the balcony so potential buyers would not be disturbed. When the open house finished, I went upstairs to let the dog in and proceeded to go downstairs. The dog blocked the stairs and wouldn't let me go down, nipping at my heels. I was frightened, which was exacerbated because I had a fear of dogs. I went into the bedroom, called my office to let them know I was having a problem with this animal.

Both phones were on speaker, and I was further agitated listening to everyone in the office laughing hysterically. One agent decided to talk to the dog on speaker phone and miraculously calmed the dog. The dog backed off, I ran downstairs while the dog was still looking at the phone, locked up and left. It took me a long time to live that one down.

• • •

Marshall Cohen,
Broker Owner
Marshall Real Estate Ltd. Brokerage

One of the biggest challenges when selling a house is the decluttering of a home that's been lived in for many years. It's amazing how much one family can accumulate. This beautiful home was buried in reams of stuff. From kids' artwork all over the walls and a sea of items covering the dining room table to piles of toys in every room. This house needed work. I provided the client with a room-by-room list of what had to be eliminated, rolled up my sleeves and got busy. They were so diligent in decluttering, they didn't waste any time removing everything... and I mean everything!

I had to bring some extra "clutter" from my own house and buy some nice tchatchkes to stage the now almost-empty house. In the end, the hard work they put into preparing was well worth it. Most of the items they stored never even made it to their new home.

• • •

David Eichhorn
David Eichorn Real Estate

Broker David Eichorn recalls one very *uplifting* house showing.

"The husband's out of town with the only key to the lower-level garage. His wife gives us permission to have a locksmith pick the lock. But once it's unlocked, it can't be locked again. Inside the garage is a classic motorcyle. The wife tells us it's her husband's pride and joy and asks us to ensure its security. So I shlep it up the stairs and put it in the living room. Four months later, my muscles are still sore."

Memo to the broker who desires a reputation for shlep: be careful what you wish for.

• • •

Sam Chaim, SRES, ABR, Sales Representative, Remax Realtron Realty

Dogs and cats are your best friends... except when you're selling your home.

It's hard to think of your beloved pets as problematic but when it comes to selling your home, they can be an issue. Being an animal lover myself I have no concerns about entering a pet-occupied home. For buyers, it can be a total turn-off and, sometimes, a complete barrier to entry.

My own experiences include: the barker dog who never stopped with strangers in the house; the Velcro cat who followed my every step doing figure eights around my ankles; the untrained dog who defecated on the floor, and the jumper with nails who, every time someone arrived, scratched the freshly painted door trim, not to mention me.

The best you can do for your pet's peace of mind and your own, and to help your sale, is to find someone to care for them during the sale period – hourly, daily or for a few weeks as necessary.

• • •

Joanna Waldman
Right at Home Realty, Inc.

The craziest moment we had was with one set of new clients. The first listing we sent them was on a Sunday night – an MLS listing that just came onto the market. As soon as they received the email listing, they called us and told us to prepare an offer immediately, as this was the perfect house for them. We faxed out an offer that same night as per their request, without them seeing the house or even knowing the exact location. The offer was accepted that night and the following day we did a home inspection, at which time they came and saw the property for the first time. They loved it and have been there for four years and could not imagine living anywhere else. To this day, we still cannot believe that someone bought a house without seeing it first.

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Bathurst Street is a magnet for Jews

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

As the Toronto Jewish community continues to move northward, a number of parents in the Greater Toronto Area would like to see their children keep up with the trend of living in neighbourhoods close to Bathurst Street.

The Census Analysis Series based on the 2001 census was commissioned by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto in 2006 and written by Charles Shahar and Tina Rosenbaum. It reports that the history of Jewish residency since the mid-20th century can generally be described as a northerly migration that's mostly been concentrated close to Bathurst Street.

More than 66% of the community lives near the vital artery

More than 66 per cent of Jews living in the census metropolitan area (CMA) live along the Bathurst Street corridor between Dufferin and Yonge streets, the report says, and in southern York Region, about 11 per cent of the population are Jews. Similarly, about 11 per cent of the population of North York is Jewish, and Jews comprise about 21 per cent of the population along the Bathurst corridor.

Shirley Kellerstein, a wife and mother of two sons in their 20s, grew up a distance from the Bathurst corridor, which has "coloured" her thinking to this day, she said.

"My family lived in Belleville [Ont.] until I was a teenager. My parents were Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Montreal and then found a business opportunity in Belleville," Kellerstein said.

"There was a small Jewish community, but we were the only postwar Jews, so I always felt a little different. We didn't fit into the non-Jewish community or the Jewish community."

She doesn't remember any antisemitism, she said, until she was about 11, when "Peter and Rickey" – she still remembers their names – "suddenly called me a dirty Jew. They had always been friendly, and I never knew why they turned on me all of a sudden. I can only think that their parents or some friends must have said something to them."

Shortly afterward, she said, the family moved to Toronto. "We lived in a small house near Bathurst and Wilson, and suddenly there were Jews everywhere. It was culture shock, but a good kind of shock."

When she first became engaged, she said, her husband, a chiropractor, suggested moving to Alberta, where there were more job opportunities for him.

"I just couldn't go through that again. Belleville coloured me forever."

They moved to Thornhill, Ont., she said, because she wanted her kids to feel comfortable in their own neighbourhood.

"No Belleville for them."

Today her older son lives in the Reena community residence on the Lebovic campus in Vaughan, Ont., and her younger son is in graduate school in New York.

"I don't know where either of them will end up, but I hope they choose a Jewish neighbourhood," she said. "I think it's important."

Joan Steinberg, a Thornhill resident who is married with three grown children, grew up near Bathurst Street, but attended a largely non-Jewish elementary school.

"The boundaries were changed, and I was sent to a different school. I was one of two Jewish kids in my class.

"I had friends, but I remember being told that I pronounce words differently, and that I wouldn't be able join the nearby cricket and skating club. Little things constantly reminded me that I was Jewish and they weren't."

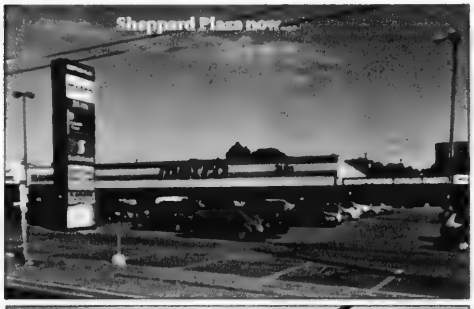
When she was single and living in an apartment in midtown Toronto, she said, she was determined "never to follow the young married Jews to Thornhill. I was going to be part of the downtown Jewish community.

"When I had my kids, though, my thinking changed. My friends were moving up north, and I realized there were great community centres, parks and schools," she added.

"We bought a house in Thornhill and my kids went to a public school that was largely Jewish. They felt much more at home in their school than I did in mine."

Her own children live on their own downtown, she said, but she believes they will make the trek up north when the time comes.

"They feel attached to the Jewish community. I can't tell them what to do, but I think they'll follow the community."



Google Maps photo

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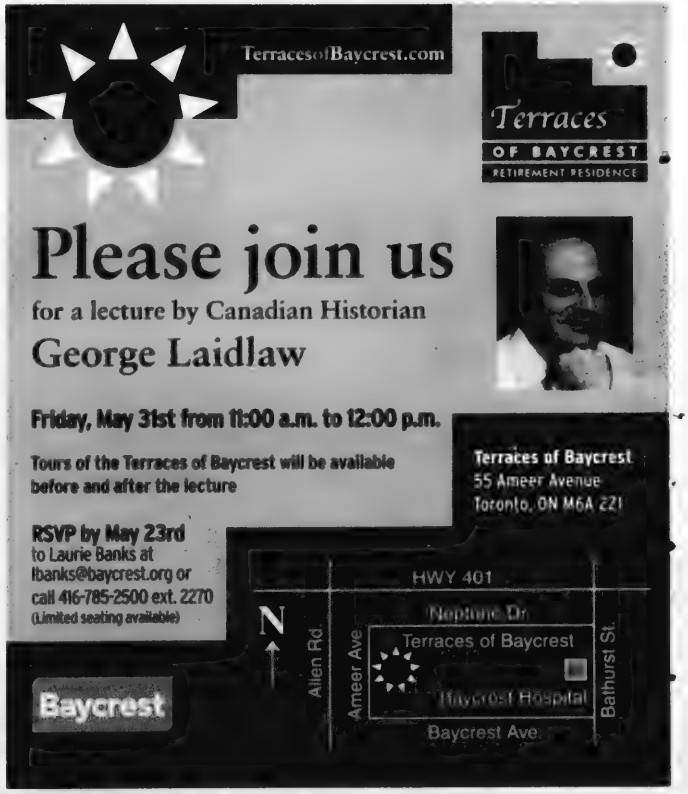
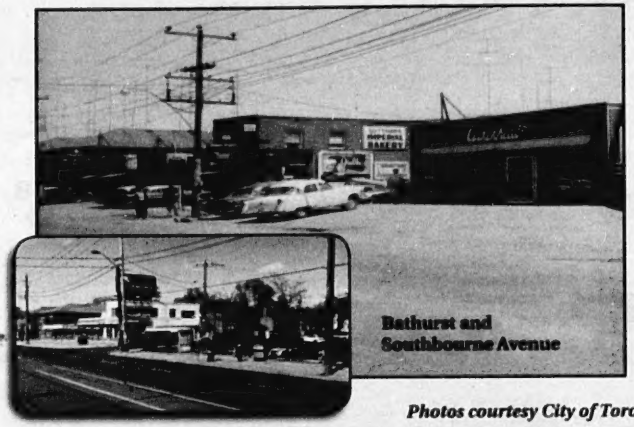
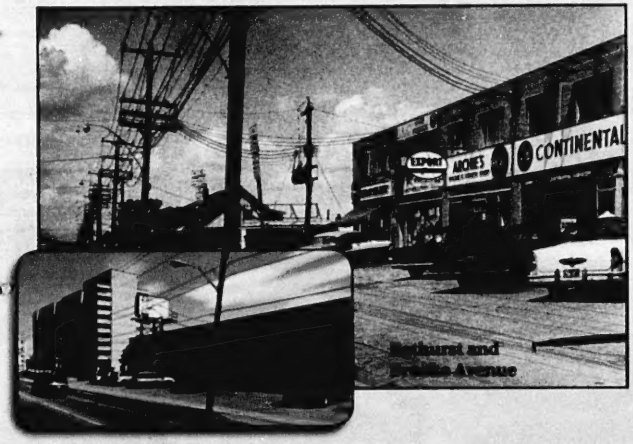


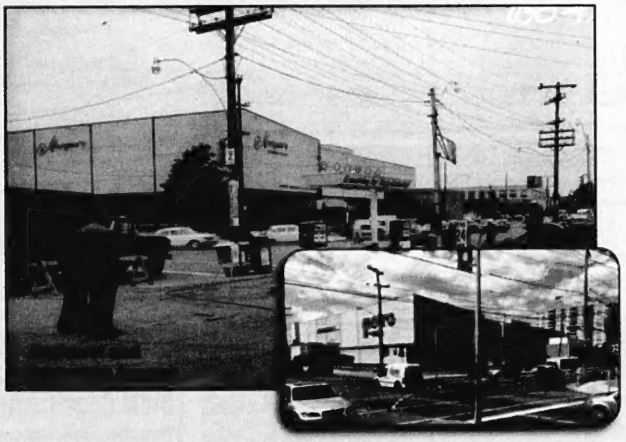
Bathurst Street: then and now

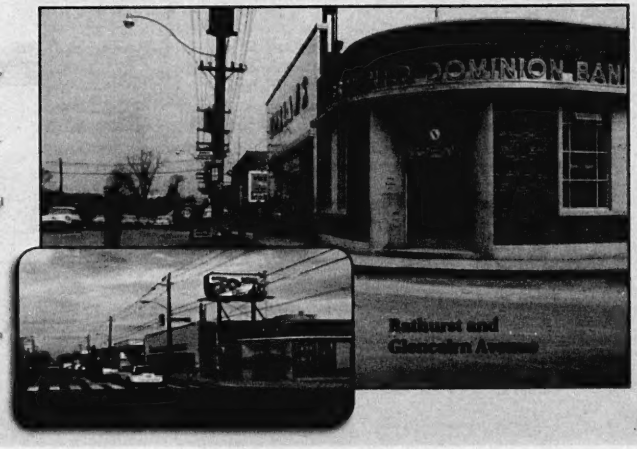
Anchoring the community for more than 50 years

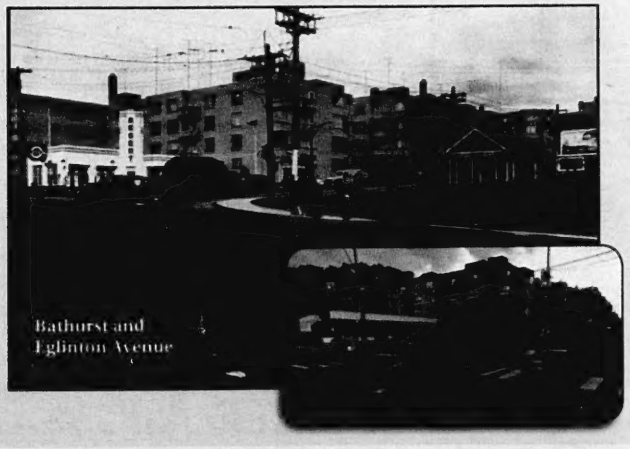


Photos courtesy City of Toronto Archives and Google Maps









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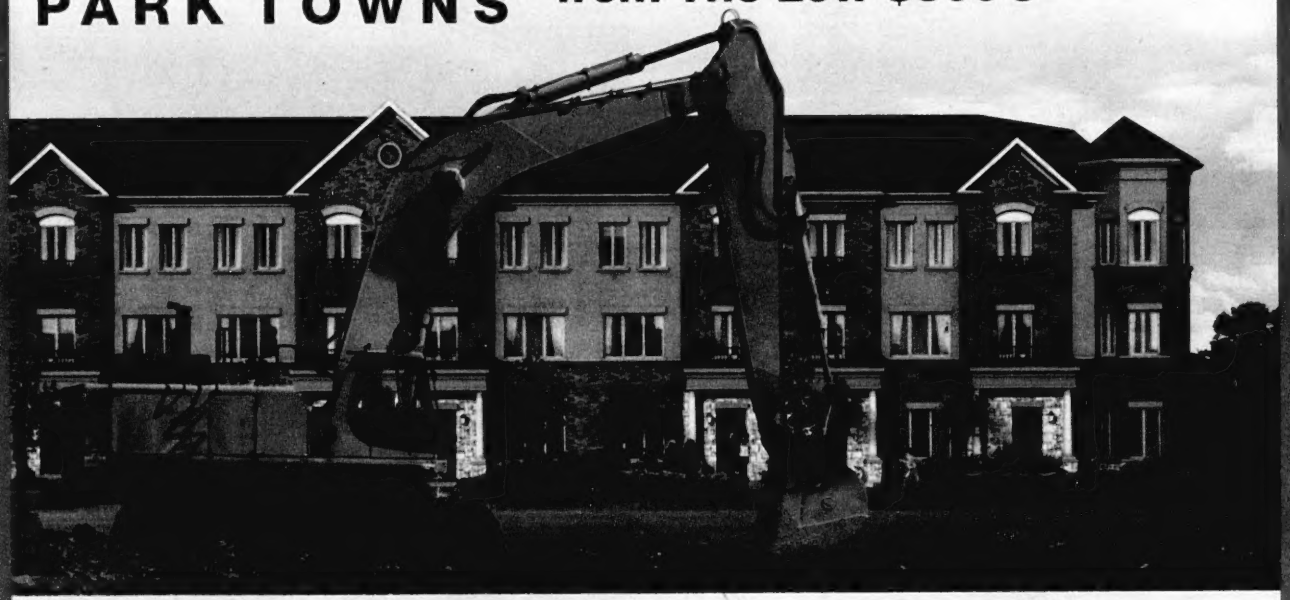

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